

## Complete Census Count Means \$\$\$\$ and More For the Great River Region

Over 70% of the households in the Great River Region's four counties to date have mailed in their Census forms. That beats the national average return rate of 63% and is just under the State's rate of 72%. But that leaves about 29% that have not responded. For every person not counted in the 2010 Census, the Region loses thousands of dollars.

The latest national and local participation rates can be viewed at [www.2010.census.gov](http://www.2010.census.gov). To date the response rate for counties in the Great River Region include Des Moines at 72%; Henry at 75%; Lee at 74% and Louisa at 63%.

If you haven't mailed in your Census form, you still have time. Households have until mid-April to mail back their forms before census takers begin going door to door to residences that failed to respond. Hundreds of households in the Region will be receiving a replacement form which will give them a second chance to get counted and help ensure that the Region gets its fair share of political representation and federal funds over the next 10 years.

Why is it so important that you fill in the form and mail it back? Here are just a few reasons:

\$ More than \$400 billion in federal funds are distributed each year to states and communities based in part on census population data. (A listing of the programs is available at [www.census.gov/prod/2009pubs/govsrr2009-1.pdf](http://www.census.gov/prod/2009pubs/govsrr2009-1.pdf).) That's \$400 trillion over a 10-year period for

- Schools
- Senior centers and services to the elderly
- Bridges, roads and other-public works projects
- Emergency services
- Services to low income residents such as free or reduced lunches and energy assistance.
- Job service centers
- Neighborhood improvements
- Public health and hospitals

\$ Census information affects the region's legislative representation at the local, regional, state and federal levels.

\$ Residents use the census data to advocate for causes and support community initiatives.

\$ Businesses rely on census data for locating new establishments and recruiting employees and they use the census demographics and household characteristics for marketing their products

\$ Census data help direct federal and state funding to communities in need and is used to obtain grants for needed social, recreational and economic development programs

\$ Census data are used by the economic development organizations in the Region to retain and recruit businesses especially useful is the information on the Region's labor force.

When you do the math, it's easy to see what an accurate and complete count of residents can do for your community and the Region. More \$\$\$\$ coming into the Region mean a stronger local economy which attracts businesses that attract employees who become local residents, customers and tax payers. The stakes are high. Contribute to your community.

**BE COUNTED.**