

OPSEC / Identity Protection during the upcoming census

With the upcoming CENSUS to begin shortly we can expect every conceivable type of scam possible to get your identity and your money.

The first phase of the 2010 U.S. Census is under way and US Census Bureau (USCB) workers have begun verifying the addresses of households across the country.

Eventually, more than 140,000 U.S. Census workers will count every person in the United States and will gather information about every person living at each address including name, age, gender, race, and other relevant data.

With that thought in mind here are some very basic but good bits of info to remember and pass along to everybody you know:

Be Cautious About Giving Info for the US Census. Think before you respond and use common sense.

Be cooperative, but cautious, so as not to become a victim of fraud or identity theft.

So how do you tell the difference between a U.S. Census worker and a con artist? **If a U.S. Census worker knocks on your door, they will have a badge, a handheld device, a Census Bureau canvas bag, and a confidentiality notice.**

- **DO - Ask to see their identification and their badge** before answering any questions. However, you should never invite anyone you don't know into your home. An invite inside your home could be used to evaluate your home for valuables for a future burglary.
- Census workers are currently only knocking on doors to "verify address information".
- **Do not** - give your Social Security number. The Census Bureau will not ask for Social Security, bank account, or credit card numbers, nor will employees solicit donations. Any one asking for that information is NOT with the Census Bureau.
- **DO NOT** - give credit card or banking information to anyone, such information is not needed by the USCB.
- **DO NOT** - answer anything about your financial situation. The USCB should only ask for basic financial information, such as a salary range.
- **REMEMBER: NO MATTER WHAT THEY ASK, YOU REALLY ONLY NEED TO TELL THEM HOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE AT YOUR ADDRESS.**
- **DO NOT** - respond to inquiries from anyone associated with ACORN. THE CENSUS BUREAU HAS DECIDED NOT TO WORK WITH ACORN ON GATHERING THIS INFORMATION. No Acorn worker should approach you saying he/she is with the Census Bureau.
- **DO NOT** - respond to emails from that claim to be from the USCB. Eventually, Census workers may contact you by telephone, mail, or in person at home. However, the **USCB WILL NOT** contact you by Email, so be on the lookout for Email scams impersonating the Census.
- **DO NOT** - open internet links that claim to be from the USCB. **Never** click on a link or open any attachments in an Email that are supposedly from the U.S. Census Bureau.
- **DO NOT** - allow and advise your children about never engaging a USCB canvasser in discussions. Children, even teenagers do not look at the same concerns or potential threats as adults and are easily manipulated. USCB personnel should not engage anyone but the adult in the home. **Remember**, the information you provide will be available to the person collecting it but also to the general public for all intentional purposes. With the downturn in the economy there will be those out there that are trying to make the fast buck whether it be by burglarizing your home an selling contents at a pawn shop or stealing your identity and stealing your life savings. So **use caution** and **DO NOT** hesitate to contact the local Police Department or the USCB before you cooperate with these people if you have concerns.