

count me in

NJ Green Teams and the 2020 U.S. Census



Posted on February 4, 2020 by Sustainable Jersey

In a little over a month, the U.S. Census will be in full swing. Homes across the country will begin receiving invitations to complete the 2020 Census either online, by phone or by mail. The count is mandated by the U.S. Constitution and conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, a nonpartisan government agency.

The Census determines how much federal funding New Jersey receives for a variety of programs, its congressional representation and allows New Jersey to plan and manage public goods appropriately. A complete and accurate count will help ensure that the political power, health and safety of every community is maintained or enhanced in the upcoming decade. We only get one chance every ten years to get this right; it is important to make sure that New Jersey gets a fair share of the pie.

Sustainable Jersey is encouraging school and municipal green teams to step up to help improve New Jersey participation rates in the 2020 Census. Since green teams are already engaged in community outreach efforts and are a trusted voice in the community, green team members can have a significant impact on educating municipal and school officials, along with the general public on the importance of a complete count, the safe and easy methods to complete it and connect with those in hard-to-count communities to improve the count across the state.

New Jersey Green Teams and the 2020 U.S. Census

In Cape May County, the [Upper Township Green Team](#) is actively engaged in 2020 Census outreach. With Sustainable Jersey's guidance and links to U.S. Census Bureau resources, Upper Township Green Team Chairperson Ralph Cooper learned ways to get the green team involved. Under Cooper's guidance, the Upper Township Green Team became an official partner with the municipality's Complete Count Committee. A Complete Count Committee is a volunteer committee established by local governments, community organizations and others, to increase awareness and motivate residents to respond to the 2020 Census.

Through the strength of the green team network, Cooper facilitated having Lori S. Carlin, the partnership specialist for the 2020 Census for Atlantic and Cape May Counties, speak at the January 23, 2020 [Rotary Club of Ocean City-Upper Township](#) meeting. Cooper, who is also the co-chair of the [Atlantic-Cape May Counties Sustainable Jersey Regional Hub](#), shares the Census resource materials with all of the green team leaders through Basecamp, an online team communication platform. In addition, the Atlantic-Cape May Counties Sustainable Jersey Regional Hub will be highlighting the importance of the 2020 Census Complete Count as part of its March 2020 meeting on Resiliency and Emergency Planning.



Cooper explained, "Sharing accurate Census information is a vital part of ensuring that all towns receive adequate funding for disaster planning and mitigation. The green team is using our established communications network to spread the word on the importance of the Census. We shared Census links on our social media and sent a communication to our email list."

Schools participating in Sustainable Jersey for Schools are also involved in Census outreach. Egg Harbor Township High School, a certified school with Sustainable Jersey for Schools, was awarded first prize in a video contest sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Atlantic County. Students were invited to create videos and songs to encourage their families, friends, and fellow community members to participate in the 2020 U.S. Census. Watch the first place video by Egg Harbor Township High School students Nardeen Saleep and Timothy Medina: [Video Contest Winner](#).



2020 Census Webinar: Earn Points by Making Sure Your Community Counts - February 6

Municipalities, schools and school districts that are engaged in 2020 Census education and outreach efforts can also earn Sustainable Jersey and Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification points. The details are included in the Sustainable Jersey [2020 Census Flyer](#). Community members are invited to register and participate in the upcoming Sustainable Jersey webinar that is hosted in partnership with the [Advocates for Children of New Jersey \(ACNJ\)](#). ACNJ is coordinating the statewide New Jersey Counts nonprofit coalition. Webinar participants will hear more about the 2020 Census, the various resources and tools available, how to achieve certification points and the equitable distribution of federal funding and political representation for the next decade.

When: Thursday, February 6, 2020 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Register: <http://bit.ly/SJCensusWebinar>

The Role of Municipal Green Teams in the Census

Sustainable Jersey municipal green teams are encouraged to work with a Complete Count Committee. Search Complete Count Committees in your area, using the [Interactive Map](#). If your town does not have a Complete Count Committee, green teams can still access Census Bureau outreach resources available online to educate the community about completing the 2020 Census. Resources include:

- Become a Census Partner: <https://www.census.gov/partners/join.html>
- Advocates for Children of New Jersey Census Toolkit: <http://bit.ly/ACNJCensusToolkit>
- Interactive Census Bureau Complete Count Committee Map: <http://bit.ly/CensusBureauCCCMa>
- Request a Census Speaker: new.york.rcc.partnership@census.gov

The Role of Schools and Green Teams in the Census

As a teacher, principal, superintendent, school board member and education advocate, Sustainable Jersey for Schools participants can help contribute to a complete count by sending information to students' homes that explains how and why to complete the 2020 Census and the importance of counting all children, especially those under age five or those living in complex households. Complex households are those that include large extended families, multiple families, children whose parents are not living in the home, and children who do not live in the home all of the time. Resources include:

- Statistics in Schools U.S. Census Bureau Website: <https://www.census.gov/schools/>

WHY CENSUS DATA MATTERS

Nearly \$23 billion in federal funding for New Jersey depends on Census counts, including support for:

- **EDUCATION:** School programs and services such as special education, free and reduced lunch, class size reduction, classroom technology, after-school programs, Head Start and more.
- **INFRASTRUCTURE AND HEALTH CARE:** Medicaid, SNAP, Transportation Planning, Environmental Programs and more.
- **POLITICAL REPRESENTATION:** Census data defines congressional and state legislative districts, voting precincts, and the number of seats each state gets in the House of Representatives. As a result, New Jersey has two fewer representatives in Congress and two fewer electoral votes than in 1990.

- Become a U.S. Census Bureau Statistics in Schools Partner: <http://bit.ly/2020CensusSISPartner>
- Statistics in Schools Partner Toolkit: <http://bit.ly/2020CensusSISPartnerToolkit>
- Resources for Counting Young Children: <https://acnj.org/census2020nj/>
- Classroom Activities by Subject Area: <https://www.census.gov/schools/>
- Classroom Activities by Grade Level: <http://bit.ly/2020CensusSISResources>

It is up to all organizations and individuals to get involved and make our voices heard. An accurate and complete 2020 Census is the first step to ensure that everyone has good roads, schools and representation now and in the future.

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