



Mt. Vernon United Tenants, Inc.

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EARLY SEPTEMBER, 2020
“NEWS & UPDATE”

Usually the end of the summer is a relatively quiet time for us at this office – not so this year. We're helping organize and/or filing complaints for four (4) separate buildings in Mt. Vernon currently.

47 Oak St.

55 Pennsylvania Ave.

60 West First St.

229 South 7th Ave. (Grace House)

... Plus we're heavily involved in a number of key public policy issues ...

Census 2020: The time to respond has been cut short by one month, from October 31, 2020, to September 30, 2020. **MVUT** has been working with people in Mt. Vernon and Westchester to increase Mt. Vernon's count. It's essential that we get more Mt. Vernon residents counted. We need everyone to be counted. We lose \$2,750.00 *every year* for every person not counted - for ten (10) years! We're enclosing a two-sided sheet prepared by Tamara Stewart, "2020 Census Remarks/Census Math" which describes the issue. We need our members to let us know if they want us to set up a table in their building to get people counted. We have computer "tablets" in our office to ask the nine (9) questions, and we periodically set up a table in front of our office to sign people up. We especially need volunteers for the balance of September to help us "count" people. Call the office (914) 699-1114 if you can help– PLEASE! THERE'S NOTHING TO FEAR! All information is confidential. Even if someone is undocumented - it does not matter - no information of any kind will be shared with ANY government or law enforcement agency.

Right to Counsel: We're still playing a key role in the campaign to get Westchester County to adopt a "Right to Counsel Law" which would provide free attorneys to income-eligible tenants in Landlord-Tenant court proceedings. For Mt. Vernon tenants we do not have a County Legislator right now as Lyndon Williams left to become a City Judge.. There will be a new County Legislator in that seat as of election day and we'll let everyone know who that is and contact info to call and write him/her to regarding support for "Right to Counsel". If you are not a Mt. Vernon resident, you can call the

(See Reverse Side)

Westchester Board of Legislators (**W-BOL**) at (914) 995-2800 and find out who your County Legislator is and his/her contact information.

Pandemic: Things have been crazy as a result of the pandemic and many people have lost some or all of their income. Low income tenants have been particularly hard-hit. We're enclosing two (2) recent newspaper articles on this issue back-to-back. An August 30, 2020 New York Times *Opinion* "Don't Let Evictions Spread the Virus" by noted author Matthew Desmond, and an August 27, 2020 news article in the Journal News – "38% of Households Cant Make Ends Meet" according to a new standard – ALICE (Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed). Times are tough indeed!

Furniture Sharehouse: Furniture Sharehouse has been physically closed during the pandemic and we have been unable to bring clients up to the Westchester County Airport to get free furniture. However, Furniture Sharehouse has recently begun allowing people to get furniture "virtually". There have been some changes and additions to the application process but we can help you through that. The same fees still apply - \$25 referral fee, and your choice of delivery – full-delivery i.e. into your home \$150.00, curbside delivery \$75.00 or no charge if you can pick up the furniture yourself. You must go through a member agency, like MVUT to participate.

Voting: This is an extremely important election coming up on November 3, 2020. However Westchester residents may vote early, from Saturday, October 24 – Sunday November 1. We're enclosing a list of the Dates, times and places where you may vote early. Be sure to let your friends, family and neighbors know of those early voting opportunities. On the reverse side of the Voting notice, we've enclosed a notice about a "Utility Scare". BEWARE!! This is especially important to senior citizens. Don't give any information to unsolicited callers. Hang up and/or call the numbers listed on the Notice.

\$ for MVUT: Please help us help the community. Support us financially so we can help more people!

2020 CENSUS REMARKS

Good evening and thank you for generously giving me a couple of minutes to address this gathering. My name is Tamara Stewart and I'm a member of Mt. Vernon's 2020 Census Complete Count Committee. Great news! The 2020 Census is almost here. Starting on March 12th, Mt. Vernon residents will be able to do our civic duty and get counted. Your household should receive a letter or postcard in the mail inviting you to participate, although some households may receive a traditional printed questionnaire instead. In any case, you should answer the nine questions for each person in your household, either online, by phone, or snail mail.

There are several reasons why responding promptly to the census is important. First, it is our civic duty and an act of patriotism. Whether you're an American citizen or non-citizen, documented or undocumented, housed or homeless, our country needs you to get counted. Second, the census determines Congressional representation. Third, the census also determines Congressional districts and how they're drawn. Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, the census count determines how \$675 billion per year in federal aid is allocated.

Mt. Vernon's official 2010 Census count was 67,292, although by many estimates our population is closer to 100,000. Due to the severe undercount in 2010, Mt. Vernon lost out on tens-of-millions of federal tax dollars over the past decade. Every person in our city who gets counted this year represents approximately \$2,750 from the federal government. That means that every 365 people represent \$1 million! If we could increase Mt. Vernon's official count to 90,000 people this year, we would increase our city's federal funding by \$61 million, the amount of the city's entire 2020 proposed budget! And that additional \$61 million wouldn't be for just one year, our city would receive this windfall of additional federal funding for the next ten years!

Federal funds pay for things like public safety, housing assistance, public transportation and roads, Medicare, health clinics, SNAP, school breakfast/lunch and after-school programs, Community Development Block Grants, community mental health programs, and Pell grants for college. We know that Mt. Vernon desperately needs funding for all of these purposes!

So please, demonstrate your patriotism while helping our community rebuild. Get counted and spread the word encouraging your family, friends and neighbors to get counted. For 2020, please help us make Mt. Vernon count. Thank you.

“CENSUS MATH”

Every person = \$2,750

Every 365 people counted = \$1 million/yr.

Estimated population = 100,000

Official 2010 census count = -- 67,292

Estimated 2010 undercount = 32,708

Mt. Vernon 2020 Proposed Budget = \$61 million

If we increase Mt. Vernon's census count to 90,000 (which is estimated would still be a 10% undercount), Mt. Vernon would increase its federal funding by \$61 million, the amount of the city's entire 2020 proposed budget! And that additional \$61 million wouldn't be for just one year, the city would receive this windfall of additional funding for the next ten years! If we succeed in getting our census count up to 90,000, the City of Mt. Vernon can improve ALL city services AND prevent the need for a property tax increase for the next ten years!

Let's share some "Census Math" with our community to help them understand why it's critically important for everyone living in Mt. Vernon to get counted.

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The Westchester County Board of Elections has announced the times and locations for early voting for the fall's general election.

The early voting period is October 24 through November 1.

Registered voters voting early may cast their ballots at ANY of the seventeen (17) designated early voting locations. On Election Day, voters must vote at their assigned polling sites.

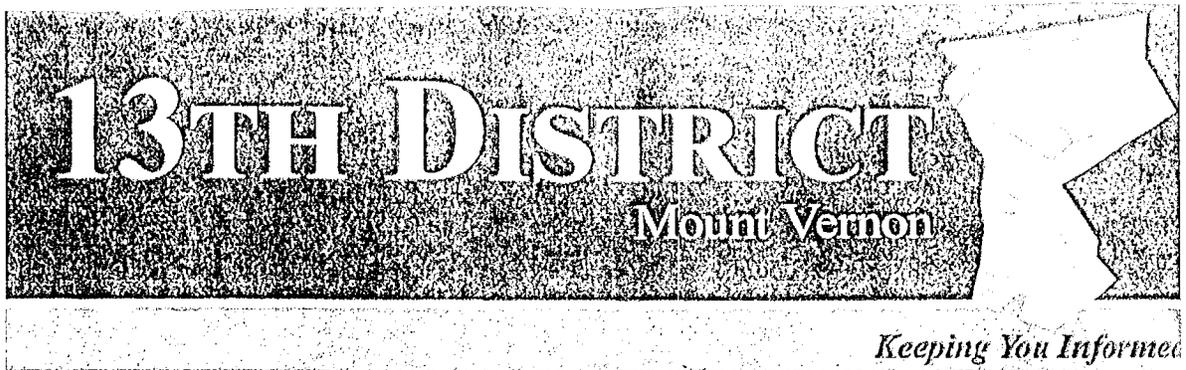
Early Voting Times:

- Saturday, October 24: 12 p.m. – 5 p.m.
- Sunday, October 25: 12 p.m. – 5 p.m.
- Monday, October 26: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 27: 12 p.m. – 8 p.m.
- Wednesday, October 28: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- Thursday, October 29: 12 p.m. – 8 p.m.
- Friday, October 30: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- Saturday, October 31: 12 p.m. – 5 p.m.
- Sunday, November 1: 12 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Early Voting Locations:

- Eastchester Public Library, 11 Oakridge Place, Eastchester, NY 10709
- Dobbs Ferry Village Hall, 112 Main Street, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522
- Greenburgh Town Hall, 177 Hillside Avenue, White Plains, NY 10607
- Veterans Memorial Building, 210 Halstead Avenue, Harrison, NY 10528
- Pound Ridge Town House, 179 Westchester Avenue, Pound Ridge, NY 10576
- Mamaroneck Town Center, 740 W. Boston Post Road, Mamaroneck, NY 10543
- Mt. Kisco Memorial Complex at Leonard Park, 1 Wallace Drive, Mt. Kisco, NY 10549
- Mt. Pleasant Community Center, 125 Lozza Drive, Valhalla, NY 10595
- Mt. Vernon City Hall, 1 Roosevelt Square, Mt. Vernon, NY 10550
- New Rochelle City Hall Annex, 90 Beaufort Place, New Rochelle, NY 10801
- Joseph G. Caputo Community Center, 95 Broadway, Ossining, NY 10562
- Peekskill Nutrition Center, Neighborhood Center, 4 Nelson Avenue, Peekskill, NY 10566
- Somers Town House, 335 Route 202, Somers, NY 10589
- Westchester County Board of Elections, 25 Quarropas Street, White Plains, NY 10601
- Grinton I. Will Library, 1500 Central Park Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10710
- Riverfront Library, One Larkin Center, Yonkers, NY 10701
- Yorktown Cultural Center, 1974 Commerce Street, Yorktown Heights, NY 10598

If you have any other questions, please visit the Westchester County Board of Elections on the web at <https://citizenparticipation.westchestergov.com> or call (914) 995-5700.



*** SCAM ALERT ***

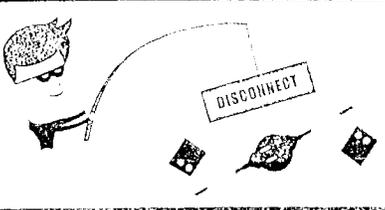
Utility services scam targeting seniors

The Yonkers Police Department has recently received several reports primarily from senior citizens regarding the utility services scam: specifically, residents have received telephone calls from fraudsters pretending to be Con Edison employees instructing the residents to purchase MoneyPaks (a prepaid debit card instrument) in order to make a false payment or risk having their service disconnected.

As always, NEVER engage in any unsolicited financial transactions over the telephone, and ALWAYS verify exactly who you are speaking with before providing any information. The SAFEST course of action is to simply HANG-UP on unsolicited, unknown, and suspicious calls you are unsure, ask a trusted friend or family member for assistance, or call the Yonkers Police at (914) 377-7900



UTILITY SCAM



You receive a telephone call from a utility company threatening to shut off service, unless you pay a bill or fine.

VERIFY the information; call the utility company directly.

There are dozens of scams and confidence tricks that fraudsters use, but the goal is the same - **they want to steal your money!** Follow these basic tips to keep yourself from becoming a victim.

- **NEVER** give your personal or bank information to anyone over the telephone, unless:
 - You know exactly who you are talking to and/or the company they work for; and,
 - You are engaged in a willing and voluntary transaction.
- **DON'T** give in to pressure to take immediate action
- **HANG-UP** on suspicious phone calls.
- **VERIFY** information before taking action; ask family members or trusted friends for help.



Scammers often work by wire-transfer – if you are asked to wire money, it's probably a SCAM.
For more information call 914-377-7375.