

An electronic news service of the PHFA Housing Services Department – October 2011

**PAHousingSearch.com
Invaluable after Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee**

Finding housing for people displaced by the September flooding is extremely challenging. Fortunately, PAHousingSearch.com has been an invaluable tool for helping people find a place to live. But the site is only as good as the information that is on it – and the quality of that information is up to YOU!

Whether you are with a management agent with hundreds of units, or have a cabin available in the hardest hit counties, please make sure that information is listed on PAHousingSearch.com and is kept up to date. There is no cost to list a unit and can be done directly on-line at the website. For people who don't have easy Internet access, they can call operators on weekdays at 1-877-428-8844 (toll-free) from 9 a.m. until 8 p.m., and staff will help them get their rental listed.

Mobile home communities that have homes or lot spaces available also are asked to please call the toll-free number to provide that information to disaster-response representatives.

PAHousingSearch.com is a Web-based housing locator service that is free for the public and landlords to use. It was launched in April of this year and is funded by PHFA, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, and the Department of Public Welfare.

In the weeks following Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, state agencies and housing locator expert Socialserve.com have been working diligently to help Pennsylvania families who lost their housing due to flooding. And it is working – prior to Hurricane Irene PAHousingSearch received an average of 8700 searches per week. Since Hurricane Irene, that number has jumped to 12,200 – a 40% increase.

In those counties that have been declared disaster areas, more than 550 housing units have been added to PAHousingSearch.com since early September, providing more housing options for displaced families. Please continue to list and keep your vacancies up to date.



Everyone is counting on you to make sure PAHousingSearch.com offers the most complete and accurate information possible -- to help our friends and neighbors get their lives back to normal as quickly as possible.

PHFA Information and Trainings

Save the Date: Regional Housing Service Forums

- **Scranton Area October 4**, 10:00 AM-3:00 PM at Village Park Apartments, Scranton. Contact Alicia Spencer at aspencer@phfa.org.
- **Regional Housing Services Forum, October 12**, 10:00 AM-2:00 PM at LIFE Lawrence County Building, New Castle. Contact Steve Chopek at schopek@phfa.org.
- **Bethlehem Area October 14**, 10:00 AM-3:00 PM at Everyday LIFE. Contact Alicia Spencer at aspencer@phfa.org.
- **Central Region October 25**, 10:00 AM-2:00 PM in Lewisburg. Contact mmcgraw@phfa.org for details.
- **NW Region October 28**, 10:00 AM-2:00 PM, at the Highmark Caring Place, Erie. Contact Steve Chopek at schopek@phfa.org.
- **Philadelphia November 4**, 10:00 AM-3:00 PM at The Salvation Army Ivy Residence. Focus on Senior Properties, Speakers from PCA, Chester County Health Department speaking on "Matter of Balance", and Fox Chase Cancer Center on "Lung Cancer Awareness". Contact Alicia Spencer at aspencer@phfa.org.
- **Philadelphia November 10**, 10:00 AM-2:00 PM, Coral Street Arts House, Philadelphia. Focus on Family properties roundtable discussion. Contact Robert Butcher at rbutcher@phfa.org.
- **Chester County November 16**, 10:00 AM-3:30 PM, at Westminster Place at Parkesburg. Contact Alicia Spencer at aspencer@phfa.org.

Engaging Residents in Energy Conservation Workshops

Are you looking for ways to engage residents in energy conservation? Have you had an energy audit? Do you participate in PHFA's Preservation through Smart Rehab Program, or other energy savings programs? Learn how management, service coordinators, and maintenance staff can involve residents in taking advantage of these improvements and ways to engage residents in energy conservation, while becoming a greener community

- **Oct 13, Eastern PA**, 10:00 AM-2:30 PM, Sandy Hill Terrace, Norristown. To register: [Click here.](#)
- **Nov 15, Western PA**, 10:00 AM-2:30 PM, Cranberry Township Municipal Building, Cranberry Township. To register: [Click here.](#)

2012 PHFA Housing Services Conference Speaker RFP Due Oct 15

Here's your last chance to submit your idea for a presentation for the 2012 PHFA Housing Services Conference to be held June 25-27, 2012 at the Sheraton Station Square in Pittsburgh. All proposals should be submitted by October 15, 2011 to Crystal Baker at cbaker@phfa.org or faxed to 1.717.614.2519. If you need a fillable RFP to be emailed to you please call 717.780.1808. Go to: http://www.phfa.org/forms/conferences/housing_services/2012_speaker_rfp.pdf.

Other Trainings and Conferences

Oct 13 Webinar: Critical Insights for Senior Care Workers

Free webinar October 13 with Dr. Marc Agronin, medical director for Mental Health and Clinical Research at Miami Jewish Health Systems and author of How We Age – A Doctor's Journey into the Heart of Growing Old. For registration and details [click here.](#)

Oct 20 Money Matters A Consumer Education Conference

Pennsylvania Securities Commission is sponsoring a free, non-commercial, financial education seminar on October 20 at the Radisson Hotel, Camp Hill. Space is limited. Registration required. Register online at www.psc.state.pa.us and click the Investor Education link or call 1.800.600.0007.

Oct 20-21 PAHMA Fall Conference; Embracing the Future of Affordable Housing

The PAHMA Fall Conference; Embracing the Future of Affordable Housing to be held October 20-21

at Seven Springs Mountain Resort in Champion PA. Registration and info at www.pahma.org.

Oct 26-27 PennDeIAHMA Fall Conference “Are We There Yet?”

The PennDeIAHMA Fall Conference “Are We There Yet?” will be held October 26-27, at Dover Downs Hotel and Casino, Dover, Delaware. [Register here.](#)

Various Dates-Senior Insights Series-Lancaster Area

A series of senior topics will be presented at Albright LIFE, 417 W. Fredrick St., Lancaster, 6:00 PM-8:00 PM on the following dates:

- **Oct 19-Legal Needs and Long term Care (When, Why and What)**
- **Nov 16-How Do I Talk to Mom and Dad About Driving, Scam and Finances**

RSVP by calling 717.381.4327.

Oct 27-30 NAMI PA 2011 Annual Conference-Harrisburg

NAMI PA is holding its Annual Conference on October 27-30, in Harrisburg. The Save the Date [flyer](#) is now available for more information.

Nov 4 Free Training- Understanding Gambling and Older Adults-Pittsburgh

The University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work in partnership with PHFA is excited to offer this free training on November 4, 10:00 AM-12:30 PM at York Commons Community Room (4003 Penn Ave. Pittsburgh 15224). Register by October 28 to Elizabeth at 412.624.0036 or eam65@pitt.edu CEU's available for \$10.

Various Training Opportunities with PA Behavioral Health & Aging Coalition

The Pennsylvania Behavioral Health and Aging Coalition will host half day training sessions on selected dates and locations on “**Understanding Dementia: Diagnosis, Treatment and Behavioral Management**”, 10:00 AM-2:30 PM. Cost is \$75. CEU's are available

Oct 6-Reading Hospital and Medical Center, West Reading, Nov 9-Case Management & Supports, Inc., Greensburg, Dec 7-Mt. Nittany Medical Center, State College. Other dates/locations next spring.

Register online at www.olderpa.org or by fax at 717.3703.6016 or email Rebecca@olderpa.org. For information call 717.541.4219.

A new free one day training will be presented entitled “**Understanding and Accessing Medicare Services for Mental Health Consumers**” & “**Understanding and Working with Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities who Have a Dual Diagnosis**”.

- **Oct 6-Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, 199 Beaver Drive, DuBois, 9:30 AM-3:15 PM**

Register online at www.olderpa.org/bhc or call 717.541.4219.

Additional PA Adult/Older Adult Suicide Prevention Coalition Activities coming up:

- **October 25- Regional Suicide Prevention Educational Forums, Genetti's Conference Center, Wilkes-Barre**
- **November 2- Regional Suicide Prevention Educational Forums, Holiday Inn, Clarion**
- **October 26-Strategic Planning for Suicide Prevention Training, 2011 Northeast Field Office, State Office Building, Scranton**

For info: <http://www.feelingblue.org/news/2010/02/PA-AdultOlder-Adult-Suicide-Prevention-Coalition>

Cost is \$35. Mail registrations to LTLTI, 525 29th St., Harrisburg, PA 17104, fax to 717.541.45217 or register online at www.ltltrainingpa.org

Free Webinars to Help Make the Most of Your PA 529 Plan

PA Treasury offers a series of free webinars to help educate families on the benefits of a 529 plan and how to make the most of their accounts. To register for one of these free webinars – or one on another topic – visit www.PA529.com.

Resources/News – General

Consumer Protection Blog from The Federal Trade Commission

Check out the Federal Trade Commission's [Consumer Protection blog](#) for valuable tips to help you protect your privacy, manage your money, avoid scams, and much more.

Bed Bug Information

For bed bug information: <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/bedbugs/>.

Comcast Unveils New Product for Internet Access

Comcast is unveiling a new product aimed at assisting low-income students and families gain access to the Internet. [Internet Essentials](#) is open to families that have at least one child receiving free school lunches under the National School Lunch Program. Full details can be found at the [Internet Essentials website](#) or <http://internetessentials.com/index.html>.

Low Cost Internet for Comcast Customers

Internet Essentials, (www.internetessentials.com) offers high-speed Internet access for \$9.95 a month and a voucher for \$150 to buy a small, netbook-style computer. For eligibility requirements or to apply call 1.855.8.INTERNET (1.855.846.8376) to request an application. Complete and return it, along with lunch program documents from your child's school.

FEMA Disaster Relief Centers and Resources

If you have been a victim of either Hurricane Irene or Tropical Storm Lee and reside in a declared county then go to <http://asd.fema.gov/inter/locator/home.htm> to find the closest Disaster Relief Center.

Filing Credit Card Complaints

You can now [file a credit card complaint](#) with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. They will forward your issue to the credit card company, give you a tracking number, and keep you updated on the status of your complaint.

HUD Rental Housing Data Available

Rental Housing data prepared for HUD based on the American Community Survey is available [by clicking here](#).

HUD's Annual State of Fair Housing Report Now Available

HUD has released a report showing that they are resolving individual housing discrimination complaints faster and launching more investigations on behalf of discrimination victims where no one has filed a complaint. According to HUD's *Annual State of Fair Housing Report*, discrimination based on a person's disability is still the largest single category of complaints. Visit: https://www.disability.gov/housing/housing_discrimination.

LIHEAP 2011-12 Applications Accepted Starting November 1

Home Heating Assistance (LIHEAP) will accept applications beginning November 1. For eligibility guidelines for 2011-12 season [click here](#).

Replacement SNAP Benefits for Food Lost in a Household Misfortune

SNAP households may qualify for replacement benefits because of recent storms. SNAP replacements can be issued for food losses due to declared disasters or for more localized "household misfortunes". A disaster declaration affects a large area or population; damage is very severe and widespread; and, as a result, affected populations are given more flexible eligibility criteria and access to benefits than normally possible in the SNAP program. A "household misfortune" is a fire, local flooding, power outage or similar circumstance lasting a short period of time that affects individuals already receiving SNAP benefits. [Click here](#).

Resources for Preparing for Severe Weather

We've updated our [Prepare for Severe Weather](#) page to help you ready your family and home for weather emergencies. [Find out how to prepare for floods, earthquakes, fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, and more](#).

When Having Becomes Hoarding

"Hoarding is the excessive collection of items, along with the inability to discard them." The disorder often runs in families; is more prevalent as people age; and may affect up to 1 in 20 people

according to the International Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Foundation. Stressful life events can precipitate this disorder. [For details click here.](#) For guidelines on how to talk to someone with a hoarding issue: [Click here.](#)

Resources for Women Veterans

Women veterans can now find news and other resources from the [Center for Women Veterans](#). There's also the [Women Veterans Health Care](#) site that provides female veterans with health care services and tips on wellness and healthy living.

VA Benefits: How to Enroll and Apply for Health Benefits

VA Benefits: How to enroll and apply for health benefits: [Visit here.](#)

Resources/News - Senior Sites

Become a National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day Site

Help older adults in your area empty their medicine cabinets of unwanted or expired medications at the third National Prescription Drug Take-Back day by offering your facility as a Take-Back location. On October 29, from 10:00 AM- 2:00 PM, DEA and local partners will hold their third National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day at sites nationwide. If someone is interested in providing a venue in the community for persons to dispose of unwanted and unused prescription drugs and to obtain contact information for your state point of contact, please visit the National Prescription Take-Back Day website at http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/index.html.

Caring for an Aging Loved One

Take a look at the article, [Caring for an Aging Loved One](#) from the Federal Citizen Information Center. You'll find support services to help you research housing options, sort legal matters, address end-of-life care, and more. [Click here.](#)

Medicare Enrollment is Oct 15-Dec 7

Medicare Open Enrollment starts October 15 and ends December 7. To compare current coverage with all of the options that are available in your area, and to enroll in a new plan, go to <http://www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan> or call 1.800.MEDICARE (1.800.633.4227). TTY users should call 1.877.486.2048. Get one-on-one help from your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). Contact information for your SHIP office is available at <http://www.medicare.gov/contacts/>.

Medicare Guide

This guide explains how Medicare works with other kinds of insurance or coverage and who should pay your bills first. Some people with Medicare have other insurance or coverage that must pay before Medicare pays its share of your bill. [Visit here for info.](#)

New Crime Prevention Tool Kits

New Crime Prevention tool kits are available to help community-based organizations and financial institutions promote the safety benefits of electronic payments and urge people to switch *now* to direct deposit or the Direct Express[®] Debit MasterCard[®] card. Materials include:

- **Newsletter copy and news briefs** – Publish in communications to beneficiaries or staff
- **Social media tips** – Post on social media sites like Twitter or Facebook
- **Fliers and posters** – Display in facilities or hand out at events

These materials can be easily added to existing activities for Crime Prevention Month (October) or any time of year. For more information, contact a campaign representative at GoDirect@webershandwick.com or 952. 346.6055.

New Website for Online PACE Applications

The PACEcares website, which houses the online PACE application for Pennsylvania residents, has a new URL. The new website address is <https://PACEcares.magellanhealth.com>. For information about PACE/PACENET, you may also call 1-800-225-7223.

Senior Environmental Employment (SEE) Opportunities

Senior Environmental Employment (SEE) Program provides an opportunity for retired and unemployed older Americans age 55 and over to share their expertise with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Administered by EPA, this program provides older workers with an opportunity to remain active using their matured skills in meaningful tasks that support a wide variety of environmental programs. For more information go to: <http://www.epa.gov/ohr/see/brochure/>.

“The Essentials: Falls and Fall Prevention” Report from MetLife

MetLife Mature Market Institute posted a report, [The Essentials: Falls and Fall Prevention](#).

Resources/News - Family Sites

How to Talk to Children About Natural Disasters

In the wake of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee find strategies for calming kids' fears about natural disasters. [How to Talk to Children About Natural Disasters](#).

Let's Play! Building Language and Literacy into Every Day

Play in early childhood is vitally important to learning. *Let's Play!* is a Language/Literacy Resource Guide that will help parents know what to look for so they can see the beginning stages of language and literacy development in their young children, both with or without disabilities. Go to: <http://www.pealcenter.org/resources/literacyandlanguage.html>.

Parent Guide to Homework: Middle School

To access the Parent Guide to Homework: Middle School: [click here](#).

Packing Smart Podcast

In this podcast for kids, the Kidtastics talk about packing a lunch that's not boring and is full of the power and energy kids need to make it through the day. [Click here](#).

Why Grandparents Should have a Disaster Plan

Parents aren't the only ones who need to plan ahead for natural disasters. [Why Grandparents Should Have a Disaster Plan](#).

Resources/News - People with Disabilities

2nd Annual My American Dream-Voices of Americans with Disabilities Video Contest

National Disability Institute (NDI) announces the launch of its 2nd annual My American Dream - Voices of Americans with Disabilities Video Contest. NDI wants to hear from individuals with disabilities across America about their American dreams and the steps they are taking to achieve them. Whether it's owning a home, landing a dream job, going to college or starting a business, National Disability Institute wants people with disabilities to share their goals and show that people with disabilities want what everyone wants - a chance to live their American dreams.

[Click here for access](#).

ADA Materials Available Free From the Department of Justice

The U.S. Department of Justice provides free ADA materials. Order by calling the [ADA Information Line](#) (1.800.514.0301 (Voice) or 1.800.514.0383 (TDD)). Automated service is available 24-hours a day for recorded information and to order publications. Publications are available in standard print as well as large print, audiotape, Braille, and computer disk for people with disabilities.

Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline

The Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline provides information and support to people with memory loss, caregivers, health care professionals and the general public. Call toll-free anytime day or night at 1.800.272.3900, TDD 1.866.403.3073. The Helpline can also give referrals to local community programs, services and ongoing support. [Click here](#).

Disability Program Navigator

Take this brief training from the Disability Program Navigator Initiative to learn about the more than 50 million Americans with disabilities - 18% of our population - who are potential customers for your business. Includes guidance on reaching out to customers with disabilities to attract and successfully provide your goods and services to this market. For more information visit https://www.disability.gov/employment/employer_resources/small_business_resources.

Information on STSD Relay Service from the FCC

Information from the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) on STS Relay Service, how it works and how to access it. If you have a problem with STS first try to resolve it with the provider. If you can't resolve it directly, you can file a complaint with the FCC. <http://www.fcc.gov/guides/speech-speech-relay-service>.

Resources from Disability.gov

Here are a few examples of the resources you'll find on Disability.gov

- Tips for people who have [pets or service animals](#)
- Information about emergency [kits and supplies](#)
- Preparing for emergencies at [work](#) and [school](#)
- Accessible [shelters and emergency housing](#)
- Help [recovering](#) from a disaster

White House Conference Calls on Disability Issues

Each month, White House staff who work on disability-related policies host a public, live-captioned conference call to keep the public better informed about important developments on many different disability issues. The White House is now offering the opportunity for you to suggest topics you'd like discussed during these calls. Send in your ideas about subjects for discussion, as well as the federal officials you'd like to hear from on these subjects, by visiting <https://www.disability.gov/WHQuestion>.

Funding Opportunities

Due Oct 20 HUD's Multifamily Energy Pilot Program

\$25 million in grants is available through HUD's new Multifamily Energy Efficiency Pilot program. These grants will help develop new innovative approaches for multifamily residential properties to reduce their energy consumption, lower greenhouse gas emissions, while saving money for the residents, property owners and taxpayers. The innovations that flow from this pilot program will serve as models to create future industry standards in energy efficiency. The closing date for applications is October 20. Instruction and applications can be downloaded at: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/nofa10/grpeif.cfm>.

KaBOOM! and Dr. Pepper Snapple Let's Play Playground Construction Grants

KaBOOM! and Dr. Pepper Snapple Group are offering Let's Play Playground Construction Grants of \$15,000 to nonprofit organization or governmental organizations using the KaBOOM! community-build model. The award can only be used towards the purchase of playground equipment from a KaBOOM! preferred vendor. The project must be completed within a year of receiving the award. Details at http://kaboom.org/build_playground/get_funding/grants.

Verizon Foundation Grants

The Verizon Foundation improves lives through literacy, knowledge and readiness for the future. Grants are available for various organizations. For more information visit: <http://www.verizonfoundation.org/grant/guidelines.shtml>.

Subscriber: If you wish to unsubscribe from Quick Connections please email cbaker@phfa.org. To assure that you continue receiving this e-newsletter in your inbox, add cbaker@phfa.org to your email address book.