



Community Life

Help Your Community Get Its Share Of Government Funding

(NAPSA)—You may play an important role in getting the schools, roads, police and other services your neighborhood needs if you're ever among the people getting the American Community Survey from the U.S. Census Bureau.

The new survey is actually not "new" at all; the questions are virtually the same as ones answered in Census 2000 by a sample of the population. But by surveying a small percentage of the population each year throughout the decade, people can get a much clearer—and more timely—look at how their communities are changing. This is important, because decision makers need current information to meet the needs of your communities.

Your answers and those collected from other people in the survey help federal and state officials determine where to distribute more than \$300 billion annually for important services like health care, education and transportation.

Your survey answers help local government and community organizations locate facilities such as day care centers, senior citizen community centers, health care clinics and even playgrounds.

The information helps emergency planners speed disaster relief to areas where people need special assistance evacuating. Information about where people live and work and the times they leave for work is used to plan highways, roads, bridges and tunnels in areas that need them.

Businessmen and -women can use the data to:

1. Determine where to open new stores, restaurants or day care centers
2. Determine if a community has the workforce the company needs



In these fast-paced times, 10 years is too long to wait for detailed census data. So the government now conducts part of the census through a survey sent every year.

3. Forecast future demand for products or services.

"The American Community Survey signals a dramatic improvement in the availability of local data used by government, communities and businesses," said Census Bureau Associate Director Preston Jay Waite. "The data are vital for the planning, implementation and evaluation of policies that affect our daily lives."

Responses to the survey are strictly confidential and protected by law. No information that can identify anyone personally may be used, shared, sold or discussed by the Census Bureau or its workers.

By law, if you get the survey, you have to answer it. If you don't answer by mail, a Census Bureau official may try to reach you by phone or contact you in person to complete the survey.

Only about one in 480 addresses a month nationwide receives the survey. If you have any questions about it, answers can be found on the Census Bureau Web site at www.census.gov. Type in "ACS" in the search bar.