



PRESS RELEASE

**State of Wyoming
Department of Administration and Information
Economic Analysis Division
2800 Central Ave.
Cheyenne, WY 82002
Ph. 307-777-7161 Fax 307-632-1819**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, March 9, 2010
Contact: Amy Bittner, Economist

Census 2010 Forms Arrive in Wyoming

The 2010 Census questionnaire is starting to arrive at the door of Wyoming residents. Every ten years, the U.S. Census Bureau undertakes the massive operation of counting every person living in the United States as mandated by the U.S. Constitution. The decennial (every ten years) census has taken place in Wyoming since 1870. Currently, staff from the Local Census Offices are hand delivering questionnaires to housing units in rural areas of the State, which will continue through the beginning of April. Wyomingites living in larger municipalities will receive their Census 2010 forms in the mail in mid-March. People living on the Wind River Reservation will be counted via interviews with census workers. Response to the census questionnaire is required by law.

The questionnaire is only 10 questions, which makes it one of the shortest census forms in history. The U.S. Census Bureau will work to count people living in housing units and group quarters, such as prisons, dormitories, nursing homes, group homes, and military barracks. The U.S. Census Bureau will also send staff to shelters, soup kitchens, outdoor locations, and mobile food vans to count people who are experiencing homelessness. Every person living in a residence, relatives, including children and non-relatives alike should be listed on the form. Households should complete their census form in the location where they live most of the year. College students should fill out the form at their college residence, i.e. dormitory or housing unit, because they live there a majority of the year.

Households that do not return their 2010 Census questionnaire will be visited by a census worker to perform a follow-up interview. "The best and easiest way for everyone to be counted is for people to complete their census form upon receipt. This provides the opportunity for people to fill out their questionnaire in the privacy of their home, and it greatly diminishes the likelihood of a census worker showing up on their door step," commented Amy Bittner, an economist with the Economic Analysis Division and coordinator of Census 2010 Wyoming Counts. "Mailing back the form helps lower the costs of the 2010 Census because it reduces the number of workers that must go door-to-door to collect the information," Bittner stated. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that \$60-70 per census form is saved if it is returned by mail.

Completing the Census 2010 questionnaire is safe and confidential. By law, the U.S. Census Bureau cannot share individual responses with any other persons, government agencies, or law enforcement.

The questionnaire does not ask any questions about a person's citizenship or legal status in the U.S. Census workers are sworn to a lifetime oath to keep personal census records confidential. To ensure safety and confidentiality, the U.S. Census Bureau will never ask respondents for their social security number and will not ask people to submit information via internet or e-mail.

The decennial census is of great importance to Wyoming because the allocation of Federal Funding to communities is based on population data, and it also determines state revenue distributions to cities, towns, and counties for the next ten years. The data are used to establish the boundaries for legislative districts. Census data are critical for local planning efforts such as business and economic development, new schools, and transportation and infrastructure projects. "Completing and returning your questionnaire is one of the simplest and easiest things a person can do to help their local community," said Bittner.

In addition, Questionnaire Assistance Centers are being set up locally to provide assistance to people who are unable to read or understand the form. These centers will also have forms available for people to pick up, if they feel they did not receive a form.

Census 2010 Operations time-line:

- March 1 - April 2: Questionnaires are hand delivered to areas where mail is not delivered to a physical address
- March 15-17: Questionnaires are mailed to areas where mail is delivered to physical address
- March 22 – May 28: Wind River Reservation Enumeration (counting via interviews)
- March 23 – April 20: Questionnaires mailed in Late Mailing phase.
- March 29-31: Service Based Enumeration (counting people experiencing homelessness)
- **APRIL 1, 2010 - CENSUS DAY**
- April 1 – May 14: Group Quarters Enumeration (dormitories, military barracks, jails, nursing homes)
- May 1 – August 27: Non-Response Follow-Up for housing units

For more information about the 2010 Census, www.2010census.gov

Census 2010 Wyoming Counts, http://eadiv.state.wy.us/wyoming_counts/