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Everyone living in the 50 states and the five U.S. territories of Puerto Rico, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands is required by law to be counted in the 2020 Census.

The first census began a year after George Washington took office and was managed by then-Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson.

Most importantly, from the framers' perspective, census data is used to determine congressional representation in individual states. It is also used to determine how billions of dollars in federal funds are distributed to states and local communities. These projects include critical public services and infrastructure like health clinics, schools, roads and emergency services.

The process applicants must undertake to be hired for one of the positions might take as long as two months according to Census Bureau Associate Director of Field Operations Tim Olson.

"We need people to apply now so they can be considered for part-time census taker positions next spring," said Olson. "Recent high school graduates, veterans, retirees, military spouses,

seasonal workers and applicants who are bilingual are highly encouraged to apply. It's important we hire people in every community in order to have a complete and accurate census."

The Census Bureau has also just released a series of public service announcements designed to inform the public of the process behind the count. The PSAs let people know that there may already be census workers in their neighborhoods to check addresses, distribute or pick up surveys or conduct quality checks related to the survey.

These PSAs also point out some noticeable changes to the 2020 Census, including an option to fill out the census form digitally and clarification of opposite-sex or same-sex spouse of partner.

If someone does visit a home seeking information, residents are within their rights to request to see their I.D. badge, which should have a picture of the worker, a U.S. Department of Commerce watermark and an expiration date. If one still has questions about an individual's identity, they can contact the Regional Census Center to speak with a Census Bureau representative.

Census takers who verify addresses are called address canvassers. These workers

help ensure an accurate and complete count by verifying addresses and noting where houses, apartments, shelters and other residences are located. Census takers will attempt to knock on every door in the neighborhood they are canvassing, sometimes returning on multiple occasions to obtain the necessary information.

The importance of accurate data gathering is highlighted in all of the information distributed by the Census Bureau. The data is used to assist municipal leaders with decision making related to education, infrastructure.

The 2020 Census officially starts counting people in January 2020 in remote Toksook Bay, Alaska. Most households in the nation will receive invitations in the mail to respond (online, by phone or by mail) in March 2020. The Census Bureau will begin advertising nationwide in January 2020 to increase awareness about the importance and benefits of participating in the census.

To be eligible for a 2020 Census job, you must:

- Be at least 18 years old.
- Have a valid Social Security number.
- Be a U.S. citizen.
- Have a valid email address.
- Complete an applica-

tion and answer assessment questions. (Some assessment questions are available in Spanish. However, an English proficiency test may also be required.)

• Be registered with the Selective Service System or have a qualifying exemption, if you are a male born after

Dec. 31, 1959.

• Pass a census-performed criminal background check and a review of criminal records, including fingerprinting.

• Commit to completing training.

• Be available to work flexible hours, which can include

days, evenings, and/or weekends.

The hourly pay for census jobs varies depending on responsibilities and location. The pay structure, application process and further information related to the 2020 Census are available at 2020census.gov.

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BEARS from page 1A

(ODFW) to take the bear away, but that wasn't the only incident in Dunes City. This month, an attempted break-in occurred on Chittum Loop.

"The bear was trying to get into the back through the sliding glass door," said Mills. "He was on his back legs, towering over this man. And I've got to tell you, this man was not little. The bear was banging on the glass, trying to get it to give."

The man made some noise and the bear eventually took off.

Then there are the incidents with the trees.

Mills read from an email from a resident near Ford Way: "Yesterday morning, a good size bear started climbing a tree that was about 20 feet from me as I stood in the doorway on my deck. We just looked at each other for a while, and he decided to jump down and ambled toward the lake. I would guess he was two

years old."

That resident had a neighbor who saw a bear walking up their driveway and climbing up an apple tree on their property.

"[Dunes City Planning Secretary Rapunzel Oblerholtzer] lost an apple tree to a bear this year," Mills said. "It broke the tree down so it could reach everything. That's what they do. They're breaking them so it falls to the ground so they can eat the apples."

And then there was Mills' own breakfast incident on Friday morning.

"I'm having breakfast and looking across the lake where someone is building a new house on Jensen lane, and all of a sudden what I thought was a wastepaper bin got up and moved," Mills recalled. "I grabbed the binoculars and sure enough, there was a bear. ... "It's a tough year for bears here in Dunes City."

The culprit for the recent spate of bear sightings appears to be a lack of berries

on the bushes. Mills spoke with representatives at multiple ODFW offices, who told her the berry crop ended early this year. The bears didn't have enough time to get fattened up, so now they're turning to additional food sources.

"They're desperately looking for other food," Mills said. "A lot of us have apple trees and pear trees and yummy stuff growing in their yard. And then when they get to a neighborhood where trash goes out at night instead of the morning, they just help themselves to the buffet."

It is strongly recommended that residents ensure they have no bear-attracting food sources in their yards. All the apples, pears and pomegranates should be harvested from the trees, and pet food should not be left out in the garage or on a porch.

"And please, do not put your garbage out until the morning of pickup," Mills said.

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Generally, black bears are less aggressive than grizzlies and don't go out of their way to attack humans; however, like any wild animal, they will defend themselves if threatened, and bear encounters should be taken seriously.

Many of the conflicts that do occur between humans and bears are driven by human activities. For bears, residential areas make great fast food joints. Why search for berries in the woods when there's a buffet to be had in someone's garbage bin?

Seeing a bear is a neat

experience, but they're not critters you want to attract to your yard as regular visitors. So, to minimize conflicts with our furry neighbors, keep trash and other food sources secure. Bear this in mind, and you'll be doing everyone a favor.



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