

Owner-Occupied and Rehabilitation Programs

In Your Area...

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If you are a resident of **Northeastern Butler County, Jefferson Township or Slippery Rock Borough**, you may be eligible to receive a grant to rehabilitate your home. The Redevelopment Authority County of Butler currently has funding to assist low to moderate income homeowners in those targeted areas. Home improvements could include: windows, roofs, electric, plumbing, heating and other obvious structural defects. If you wish to be considered or learn more, contact our office at 724.287.6797 or visit our website www.housingauthority.com.

Simple Changes You Can Do To Improve Your HVAC System

- Keep your indoor temperature set at a constant temperature! Constantly changing the thermometer up and down makes the units work harder.
- Ensure filters are kept clean and any debris is removed. Obstructions can prohibit proper air flow from the unit.
- A well cared for HVAC system has the best chance of giving you the efficiency and energy savings you can expect. Units are not easy or cheap to repair. Proper maintenance of your heating and cooling systems will ensure longevity of the units.

www.housingauthority.com

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Executive Director: Perry O'Malley

Editor: Ashley Pino

Butler County Housing Authority

114 Woody Drive

Butler, PA 16001

Phone: 724.287.6797

Email: bcha@housingauthority.com

Housing Matters

Housing Summit Held To Discuss Housing Needs In Butler County

On September 17th over 20 local agencies met to discuss the housing needs in Butler County. The agencies participating in the summit included those who have low-income clients and those who provide a wide range of services, including health, housing and education resources. Agencies in attendance were: Housing and Redevelopment Authority County of Butler, United Way of Butler County, Center for Community Resources, Irene Stacy Community Mental Health Center, Catholic Charities as well as many others. The summit focused on the need for affordable housing, identifying young adults in need as well as improving the services for military veterans.

LOCAL FAMILY BENEFITS FROM MULTIPLE HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY PROGRAMS

The Housing and Redevelopment Authority is helping families improve their quality of life and the quality of their homes through various programs. Recently, one family was able to benefit from several of our programs. The Thorhauer family learned about our Weatherization Program through a brochure that they saw at the local post office in Petrolia. They were able to receive a grant through the Weatherization Program in April 2012 to make their home more energy efficient. From there they learned about two other programs that they were able to benefit from; the Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Program and the Emergency Program. Through these three programs the Thorhauer family received the following improvements to their home: insulation and air sealing, new smoke and carbon dioxide detectors, new energy efficient light bulbs, all new windows, new front door, new siding, new gutters, repaired fascia and their home was completely weatherized in the process. It is wonderful to help a family improve their home and address health and safety issues, especially a young family like the Thorhauer's. They were very pleased with the experience and truly developed a great and trusting relationship with their Housing and Redevelopment Authority team. Joelle Thorhauer would recommend the programs to anyone.



Housing & Redevelopment Authority County of Butler

114 Woody Drive

Butler, PA 16001

Phone: 724.287.6797 Fax: 724.287.7906

Email: bcha@housingauthority.com

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Perry O'Malley

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HUMAN RESOURCE DAY FOR HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Every year employees of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority County of Butler take part in a day long program covering everything from: health and wellness, financial security, safety and stress management as well as customer service. April Mottern began the day with presentations on chemical hazard safety and back safety. Alex Kline a retirement planning specialist with Duncan Financial gave an overview of services and offered professional advice to help employees plan for their financial future and retirement. A key focus of this years event was the health and wellness of employees. Kevin Wildrick of UPMC informed employees of the health and wellness initiative that BCHA is kicking off. Jodi Detwiler from HR Network Consultants added her expertise on stress management and how to measure stress levels and cope accordingly. The afternoon began with a Fair Housing Act presentation by Jennifer Sinclair of Southwestern PA Legal Services, Inc. She reviewed categories of prohibited practices such as: discrimination, protected classes, redlining, blockbusting, coercion and intimidation, and threats and interference. She also covered: coverage specific to persons with disabilities, reasonable accommodations, design requirements, exceptions to coverage, applicable state statutes and the complaint process with HUD or federal court. Employees finished the day with training on conflict resolution and customer service provided by Dawn Pomaybo, Inc. The employees received a full day of information and training on various topics and are committed to improving in their job functions as well as in their overall health and wellness.



RELIEVE STRESS AT WORK

If your work is stressing you out, here are some tips to help alleviate some of the stress and make your day to day work life more bearable and maybe even enjoyable!

Focus on better nutrition: Certain foods called “pseudostressors” can trigger or increase stress. Foods containing caffeine kick metabolism into a higher gear and cause the release of stress hormones. Refined sugar and simple carbohydrates like white flour and rice can cause anxiety and irritability. To avoid these scenarios, follow a diet low in fat and sugars, cut down on caffeine and increase your daily intake of fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Also be sure not to skip any meals, pack healthy snacks to eat throughout the day and consider taking a multivitamin.

Take short breaks daily: According to the Mental Health Association, a mere ten to twenty minute break can help relieve stress and increase your tolerance to it. Deep breathing exercises are also a great way to ease stress.

Exercise regularly: Exercise can help improve your mindset according to the American Council on Exercise (ACE). It is a great way to ease anxiety, promote relaxation, bolster your self-esteem and improve your eating habits.

Get organized, prioritize and ask for help if needed: Take some time to write yourself a to-do list. List them in order of importance and check the tasks off when they are completed. Giving yourself a visual will help you get a handle on your workload and decrease your stress levels.

Regain balance and perspective: Leave your work at work. Strive for a healthy balance between work and play!



Resident Spotlight



Congratulations to Marilyn Ion

She is our latest graduate from the Family Self-Sufficiency Program. Marilyn joined the FSS program in 2008 and is employed as a bus driver. She received a check for \$6,581.90 which she is going to use as a down payment on a house. Marilyn plans to convert her Section 8 rental assistance voucher to a mortgage voucher.

Congratulations Marilyn. We are looking forward to working with you on your home purchase.



Congratulations to Paul Baker

He graduated from the Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS) and received a check for \$504.10. Paul had a VASH Voucher, which is a housing voucher issued to Veterans, and had joined the FSS Program in 2010. He sent out resumes, attended job fairs and job training programs at both Career Track and Butler County Community College in order to upgrade his work skills. In May of this year his persistence paid off. He landed a great job with a great salary and no longer needs housing assistance. Paul said, “You have to take responsibility for your choices. You can’t blame others and you have to keep picking yourself up each time that you fall.” Well said Paul. We wish you the best.

If you are interested in learning more about the FSS program, please contact the Housing Authority at 724.287.6797 or visit our website www.housingauthority.com!

When the Weather Outside is Frightful

Tips for keeping yourself and elderly loved ones safe, secure and warm during the cold winter months.

Keep plenty of warm blankets, candles and working flashlights around your home. A winter power outages could leave you without heat or electricity.

Keep an emergency supply of canned goods and other necessities in your home. A sudden winter storm could leave you unable to get to the store.

Pre-arrange for someone to check-in on you in the event of a winter emergency.

Watch your step! Falling is one of the biggest hazards during the cold and icy months. If you must head out into the snow, wear sturdy, low-heeled shoes with non-skid rubber soles. Stay clear of unshoveled sidewalks and remember to take small steps.

Limit your time outdoors and layer your clothing if you need to go outside. Remember to also stay inside on windy days, the wind chill can substantially increase your chances of developing hypothermia.

Do not put your hands in your pockets. If you slip, you will need your arms to restore your balance and break your fall. Don’t carry large loads and use handrails when available.

2012 BUILDING SERVICE FAIRS

Each year building fairs are held at our nine senior properties. Thirteen vendors were in attendance including: Personal Touch, VNA, Mental Health Association, Foster Grandparents, Life Butler County, AmeriCorps, Red Cross, BART, Voice, United Healthcare, Armstrong and Butler County Area on Aging and the United Way of Butler County. Residents were able to receive flu shots and register to win door prizes. This year’s fairs brought in 183 residents!

