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Oakland Tribune, The (CA)

Oakland Library asks patrons to update records

December 7, 2009

Section: My Town

Cassie Harwood Oakland Tribune

The Oakland Public Library is in the process of updating its records and starting Friday, patrons are asked to visit any branch library to update or confirm account information and to opt for phone or e-mail notifications about the availability of on-hold items and materials nearing due dates. After March 1, any of the libraries' 215,000 cardholders who haven't verified their cards in person will lose access to online library services such as database searches, along with Internet access at the libraries. Those who haven't used their cards since Nov. 1, 2006, must get new cards around the March deadline to avoid being purged from library records.

"It's a kind of long overdue housecleaning," said Tom Downs, community relations assistant for Oakland libraries. "We have a lot of people who are registered who haven't been in the library for three or four years or more, and it's just a lot of clutter having that many people registered who many not even live in Oakland anymore."

Account re-registration begins Friday, after which anyone checking out books will be asked to update their contact information in the database. Re-registration requires a person's photo ID with a current address, or a bill or postmarked letter with current information. The update may cause a somewhat slower checkout process, but a statement issued by the library system said it ultimately will lead to expanded library services.

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