

SUN MESSENGER

2010

FOR COMMUNITY NEWS ALL DAY, EVERY DAY

CLEVELAND.COM/SUN

1-28-10

SE offers mortgage warning

By Jeff Piorkowski
jpiorkowski@sunnews.com

SOUTH EUCLID — Housing Manager Sally Martin wants everyone who may be in danger of having their house foreclosed upon, and who has an

See **WARNING, A6**

WARNING

From A1

adjustable rate mortgage, to be proactive.

"In 2010, a lot of adjustable rate mortgages are going to be re-set," Martin said, meaning interest rates will be adjusted.

Last fall, the city sent letters to 750 homeowners with adjustable rate mortgages and who could be in danger of foreclosure this year.

The letters, which urged that homeowners take the proper steps to save their homes, were sent after the city received information on housing projections from NEO CANDO —the Northeast Ohio Community and Neighborhood Data for Organizing, a research institute housed at Case Western Reserve University. That information told of homeowners in possible danger of foreclosure.

"We want people to know that ESOP (Empowering and Strengthening Ohio's People) is available at City Hall (1349 S. Green Road) every Monday," Martin said.

ESOP is a non-profit agency that works with homeowners to help them keep their houses.

To meet with an ESOP representative at city hall, one must first make an appointment by calling (216) 361-0718.

"ESOP is very good. They have a near 80-percent success rate in saving homes from foreclosure.

"People should hurry to get help, they shouldn't wait," Martin said. "The message is that you don't have to wait to be foreclosed to get help. The sooner the better."

Martin also said if people do get a letter of foreclosure, they should not immediately panic and make plans to move out.

After seeking help from ESOP, she said, homeowners, and renters of a foreclosed home, will see the process takes a while to develop. During the time, Martin stressed, there are ways to save one's home.

"If owners try to work something out, they can often succeed," Martin said. "Banks aren't in a hurry to foreclose when you consider that the average cost for them to foreclose is \$30,000, and it takes \$3,000 just for them to get a home to a sheriff's sale.

"Now, more than ever, there are protections for people facing foreclosure."