

CENSUS 1990

Dear Editor:

April 1st is census day. This year's count marks 200 years since the first census was taken in the United States. In 1790 the country's population was about 4 million, in 1990 the projected population count is 250 million.

The 1990 census is very important for all levels of government including towns. Because of population changes nationwide, the state risks losing one of its nine seats in the House of Representatives. More importantly, the allocation of millions of dollars for state and local programs is contingent upon this count.

However, the census is more than just the basis for reapportioning federal or state legislative bodies and county boards. For the town, the census means approximately \$29.31 for each man, woman and child under the states shared revenue formula. If the census is 100 people short of the true population in a town, it means the Department of Administration population estimates will start the next decade 100 people short. Among other things, this means in the first year alone a \$2,931.00 entitlement the town won't receive. Remember, the census is the basis for population estimates for the next 10 years which could calculate to a \$29,310.00 short fall the town is entitled to. In this age of short money supply and the demands for lower property taxes, this amount of loss impacts on town government.

Most households will receive a postal delivered questionnaire about March 23rd. Households will complete the form and mail it to the local census office by April 1st. All information given on the census form remains confidential.

The questionnaire appears in two forms - a short form of 14 questions mailed to 5 out of 6 households, and a larger form of 59 questions mailed to one of every six households.

The success of the count depends upon the accurate completion and timely return of questionnaires. When a form is not returned or is incomplete, a census worker must follow up with a phone call or a personal visit.

Remember, the census is important to all of us. Therefore, everyone is encouraged to participate and answer the census questionnaires. Persons who believe they were missed in the census are urged to step forward to be counted.

Sincerely,

West Point Town Board