



Berkeley Housing Authority

# Section 8 HAP'nings!

## November 2013

### The Harvest .....

As we approach the Thanksgiving holiday we are reminded of the daily struggle of those with limited financial means to provide basic food and shelter. Thank you for caring; thank you for sharing.



### Federal Shut-Down

None of our planning anticipated a shut-down of the Federal government. We were very fortunate that we had funds available to meet all of our financial obligations to participating landlords! Unfortunately, there is a possibility that funding may be suspended again early next year. We understand the importance of on-time payment of the monthly rental subsidy, and will remain committed to doing all we can to ensure our check is in the mail by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month.



### Payment Standards

As you are aware, the local Payment Standard (PS) is a factor of the HUD published Fair Market Rents (FMR). After consecutive years of increases, the FMRs last year were decreased. We challenged the reduction, and are pleased to report that the FMRs published this October reflect a significant increase in all bedroom sizes. The new PSs are effective NOW for new contracts, and are applied to existing tenancies at the contract anniversary. NOTE – all contracts remain subject to “rent reasonableness.”



### Winter Check-Up

The “easy” time change is about to happen ~ where we gain an additional hour of sleep. It is also a good time to prepare for winter – by checking our emergency devices including smoke detectors, and our emergency kits.



Notwithstanding the fact that smoke alarms save

lives, we continue to see and hear of reports where lives are lost in residential fires. Please work with your tenants to ensure there are working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors throughout the unit.

### Electronic HAP processing!

As a cost savings measure we will go to a system of making all rental subsidy payments (HAP) electronically effective April 1, 2014. If you need forms please contact Jayla at (510) 981-5474 or [bfuentecilla@ci.berkeley.ca.us](mailto:bfuentecilla@ci.berkeley.ca.us).



Forms are also available online at [www.cityofberkeley.info/bha](http://www.cityofberkeley.info/bha). If you lack computer access, or need a hard copy check, we can extend the date for you to convert to electronic payments for six months. Contact Jayla to make arrangements to pick up your check at the BHA office.

### Security Deposit Interest

Reminder – under the Rent Control Ordinance landlords are required to pay interest on the security deposit to tenants annually every December during tenancy. Payments may either be a cash payment or rent rebate. (*Berkeley Municipal Code section 13.76.070.*) If the December interest refund payment is not made by January 10<sup>th</sup>, the tenant may recover interest at the rate of 10%.

### Reduced Service

Please make note of the following dates the BHA office will be closed or operating on a reduced service schedule:

#### Closed

- Monday – November 11<sup>th</sup> – Veterans Day
- Wed – Fri, Nov 27-29<sup>th</sup> – Thanksgiving Holiday

#### Reduced Service

- Mon – Thurs, Nov 18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Office open 8:15 a.m. – 12:00 noon ONLY

In addition, please be aware that BHA staff will be furloughed beginning Monday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> through Tuesday, December 31<sup>st</sup>.