



Resident Newsletter December 2023

KEEPING UP WITH CURRENT TOPICS

Resident Survey & Feedback

We would like to thank all of the residents that have participated in RHA surveys this year. Public Housing residents from 13 RHA communities participated. Of those that expressed an opinion...

- 80% feel safe in their home.
- 93% feel that staff treats them with respect.
- 96 % are interested in the future of their community.

Keep your eyes out for future resident surveys from RHA!

Internet Service Assistance Program

Have you registered for the Affordable Connectivity Program, formerly called the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program? If not, take a second to check it out!

The program provides a discount of up to \$30 per month towards broadband internet services for eligible households. You can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers. That means you could potentially save \$360-\$460 annually!

The program is limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household. A household is eligible if a member of the household meets one of the criteria below:

- Participate in certain assistance programs like SNAP, Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, SSI, WIC, or Lifeline;
- Have an income at or below 200% of federal poverty guidelines; or

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- Are approved to receive benefits under the free and reduced-price school lunch or breakfast program.

You can learn more about the benefit, including eligibility and enrollment information, by visiting www.fcc.gov/ACP or by calling 877-384-2575.

December Filter Changes

Raleigh Housing Authority Maintenance staff routinely enter homes to inspect and change air filters. Maintenance staff are scheduled to be at the following sites during December:

- Terrace Park
- Mayview

Free Event: Illuminate

Downtown Raleigh comes to light with *Illuminate*, a self-guided, light-based art walk. This five-week activation takes place in Downtown Raleigh's Fayetteville Street and Glenwood South districts.

Illuminate will transform plazas

and underutilized spaces with a large-scale interactive installation, light-based sculptures, and projection art. Installations will shine nightly from December 1st through January 5th. More information: www.visitraleigh.com/event/downtown-raleigh-illuminate-art-walk/89930/

Work at RHA!

We're hiring at RHA. We have job openings in: Finance, Housing Management, Maintenance, and Leased Housing. Check out our Career Opportunities page to learn more about each position: <https://www.rhaonline.com/career-opportunities/>

Boosting Mental Health

Feeling the winter blues? There is a reason that winter can be the hardest season for your mental health. Shorter days and colder temperatures can impact the way that you feel.

Whether or not you are feeling the effects of the season, there are some simple things you can do to improve your mental state:

- **Enjoy some sunshine each day.** Sunlight is important to help your serotonin production.
- **Make sure you are getting enough sleep.** Maintaining a good sleep schedule helps boost your mood.

Establish and Improve Your Credit

All consumers are assigned a "credit score" which is a number that provides lenders with information about your financing history. This score can range from 300 to 850 points. A higher credit score number generally receives better credit terms. This can translate into lower payments and less interest owed over the life of the account. Keep reading below for some ways to establish and/or improve your credit score!

- Check your credit score to understand where you currently stand. Many companies allow you to check your score for free at least annually, if not more frequently. Source: <https://www.annualcreditreport.com/index.action>
- Notify the major credit bureaus if something on your report does not look correct.
- Shop around prior to opening an account to find which companies have the lowest rates and fees.
- Consider opening up a secured credit account to help establish your credit history.
- Set up at least one credit account where you can make on-time payments each month, preferably in full.
- Once you have opened accounts, make sure to pay them each month before your due date.
- Work to bring any past due bills current to avoid extra fees and higher interest rates.
- Keep the amount you owe low and work on paying down balances when you can.
- Limit how often you apply for new credit. Multiple inquiries and loans can lower your overall score.
- Be patient. Credit scores look at several years of your spending and borrowing history. The needle may move slowly, but you can improve your score if you stick with it!

- **Get moving.** Even gentle exercises like walking and yoga can help you feel better.
- **Smile.** It may not always be the easiest thing to do, but smiling can lower your heart rate and help you be calm.
- **Eat nutrient dense food.** It is important to stay healthy and keep from getting sick.
- **Talk with someone.** Reaching out to friends and loved ones can help you feel less isolated.
- **See a professional.** It's okay to ask a professional for help to improve your mental state.

Please consider reaching out to the following providers if you think you need to:

ALLIANCE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (800) 510-9132
www.alliancehealthplan.org/

FERNANDEZ COMMUNITY CENTER (919) 900-7438
<http://www.fernandezcommunitycenter.com/>

MOBILE CRISIS UNIT
 (877) 626-1772
www.mytahome.com/mobile-crisis

SOUTHLIGHT HEALTHCARE
 (919) 787-6131
www.southlight.org/

SUICIDE HOTLINE
 (800) 273-8255
<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

WAKEBROOK (984) 974-4800

Screen and Storm Doors

RHA Maintenance staff will be working on removing screen and storm doors at various sites. This project will be taking place due to various issues with the doors and locking mechanisms. Notices and specifics will be provided to residents closer to time.

Homemade Hot Chocolate



Try this if you are looking for something to warm you up or an activity for the kids! Homemade hot chocolate outshines store-bought mixes in flavor. Simply whisk cocoa powder and chocolate chips with your preferred milk. Top and enjoy!

2 cups milk of choice

1-1/2 tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder

1-1/2 tbsp. sugar

1/4 cup chocolate chips

1/4 tsp. vanilla extract

In a saucepan, warm milk until it simmers. Whisk in cocoa and sugar. Mix in chocolate chips and whisk until melted. Remove from heat and add the vanilla. Top with whipped cream, marshmallows, or crushed candy canes.

December Holidays Around the World

Think everyone celebrates the holidays the same way? Think again! Read on to learn more

about 10 different holidays that are celebrated during December. (The believed countries of origin are noted in parentheses.)

12/6 – St. Nicholas Day (Belgium)

Also known as the Feast of Saint Nicholas, this holiday honors the birthday of Saint Nicholas—the inspiration behind Santa Claus.

12/7-12/15 – Hanukkah (Israel)

The eight-day Jewish holiday of Hanukkah is a central part of the Jewish Festival of Lights and entails the lighting of a nine-branched menorah each night.

12/8 – Bodhi Day (India)

This Buddhist tradition honors the day in which the Buddha—Siddhartha Gautama—is said to have achieved enlightenment.

12/8 – Immaculate Conception Day (Syria)

Catholics celebrate the day of Immaculate Conception to honor the Virgin Mary.

12/12 – Feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Mexico)

A feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patron saint of Mexico who symbolizes patriotism and devotion.

12/21-1/1 – Yule (Scandinavia)

First celebrated as a Norse festival, Yule celebrates the re-emergence of the sun and the days beginning to grow longer.



12/25 – Christmas (Rome)

While Christians celebrate Christmas to commemorate the birth of Jesus, this holiday has been adopted as a family holiday by people of different faiths.

12/26 – Boxing Day (England)

A British tradition that occurs the day after Christmas and dates back to the 1800s.

12/26-1/1 – Kwanzaa (US)

The week-long holiday of Kwanzaa honors African-American heritage and draws on African music and storytelling.

12/31 – New Year's Eve (Turkey)

Celebrated around the world - every new year is met with anticipation as revelers party, set resolutions and countdown to midnight to welcome in new beginnings.

Resident Resources

The following providers can be contacted by residents. Additional resources can be found at www.rhaonline.com.

Budgeting

Triangle Family Services
<https://tfsnc.org/>

Diaper Assistance

The Diaper Train
www.saintsaviourcenter.org/get-help/diaper-train/

Domestic Violence Resources

Interact of Wake County
<https://interactofwake.org/>

Employment

Jobs for Life
www.jobsforlife.org

Step Up Ministries
www.stepupministry.org

Food Resources

Wake County
<https://www.wake.gov/departments-government/food-security>

Homeownership

DHIC Homeownership Center
<https://dhic.org/homeownership-center/>

Habitat for Humanity
www.habitatwake.org

Senior Citizens

Resources for Seniors
www.resourcesforseniors.com

Utilities Assistance

Wake County Network of Care
<https://wake.nc.networkofcare.org/>

Wake County Schools Resources

Communities in Schools
<https://ciswake.org/>

Youth Programs

Saint Monica Teen Center
<https://raleighnc.gov/parks/services/teen-program>

Questions about Resident Resources can be directed to Suzanne Sands at ssands@rhaonline.com and by phone at (919) 508-1202.

Coming Soon

RHA is excited that the following programs will be coming to its public housing residents soon...



The holiday season is quickly approaching and we are looking forward to the Toys for Tots program. RHA and the ICC are partnering together to receive toys for our residents.

All RHA households are eligible to participate in this free gift program and ensure their children have gifts to open this holiday season. Keep a lookout for flyers distributed to households instructing families how to sign up to receive toys through this program.

YARDI Conversion

RHA is getting closer to implementing its new YARDI software. Residents should expect to see information about YARDI in early 2024.

Converting to YARDI will benefit residents in multiple ways including:

- Increasing resident access to rental accounts.
- Online submittal of paperwork.
- Placing maintenance work orders electronically and more.

SEEK Art Installations

SEEK Art Installations will be coming soon to a few RHA properties. Canvas style murals will be installed at three properties. Residents at these sites have been involved in the process through the creation of the art - "We ART a Village".