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Coming to a Neighborhood Near You: Census Workers

If you haven't filled out the Census yet, here's some incentive for you: It's the best way to keep a Census Enumerator from your doorstep next week.

After a three-month delay due to COVID-19, more than 2,000 Census workers will hit Lehigh Valley areas streets beginning August 11 to track down anyone who has yet to fill out the 10-question survey that's done once every decade. They'll be knocking and if you don't answer, they may even knock on your neighbor's door to find you.

It's all part of getting an accurate count by October 31. Getting fully counted is key for the Lehigh Valley because it determines how much funding the region gets for things like education, roads, healthcare and more. It also determines how much Congressional representation Pennsylvania has in Washington D.C.

"It's really important for people to respond because the count ends October 31," said Census Lehigh County Partnership Specialist Erin Yasenachak. "A George Washington University study estimates that for every person who doesn't get counted, that area loses \$2,093 in funding."

So, anyone who wants to avoid that knock at the door can respond now by completing and mailing back the paper questionnaire they received, by responding online at 2020census.gov, or by phone at 844-330-2020.

Post cards will soon arrive in the mail let people know the neighborhood campaign is about to begin.

Census enumerators have been trained in social distancing. They're required to wear masks, and carry a photo identification with a Census Bureau water mark on it. To this point, the Census has relied on people self-responding. So far, about 73% of the region has responded, but that means Census workers have a big job ahead.

From August 11 to October 31, they'll be canvassing neighborhoods. From there, Census workers will tabulate what they've collected, and send the final totals to the President by April 30, 2021 – four months later than planned. That will start the process of redistricting Congressional districts before the final numbers are released and used for the next decade to determine how federal funding is spent.