



# NeighborImpact

Critical Needs. Diverse Services. Empowering Change.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** April 2, 2007

**Contact:** Steve Murray  
**Agency:** NeighborImpact  
**Telephone:** 548-2380 x108  
**Fax:** 923-2527  
**Email:** [stevem@neighborimpact.org](mailto:stevem@neighborimpact.org)  
**Website:** [www.neighborimpact.org](http://www.neighborimpact.org)

## **Advance America Sponsors Food Drive in April**

**Who:** Advance America – Westside Bend Location

**What:** Advance America will hold a community food drive during two weeks in April. The public is invited to drop non perishable food items at their Westside location. All collected food items will be donated to the NeighborImpact Food Bank for distribution to low income residents of Central Oregon through a network of local social service agencies.

**When:** April 9 – April 23; Office open M, T, Th. & F from 10:30-6PM and Sat from 10-1PM

**Where:** 1288 SW Simpson, Suite J in Bend

**Why:** Many community food drives can begin to make a dent in the shortages resulting from cut Federal Emergency Shelter and Food Funds for local social service agencies. Food Program Specialist, Steve Murray, offers the following stats as a brief profile of hunger in Central Oregon that is growing alongside development:

- In Central Oregon, from 2000-05, the number of people eating from food boxes increased by 41 percent
- Each month, over 6,000 meals are served at emergency meal sites
- Over 40 percent of the people who access meals from emergency food boxes in are under 18 years of age
- Each month, 1,900 emergency food boxes are distributed in the tri-county area, providing for 6,500 people
- Central Oregon families face high housing costs as well as rising costs for health care. Hence, 45 percent of families who regularly receive food boxes have at least one member of the household working.

Additionally, this past winter student-volunteers from OSU's Families in Poverty Class interviewed visitors at various hot meal sites in Bend, Redmond and Madras. The students found qualitative data about the individuals receiving food at the sites as well. Their interviews suggested that many were not there simply for a 'free meal'. On the contrary, several meal site visitors indicated that the meal was a strategic way to save money, as a financial asset, to offset other costs such as those for rent, transportation, or utilities.

Summary: Advance America on the Westside in Bend is organizing a food drive for NeighborImpact. A collection container will be available for the public to drop non-perishable food items off at 1288 SW Simpson, Suite J during business hours between April 9 and April 23. All food items will benefit Central Oregon residents, and be distributed through a network of social service agencies.

History/Mission: NeighborImpact seeks to change the course of each family's future by giving them the tools they need to succeed. NeighborImpact's tool box includes Head Start, weatherization, home repair, energy and rent assistance, financial skills building, savings programs, assisting parents to find child care, tutoring homeless children, providing emergency and transitional housing to homeless families, home buyer education and feeding the hungry.

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