

NACo National Association of Counties

CountyNews

The Voice of America's Counties

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES ■ WASHINGTON, D.C.

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Congress votes to reallocate D-Block

NACo scored a major victory in Congress when members voted to include reallocation of the D-Block spectrum in the payroll tax package signed by the president Feb. 22.

The measure will also provide \$7 billion for the public safety network; will not require the proposed give-back of 700 megahertz (MHz) narrowband spectrum used for voice; will require the reallocation of the T-Band spectrum (470

See D-BLOCK 2012 page 9

QuickTakes

Top 5 States for Making a Living

Factors: Average state wages, unemployment rate, tax rate and cost of living

- 1 • Illinois
- 2 • Washington
- 3 • Texas
- 4 • Virginia
- 5 • Delaware

Source: MoneyRates.com, 2011



Photo courtesy of Broward County, Fla.

Miami Dolphins players Nate Garner (l) and Marlon Moore (r) read aloud to After School@Your Library students at the Riverland Branch Library in Broward County, Fla. Turn to Model Counties on page 12 for the whole story.

FY13 budget request outlines future spending

By NACo LEGISLATIVE STAFF

President Barack Obama's FY13 budget, submitted Feb. 13, continues the general trend of decreases in federal assistance.

Proposed increases, in general, are small while cuts in spending can be significant in some areas. In addition, the president's budget proposes dramatic reorganization of funding streams for Homeland Security programs.

Following is a more detailed report on the president's proposed FY13 spending for programs benefiting communities.

Agriculture and Rural Affairs

President Obama's FY13 budget requests \$22.96 billion in discretionary funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture

See BUDGET page 8

Economic recovery tops agenda at NACo Legislative Conference

By JIM PHILLIPS
MEDIA RELATIONS MANAGER

Jobs and the role of county governments in the economic recovery will be the primary focus for more than 2,000 elected and appointed county officials attending NACo's 2012 Legislative Conference, March 3-7, in Washington, D.C.

During the five-day conference, county officials will hear from national leaders, consider policy resolutions on federal issues affecting local government, and meet with administration officials and members of Congress to deliver the county government message.

Confirmed featured guest speakers include Transportation Secretary Ray H. LaHood, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, Sen. Dick



Durbin (D-Ill.), Sen. Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), and political commentators Tucker Carlson and Eleanor Clift. In addition, Ambassador Ron Kirk, the U.S. trade representative, will address NACo's International Economic Development Task Force.

Despite some hopeful signs of

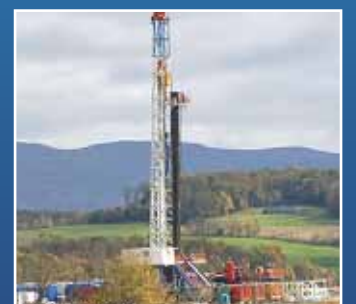
national economic recovery, NACo President Lenny Eliason said counties are continuing to struggle with their revenues and budgets.

"Counties are feeling the effects of cuts in federal assistance," said Eliason, commissioner, Athens County, Ohio. "Combined with reduced state funding and lower local revenue, these cuts are forcing counties to reduce staff and struggle to fund essential social safety net programs, health care and public safety services, and maintain our aging transportation and infrastructure systems.

"During this conference, we will deliver the message to the administration and Congress that county officials seek solutions that

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CountyNews Features

NACo urges Senate to support rural development

By **ERIK JOHNSTON**
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

In testimony on behalf of NACo, Mathias McCauley, director of regional planning and community development for the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments, urged the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry to prioritize rural development programs and funding in the 2012 Farm Bill.

Congress is in the process of considering reauthorization of the farm bill, which expires on Sept. 30. Election-year politics may make it difficult to finish the bill in both chambers of Congress, but the Senate Agriculture Committee is working in a bipartisan manner to pass a bill by late spring.

The hearing focused on "Energy and Economic Growth in Rural America" and was the first of several hearings in which the committee will hear from key stakeholders on specific topics. Secretary of Agriculture

Tom Vilsack was the lead witness at the Feb. 15 event and emphasized the administration's strong commitment to rural development and renewable energy efforts. McCauley testified on behalf of the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), emphasizing the broad consensus for focusing on programs that help rural communities enhance infrastructure and create rural jobs.

The farm bill authorizes a broad range of programs that assist counties in the development of rural water-wastewater infrastructure, community facilities, broadband expansion, nutrition assistance, renewable energy, local and regional food systems, support for new farmers and business development initiatives. Reauthorizing these important county-supported programs and placing a particular emphasis within this reauthorization on enhanced and flexible rural development resources is a key legislative priority for NACo.

McCauley emphasized in his

testimony that especially important in the reauthorization are flexible rural development programs that focus limited federal resources on county and regional priorities.

"Rural Development is a vital tool for regional development organizations and our local government and community partners as we strive

to position our communities for the future," he told the committee, chaired by Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.). "That is why NACo and NADO are joined by a broad base of 32 other national organizations in advocating for USDA Rural Development through the Campaign for a Renewed Rural Development."

Commentary

Ask Your Senators to Support the Marketplace Fairness Act

Last November, the senior senator from my home state of Illinois, Richard Durbin (D), along with Sens. Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.), Tim Johnson (D-S.D.), John Boozman (R-Ark.), Jack Reed (D-R.I.), Roy Blunt (R-Mo.), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.), Bob Corker (R-Tenn.) and Mark Pryor (D-Ark.) introduced S. 1832 — the Marketplace Fairness Act. This bill allows local retailers to compete on a fair basis with online retailers and does not establish or create any new taxes.

I urge my county colleagues across the country to weigh in now with their Senators and ask them to co-sponsor this bipartisan measure.

NACo has long been on record advocating that Internet vendors charge and collect state and local taxes already due on their remote sales, emphasizing that the same taxation rules and regulations should apply to retailers whether they conduct business online or in a physical setting.

In 1992, the United States Supreme Court, in *Quill Corp. v. North Dakota*, held that businesses must have a physical presence in a state in order for them to be required to collect sales taxes. Today, local retailers are at a competitive disadvantage, as many online retailers do not collect sales tax on products sold via the Internet using the *Quill* rationale. It is estimated that state and local governments will lose approximately \$23 billion in uncollected sales and use tax revenue in 2012 alone.

Many of our counties continue to struggle to provide vital public services as the result of our recent economic downturn; it is imperative that state and local governments have the tools necessary to collect taxes that they are currently owed today. This bill provides the means

necessary for state and local governments to collect current taxes they are due.

The drafters of this legislation provide states with the authority to enforce their own tax laws through the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement (SSUTA), which allows any state that is a member of the SSUTA to require remote retailers to collect state and local sales and use taxes. Alternatively, states that are not SSUTA members may require remote retailers to collect state and local sales and use taxes if they adopt minimum simplification requirements.

The authors of this proposal demonstrate their understanding and the importance of small businesses on our economy. This initiative would prohibit states from requiring small online companies that generate less than \$500,000 in annual online sales to collect local taxes under this proposal.

Once again, I urge my county colleagues to contact their Senators on both sides of the aisle to urge their sponsorship of S.1832. I appreciate your consideration of this proposal and look forward to discussing S.1832 further at NACo's Legislative Conference.



Toni Preckwinkle
Cook County, Ill. Board President

During his testimony, McCauley cited three key areas related to USDA Rural Development and the future of rural counties and regions:

- The mission area of USDA Rural Development is critical to the overall competitiveness of rural counties and regions as communities work to foster job growth, regional innovation and economic prosperity

- With rural regions facing increasingly global competition and opportunities, it is necessary to ensure USDA Rural Development has the tools, resources and flexibility to assist rural communities and regions with cutting-edge, asset-based regional innovation strategies and investments, and

- USDA Rural Development applications, policies and reporting requirements should be streamlined and simplified so they are more accessible to rural people, businesses and communities, and assist in meeting the emerging needs and opportunities of rural regions and communities.

To read the full testimony, visit www.naco.org/newsroom/latest.

2011 County Courthouse Award Applications Available

By **ERIK JOHNSTON**
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

NACo is now accepting applications for the 2012 County Courthouse Awards. Established in 2001, the awards are sponsored by Siemens and recognize individual elected county officials from NACo-member counties who demonstrate innovative and effective leadership to improve the quality of life of residents. One County Courthouse Award is presented each year in three categories: rural, suburban and urban.

The awards program provides recognition for innovative county leaders and helps publicize their efforts so that others can build upon the good governance practices they have initiated in their communities.

"Good governance is very important as we attempt to meet the public safety, economic, environmental and technological challenges facing America's counties," said NACo President Lenny Eliason. "I encourage NACo members to participate and recognize an innovative and effective county elected official from their community or state. NACo simplified the application process this year so that it is easier for more county officials to apply through an online application."

Award winners receive an engraved hand-crafted plaque that they can display in their county, recognition at the 2012 NACo Annual Conference in Allegheny County (Pittsburgh), Pa. and a \$5,000 college scholarship to present to a graduating high school senior.

Applications and information about the 2012 NACo County Courthouse Awards are now available on the NACo website at www.naco.org/courthouseawards.

Applications must be received online by April 27 to be considered. If you have questions, please contact NACo associate legislative directors Dalen Harris or Erik Johnston at 202.393.6226 or by email at dharris@naco.org or ejohnston@naco.org.



When you see the "web" icon in a story, there's more information available in the online edition of County News at www.naco.org/countynews. Check it out!

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'Fracking' for shale gas spurs new state, local laws

By CHARLES TAYLOR
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Lycoming County, Pa. officials' first inkling that there was "something big beneath our feet" — Marcellus Shale gas — came indirectly in spring 2008, said Mark Murawski, a county planner.

The county register and recorder's office began seeing an increase in gas companies recording deeds as they entered into lease agreements with landowners. "The register and recorder's office contacted our commissioners' office and said, 'What's going on?'" Murawski recalled recently.

"Once we understood the magnitude of Marcellus and its opportunity, we realized that we had something big that we were going to have to deal with as county government."

The Marcellus Shale has been called the "Saudi Arabia of natural gas," much of it underlying Pennsylvania. It's the largest shale gas formation in the U.S. with the potential to meet the nation's demand for natural gas for the next three to 25 years.

Earlier this month, Pennsylvania became the first state in the Marcellus region — extending from the southern tier of New York to West Virginia — to enact a shale gas impact fee on "unconventional gas wells." Gov. Tom Corbett (R) signed Act 13, the Marcellus Shale Act, into law Feb. 14. It allows for a local impact fee on gas wells, imposes significant new environmental regulations on the industry, improves public safety standards, and clarifies how local governments may use zoning and land use regulations to regulate drilling operations.



Photo courtesy of the Penn State Extension Marcellus Center

This shale gas well in Lycoming County is one of thousands dotting the landscape in areas of Pennsylvania above the vast Marcellus Shale.

"One of the things that the impact fee did try to address is there is a lot of activity going on at the local level, a lot of need for local governments to respond," said Tim Kelsey, a Penn State University professor of agricultural economics. "They've essentially not had new revenue to help cover these costs."

Unlike many states, Pennsylvania does not have a tax on the extraction of petroleum products and minerals, which is the mechanism several states use to funnel money back to localities to deal with impacts.

Pennsylvania counties have 60 days from the law's enactment to adopt an impact fee ordinance. County and municipal governments receiving funds may use them for a variety of purposes, including roadways, bridges and public infrastructure; emergency preparedness

and public safety; environmental and recreation programs, including conservation districts, open space and agricultural preservation; preservation and reclamation of water supplies; delivery of social and judicial services; and career and technology centers for training related to the oil and gas industry.

The County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania supported the legislation, said Doug Hill, executive director. To be

Legislative Conference workshop addresses fracking

A workshop, Hydraulic Fracturing: Balancing Energy Independence vs. Environmental Concerns, March 6 during NACo's Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C., will explore the issues associated with shale gas production and hydraulic fracturing.

A Lycoming County commissioner and representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, America's Natural Gas Alliance and the Environmental Defense Fund are scheduled to speak.

eligible to impose the fee, counties must have at least one unconventional well — one that uses fracking; currently about 35 of the state's 67 counties do, he said.

"The host county will receive a fair amount of funding, and a piece of it goes to municipalities in a host county," Hill said of counties that adopt the fee. "And then a portion goes to the state to fund a variety of specific project areas, and then a portion of the state money actually comes back to all counties."

Hill said Bradford and Tioga counties have the most wells in the state — about 1,000 wells each. Jefferson County has three shale gas wells that are producing, according to Commissioner Jeff Pisarcik. The northwestern Pennsylvania county has a population of about 45,200; its largest borough is Punxsutawney,

of Groundhog's Day fame.

He thinks the legislation is good for counties, with some minor reservations. "I felt that even though I don't agree 100 percent with the language in this, it's the best that the state has offered to the counties and the municipalities," he said.

Exploration for and production of shale gas, trapped in rock formations thousands of feet underground, has taken off in recent years as a new method of extraction — hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking — became more cost effective as natural gas prices rose. Energy companies drill first vertically, then horizontally into shale formations. The trapped gas is released by fracturing the rock using a pressurized mix of water, sand and chemicals.

See **FRACKING** page 7



Letters to the Editor

Cuts in federal funding good for counties

Cuts in federal funding are good. It's time that counties quit nursing at the federal teat.

If the county has a need, tax the citizens of the county for it.

Why send tax money to Washington and then beg for some to use in a county? It makes no sense.

Steven Ward
Justice of the Peace
Union County, Ark.

Share your point of view ...

Please include a phone number with your letter. Mail, fax or email to:
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NACo Annual Conference site, one of the 'Best of the World'

NACo's 77th Annual Conference and Exposition will be held in Allegheny County (Pittsburgh), Pa. July 13. The conference is a great opportunity for county leaders and staff to learn, network and guide the association's direction. This year, it is also a great opportunity to experience a city named as one of the 20 "Best of the World" places to visit in 2012 by National Geographic Traveler.

During the last 30 years, Pittsburgh has undergone a tremendous economic and environmental transformation. The city is located at the confluence of three sparkling rivers and banked on all sides by green hills. It's home to leading technology, energy, medicine, finance, education and manufacturing organizations. Pittsburgh offers big-city amenities and boundless hospitality in an atmosphere that is small-town friendly. In fact, it has twice earned the title of America's Most Livable City.

Travelers arriving by plane will enjoy the first-class service and impeccable facilities of Pittsburgh International Airport. This award-winning facility is home to the Airmall, a unique selection of shops, services and restaurants — all at guaranteed street-level pricing. It has been voted the best overall shopping and concession experience by *World Airport Retail News*.

Heading into Downtown Pittsburgh through the Fort Pitt Tunnel, you will emerge to a spectacular view of the three rivers and a skyline spiked with architectural masterpieces. *The Huffington Post*



calls Pittsburgh one of the prettiest cities in the world.

The Annual Conference and Exposition will take place at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center — the world's first LEED-certified convention center. When it was completed in 2003, it was also the world's largest green building at nearly 1.5 million square feet.

The convention center is located on a former brownfield site, further reflecting the commitment to environmental transformation and responsibility that is a hallmark of Southwestern Pennsylvania. The facility features a stunning, sweeping roof, walls of windows, and expansive terraces and balconies that open to incredible river views and cityscapes. A brand new riverfront park directly connects the building to miles of trails that line the riverfronts.

The convention center lies at the hub of Downtown Pittsburgh's activity. Located along the Allegheny River, it is ideally situated between the bustling Strip District, home to outdoor markets, clubs, restaurants and unique shops, and the thriving

Cultural District, which offers performances by the world-class Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh Ballet Theater, Pittsburgh Opera and Broadway Series. The 14-block area dazzles with urban energy and charm, and its nine theaters offer 2,300 performances each year.

A wide variety of stores are located within easy walking distance of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center and downtown hotels, allowing plenty of opportunities to take advantage of the fact that there is no sales tax on clothing, shoes or necessities in Pennsylvania.

From downtown and the convention center, a short walk across the beautiful Roberto Clemente, Andy Warhol or Rachel Carson suspension bridges will take you to the North Shore, where you may enjoy a number of dining options and other attractions, including The Andy Warhol Museum, the most comprehensive single-artist museum in the world. Kayaks are available for rent on the North Shore waterfront so you can explore the city from the three rivers.

The North Shore is also the site of PNC Park, a 38,000-seat classic baseball stadium with dramatic views of Pittsburgh's skyline, as well as Heinz Field, home of the Pittsburgh Steelers and University of Pittsburgh Panthers.

Pittsburgh is one of America's safest cities, and its downtown restaurants, theaters and shops are easily accessed on foot or on the "T," an underground light-rail system that is free within the downtown and North Shore areas.

Visitors may experience the

city's breathtaking skyline on board the Gateway Clipper Fleet. Additional spectacular views can be had from one of the fine restaurants overlooking the city at the top of Mt. Washington, along the Monongahela waterfront at Station Square, a restored 19th century railroad station, or from Market Square, downtown's historic public piazza.

For more on Pittsburgh, check out VisitPittsburgh's website at www.visitpittsburgh.com.

Developing a Social Media Policy That's Right for Your County

By JIM PHILIPPS
MEDIA RELATIONS MANAGER

This is part 1 of a two-part series on developing a social media policy.

Ready or not, your county is using social media tools every day. County employees, department heads and elected officials are communicating with one another, the public, and friends and family outside of county government via Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Linked-In, Scribd, Flickr, ShareSlide and more.

Equally important and true: the people served by your county government are using social media as well. As a result, counties can no longer afford to avoid social

media platforms as effective communications tools. But like almost everything else in county government, policies, procedures and best practices need to be in place to increase the odds for success.

At the heart of effective county government is effective communication. Without it, or at least a good faith attempt at it, disservice or even failure is a more likely outcome.

Many counties across the country have implemented guidelines and policies to manage their social media presence. Recently, NACo and the National Association of County Information Officers (NACIO), a NACo-affiliate organization, presented a members-only webinar entitled, "Developing a Social Media Policy That's Right

for Your County." It explored the issues counties should consider when developing a countywide social media policy.

A few years ago, Oakland County, Mich. wrestled with the same issues many counties are facing now in terms of use of social media tools and the forces within county government who believe it is best not to engage each other and the public via Facebook, Twitter and videos.

"Even though we were diving head first into social media, we were still getting pushback from people saying there's no way we are going to be able to control this," said Phil Bertolini, Oakland County's deputy

See **SOCIAL MEDIA** page 5

Profiles in Service



» Bob Cole

County Commissioner
Santa Rosa County, Fla.

Number of Years Active in NACo: 8

Years in public service: 10

Occupation: Master ASE automotive technician for 38 years

Education: Associates degree in pre-industrial education

The hardest thing I've ever done: serve as county commissioner during Hurricane Ivan.

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: Robert E. Lee, Henry Ford and Marilyn Monroe.

A dream I have is to: sail the Caribbean.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: worked at the local Tastee Freeze to earn and save money for my wedding to Sheila.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: ride the bull on a Tri Hull Sail Boat off Key West.

My favorite way to relax is: running Lionel trains with my grandkids.

I'm most proud of: 40 years of marriage to my wife Sheila, our four children and our nine grandkids.

I enjoy reading: toy train magazines.

My favorite meal is: my wife's country fried steak.

My pet peeve is: people that make comments anonymously.

My motto is: "Better to be judged by 12, than carried by 6."

My favorite movie is: *Tombstone*.

My favorite music is: Roy Orbison, American/Southern Rock.

My favorite president is: toss-up between Teddy Roosevelt, Ike and George W. Bush.

County parks seek patrons to bridge budget gaps

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

Individuals and corporations becoming “patrons of the parks” are helping some county greenspaces see a renaissance of sorts in the age of budget cuts.

The budget situation in El Paso County, Colo. got to the point where a lot of basic tasks such as replacing signs and repairing trails were not happening.

Community Services Director Tim Wolken said budget cuts from 2006–2009 left his department unable to tackle many of the capital improvement programs to which residents had become accustomed.

“It was necessary to push a lot of stuff down the road,” he said. “Planting beds, capital improvements, other repairs, just couldn’t get done.” Enter the Partners in the Parks program. Started in 2009, it has raised \$60,500 from private donors.

“We wanted to reach out to the corporate community to help,” Wolken said. “We’ve found that people who really appreciate the parks recognize the financial challenges we’re facing and are willing to step up.

“We recognize the donors in the parks where they’ve contributed, but

I get the feeling that doesn’t matter to them as much as the knowledge that they’ve helped,” he added.”

The campaign cleared nearly \$30,000 in 2011.

“We’re not quite back to our previous funding level, but we’re making some progress,” Wolken said.

As troubled as El Paso County’s situation seems, it is stable compared to another parks department forced to seek donations.

On Valentine’s Day 2011, San Mateo County, Calif.’s Parks Department entered an arranged marriage of sorts with Public Works. Losing its director highlighted the department’s place in the county hierarchy and set the stage for a new focus on fundraising. San Mateo is the only county in the San Francisco Bay area that doesn’t get any funding from tax revenue for its parks system’s \$8 million budget, about \$2 million of which comes from user fees.

Cecily Harris serves as the financial services manager for what remains of the parks department and works to secure public funding. She said there are similarities to a college student paying for tuition.

“They’re saying we love you and we hope for the best for you, but you’re on your own,” she said.

Harris is developing a page on the parks website to solicit donations online, nearby where the staff posts its

wish list for programs and improvements it would like to have funded. Donors can currently print donation forms and mail checks.

“We want to get to the point where someone sitting in one of our parks can use their smartphone to make their donation on the spot,” Harris said. “Once that’s working, we’ll start the full-court press.”

The San Mateo County Parks Foundation, in place since 1999, has raised more than \$10 million, with approximately \$900,000 coming in last year to contribute to maintenance costs.

“We do well for our size and the niche we’re in,” said Julia Bott, the foundation’s executive director. “The big problem is fighting the perception that people’s tax dollars already support the parks. Then, they underestimate the cost of maintaining the parks once we’ve purchased the land, and there is a lot that needs to be done to fight invasive species. It’s hard to get contributions for ongoing projects.”

The foundation has maintained a roster of nearly 2,500 families, grown from 300 initially, who donate annually, sometimes twice. The typical large individual gifts are approximately \$5,000 though a few have made six-figure donations. The next frontier for fundraising is to be bequeathed in a will, something Bott

said the foundation is just now able to realistically attempt.

“When (your organization) is younger than 10 years old, you lack a track record that gives people confidence you’ll be around for a long time,” she said. “People are feeling comfortable with us, and we hope that some of our park volunteers are keeping us in mind when they plan their estates.”

Her challenge, though, remains in nailing down how changing demographics will affect park use and donations and in keeping the parks relevant.

Online donations, like the system Harris is developing, don’t always show positive results immediately, though. Dane County, Wis. stopped mailing out fliers to solicit donations in 2011 in favor of a Web-based system and saw the typical annual donation volume drop to \$15,000 after hovering near \$20,000 for years.

“Our donations dipped because it was a whole new system for people to get used to, and it didn’t have the same giving functionality,” said Darren Marsh, the county’s parks director. “We also saved almost the difference in administrative and postage costs, so it balances out.”

He said people typically tacked on donations when paying for a permit, but haven’t quite gotten used to doing so on the website.

To the north, Sonoma County, Calif.’s success pulling off park events has fortified people’s confidence in the department, and Director Bert Whitaker hopes that will influence them to give more on a regular basis.

The Healdsburg Water Festival last July attracted more than 4,000 visitors and raised \$22,000 for a seasonal dam to be built on the Russian River to accommodate swimming.

“It was a pretty big deal to attract those kinds of numbers for a town of that size,” Whitaker said. “It helped strengthen our relationship with the town, but also set the stage for more fundraisers.”

A series of events at a lagoon that allowed dogs to swim attracted solid numbers, too, with close to 400 and 500 dogs showing up for the first two “dog swims.”

“These kinds of activities are creating stronger connections between our residents and their parks,” he said. “They’re demanding services, but they’re also willing to work to fund them and respect that we are telling them what we need to make the parks work.”

Sonoma County netted more than \$40,000 in general donations in 2011.

** For a look at San Mateo County’s parks wish list, go to the online edition of County News at www.naco.org/countynews.*

Staying current means implementing social media strategies

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county executive and CIO. “This was a problem for us. We had to sit down and develop a strategy on how we were going to deal with this. Are we going to manage each of the channels? Are we going to have policies and guidelines that will help us govern this longer term?” he said.

“The other problem we saw was if we were going to use social media as a business tool for county government, how can we then shut its access off to our employees? We were forced to sit down and develop a strategy.”

Bertolini said it is critical that counties manage their digital footprint.

“If you are not managing it, you certainly do not want someone else managing it on your behalf because every picture, everything you say and everything you post via social media lives forever,” he said. “Counties need to consider the risks and rewards of using social media and take control of the issue.”

Todd McGee, communications

director of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners, said counties in his state have taken a similar approach. They have relied on internal resources and created teams to develop social media policies. Typically, members of the policy-development team include representatives from the offices of the county manager, information technology, public information, emergency management and the county attorney’s office.

McGee, who is first vice president of NACIO, said a good social media policy should set guidelines for establishing a county social media site; managing and using the site, and archiving information in compliance with public records laws.

“One of the things to consider that probably got the most discussion here in North Carolina was: Should counties allow the public to comment?” McGee said. Platforms such as Facebook already have restrictions in place about what people can post, and counties can adopt even further restrictions.

For example, Henderson County, N.C. posts “Rules for Henderson, N.C. County Government Facebook Posting,” which list the types of public comments that the county would be inclined to remove from the page. Among them: unrelated comments to the topic, profanity, solicitations, advertisements, encouragement of illegal activities and discrimination.

“The other thing to remember when developing your policy — this has to be a fluid document,” McGee said. “The world of social media is changing every day. You have to stay abreast of what is going on in social media so you will be able to adapt your policy. You can’t just adopt a policy and stick it on the shelf.”

Fairfax County, Va. staff conducted extensive research when they began to develop their policy. They looked at other government, nonprofit and commercial policies. They paid particular attention to employee participation issues, according to Greg Licamele, the county’s director of communications, integration and engagement.

He said Fairfax County developed its comprehensive social media policy through its e-Government Steering Committee, chaired by the deputy county executive. The group includes representatives from the county attorney’s office, information technology, public affairs, libraries and human resources.

Once Fairfax County had an acceptable draft policy, it was shared with an outside focus group of PIOs and social media publishers who gave their feedback.

“About 25 people had the opportunity to give us their feedback,” Licamele said. “Did they think it was too onerous? Most said it was great.”

Licamele said his county’s policy has three sections: managing official social media accounts, employee access at work and employee participation at work or home. The policy includes guidelines concerning what to post, how to post, who to “follow” or “retweet,” security, metrics and promotion.

“Just as important as what to post, we tell them what not to post such as items in litigation, nonpublic

information, personnel information, and medical information in violation of HIPAA,” Licamele said.

While the Fairfax County policy has grown from three pages in 2007 to 12 pages today, it is a much more conversational policy than your typical county policy or procedural memorandum.

Fairfax County, a suburb of Washington, D.C. with more than 1 million residents, has 13 Facebook accounts, seven Twitter accounts, two Flickr accounts and one SlideShare account.

Part 2 will highlight some specific examples of how counties are managing their social media presence and the legal issues counties should consider.

The webinar recording and related materials are available at www.naco.org ► News Room ► Media Center ► Tools for County Officials.

** To check out results and analysis of a County News survey of counties’ social media policies, read this story at www.naco.org/countynews.*

Grants seek to reform counties' health problems

By CHARLES TAYLOR
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

San Diego County has seen a decrease in childhood obesity at a time when rates are rising in more than half of California's 58 counties, according to Nick Macchione, director of the county's Health & Human Services Agency — and deaths from heart disease and cancer are on the decline.

Macchione is hopeful that a \$3 million Community Transformation Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will help the county to further reduce the incidence of these and other chronic diseases, such as Type 2 diabetes, by enabling and promoting healthy lifestyles. The grant was awarded late last year, after the county had already seen progress in several health indicators.

Childhood obesity decreased 3.7 percent in the county from 2005 to 2010. The trend line for heart disease and cancer mortality between 2000 and 2009 also slopes downward. Macchione said those improvements are attributed to several efforts between 2001 and 2010, including the Childhood Obesity Initiative, which began in 2004, and to the county's low rate of tobacco usage, and improved treatment and prevention of heart disease.

San Diego County is one of 35 communities and states nationwide that received a Community Transformation Grant (CTG) to implement evidence- and practice-based programs to improve health and wellness. CDC also awarded 26 smaller capacity-building grants, seven of which also went to counties. Funded by the Affordable Care Act's Prevention and Public Health Fund, future grants are possible, but the prevention dollars are in jeopardy of being cut by Congress.

It's as if the grant was "custom built" for the county's existing "Live Well, San Diego!" initiative, a year-old, 10-year strategy to improve county residents' health and well being, Macchione said. Live Well focuses, in part, on building a better service delivery system; supporting positive healthy choices; and pursuing policy and environmental changes.

The county's Housing & Community Development (HCD) department is already integrating health concepts into its programs and activities, including the development of community gardens.

"We have funded everything

from building out sidewalks to working with the ag department and farmers to develop pathways to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to schools," Macchione said.

CTG grantees must use their funding, over five years, to address certain CDC-established priority areas such as tobacco-free living, active living and healthy eating, evidence-based quality clinical and other preventive services — in particular, prevention and control of high blood pressure and high cholesterol. The grants' goals also include addressing health disparities and developing a stronger evidence base for effective prevention programs.

San Diego's grant was the sec-

ond largest awarded to a county health department, behind Los Angeles County and ahead of Hennepin County. Amounts ranged from \$500,000 to \$10 million depending on population size and scope of the projects.

Like San Diego, Hennepin County has a head start, thanks to Minnesota's Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) — funding provided by the state for obesity and tobacco prevention that focused on environmental change.

"We're taking what there is, and then we are building on it," said Khatidja Dawood, who is in charge of health promotion and CTG-related activities in Henne-

pin County, in partnership with the cities of Minneapolis and Bloomington, hospitals, health plans and community organizations. "We are working with our partners and strengthening their ability to work in their jurisdictions."

"What we're focusing on through SHIP and now CTG is making environmental changes," she explained. "For example, in schools, instead of telling children: 'Be more active, eat well,' we are saying OK, let's change the environment so they can be more active and eat better."

Gail Dorfman, a Hennepin County commissioner, said one of the county health department's first-year goals under the grant is

to implement a policy that bans smoking in foster care homes, and the county is already providing smoking-cessation programs in public housing and some private multi-family housing communities.

"The notion is really to try to move — in the big picture — from care of the sick to prevention and wellness," she said, "and also to look at health of larger communities versus single-patient health."

**For a list of Community Transformation Grant awardees — both implementation and capacity-building grantees, see the online version of this story at www.naco.org/countynews.*

County ordinances look to curb panhandling

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

Panhandlers on the streets of some counties are finding themselves deluged with change they don't want.

Their cash cow is thinning after years of complaints about aggressive tactics, though the underlying free speech protection surrounding their trade gives it blanket protection. Johnston County, N.C. recently passed a standard anti-panhandling ordinance, with a few personalized touches.

Comissioner Cookie Pope said businesses reported customers expressing dismay at the number of panhandlers and often turned away from stores when they were nearby. Some panhandlers become more aggressive, she said, coming as far as to knock on car windows in parking lots.

"It got to the point where people weren't feeling safe being in certain places because they'd be accosted by panhandlers," she said.

Johnston County Attorney David Mills told the commission that though panhandling is protected speech, it can be regulated if such laws are narrowly tailored. They must provide for an alternative method, serve a governmental interest and be content-neutral — which means no discrimination can be made between fundraising for a group or an individual. The county dropped a provision that would have charged a fee to register for a permit.

The council passed an ordinance with common anti-panhandling provisions, including:

- a safe zone within 100 feet of a bank or cash machine, 20 feet of



a transit stop or taxi stand, 20 feet of any open business, or near a line for a business

- prohibits a panhandler from touching someone, blocking someone's path threatening them, or continuing to solicit them after they have declined
- prohibits a panhandler from being intoxicated or using illegal drugs, and
- prohibits panhandling between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m.

The ordinance also prohibits pandhandlers from making false claims, such as a specific use for the money or that the panhandler is a veteran.

It also establishes a permitting system similar to one in neighboring Wake County, administered through the sheriff's office. Johnston requires a yearly permit, Wake requires weekly renewals, which has drawn the ire of the American Civil Liberties Union. Wake's ordinance also prohibits pandhandlers from approaching cars to solicit.

"That's not to say our commissioners are not sympathetic," Pope said of Johnston County. "Hopefully it will protect panhandlers, by identifying them and getting them to come to sheriff's office and get an idea of what is acceptable."

A panhandler whose permit is

Drafting Panhandling Ordinances

Panhandling is considered protected free speech by the First Amendment, so outlawing it requires very precise and narrow regulations.

As a result, Marion County, Fla. has been stymied in its attempts to regulate it.

"We get a lot of calls from residents who complain about panhandlers, but they never specify what behavior offends them in a way that we can write an effective ordinance," said Marion County Attorney Matthew Minter.

Several features of proposed ordinances can lead to a measure not passing legal muster, including charging fees for permits.

Some features of effective anti-panhandling ordinances include:

- outlawing it in a zone around banks, businesses or lines to enter a business
- requiring panhandlers' claims to be valid, including veteran status, and
- protecting people from threats from panhandlers.

revoked loses it for two years.

In Nevada, pets have been accompanying panhandlers on Las Vegas' hot sidewalks, which led to a lot of calls to Clark County Commissioner Chris Giunchigliani's office. Average high temperatures soar to and past 100 degrees in June through August.

"I knew when tourists from places like Idaho were thinking to call the county while they're on vacation, it must really be upsetting them," she said.

Giunchigliani's first attempt to outlaw using animals to curry sympathy couldn't pass muster because it essentially outlawed panhandling, which is protected as free speech, so she reworked the ordinance to focus on the health of the animals.

In March, the Board of Commissioners will hear her new

ordinance that only allows animals on the sidewalks from 5 a.m. until noon, what she sees as a fair compromise, while also protecting the animals. Service animals will continue to be allowed at all times.

"That way the animals are out of the heat when it gets really intense, but it also doesn't restrict hotel guests from walking their dogs. We consulted the hotels, especially Caesar's which has the most pet-friendly policies, about how that would affect their patrons and they supported it."

In Florida, two counties recently passed ordinances to keep panhandlers away from cars. Commissioners in Pasco and Hillsborough counties near Tampa. banned any kind of solicitation from the right of way on any county or state roads, though Pasco lifts the restriction on Sundays to allow for fundraising groups.

Commentary

Cyber security: Locking down your computers a safety essential

By WILLIAM PELGRIN

MULTI-STATE INFORMATION AND
SHARING ANALYSIS CENTER

Many of our critical government services rely on the Internet and technology to function. While this inter-connectivity has many benefits — such as convenience and efficiency — there are risks associated with this digital environment. The cyber challenges facing us continue to escalate.

We only need to look at the headlines to understand that the risks are real and that local governments are vulnerable: so-called “hacktivist” groups targeting local police departments across the nation, disgruntled employees hacking into municipal networks, and public health records being stolen by cyber criminals are just a few recent cases targeting local governments.

Some specific examples of how your county’s computer system could be affected by a cyber security incident — whether because of improper cyber security controls, man-made or natural disasters, or malicious users wreaking havoc — include:

- your websites being disabled and unavailable to your citizens
- criminals breaking into your systems, and stealing personal and sensitive information about your employees or citizens
- a virus shutting down your network
- a laptop or mobile device being inadvertently lost, putting any data on that machine at risk for compromise, or
- a malicious user using your systems to attack other systems.

These and other information security incidents would certainly hamper your ability to provide services to citizens, may be costly to recover from and could result in a loss of public confidence.

Local governments have a responsibility to citizens and business partners to safeguard the information with which they are entrusted and to keep mission-critical operations functioning.

Don't Get
Overwhelmed...
Get Started

Addressing these challenges can seem daunting. It is difficult to know what to do or how to get started especially for those with a lack of experience or resources to address the constant evolving and increasing threats from cyberspace. But there are many proactive steps

that can strengthen your county’s cyber security posture, and many of them can be implemented with a relatively small amount of fiscal and staff resources. In fact, a recent report found that 96 percent of data breaches could have been avoided if simple controls were in place.

Steps Every County
Official Should Take

Designate a principal individual responsible for cyber security. This may be a part-time or full-time assignment, depending on the scope and complexity of your organization’s operations. It may be your county’s information technology director, a third-party consultant or other designee. Make sure this individual can provide you with answers to these questions:

How are we protecting our cyber infrastructure and residents’ data?

What policies and procedures are in place for physically protecting



our equipment from unauthorized access, loss or theft?

What is our plan for responding to a cyber security incident, and what cyber security policies are in place? Is staff trained on those policies?

Make sure that cyber security is factored into business decisions and that those responsible for cyber security in your county are involved in the discussions whenever a new program or service is being considered.

Serve as the champion for cyber security in your county. Make sure you adhere to best practices, such as using a strong password, never opening unknown attachments in emails and only visiting trusted websites.

Engage the Multi-State
Information Sharing and
Analysis Center for Help

For assistance with any of the above tips and to learn more about keeping your county protected, contact the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC). The MS-ISAC is a division of the not-for-profit Center for Internet Security, and is designated by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security as a key resource for cyber threat prevention, protection, response and recovery for the nation’s state, local, territorial and tribal governments.

The MS-ISAC provides a number of resources at no cost to its members, including incident response; cyber alerts and advisories; monthly Web cast meetings; annual in-person meeting; trainings and exercises; annual Cyber Security Awareness Month materials; and a community of practice for information sharing between and among states and local governments. There is no cost to join the MS-ISAC, and membership is open to all state, local, territorial and tribal governments.

To learn more about how your county government can become a member and take advantage of this resource, contact Kristin Judge at 518.368.8824 or kristin.judge@msisac.org (Pelgrin is the MS-ISAC chairman.)

** Find out more about Cyber Security Month in the online edition of County News at www.naco.org/countynews.*

Shale gas industry brought 600,000 jobs in 2010

FRACKING from page 3

As fracking has become more prevalent in the East and encroached on some urban areas in the West, citizens and gas companies have clashed — with local governments being called upon to intervene through regulation or other means.

Impacts to the environment are a primary concern among citizens who fear contamination of drinking water by chemicals used in the fracking process, which some companies refuse to disclose citing proprietary information. Meanwhile, media portrayals, such as the documentary film “Gasland,” warn of fish kills in Pennsylvania and flaming tap water in Colorado, purportedly caused by hydraulic fracturing activity. America’s Natural Gas Alliance (ANGA), a trade association for the gas industry, has authoritatively debunked several of the more sensational incidents that the movie attributed to fracking.

“We believe that there does not have to be a tradeoff between protecting the environment in communities where we operate, and economic advancement and jobs in those communities,” said Dan Whitten, a spokesman for ANGA.

In addition to Pennsylvania, counties in New York, West Virginia, Colorado, Texas and Wyoming have witnessed the industry’s growth. In New York, several counties have restricted fracking — or barred it on county-owned land.

On Feb. 21, a New York state court ruled for the first time that towns have the right to ban drilling even though a state regulation says they cannot. It’s a decision that could set a national precedent for how localities can regulate gas drilling, according to a ProPublica report.

While welcoming the industry’s economic development potential, some counties are also concerned about the effects to their infrastructure that could be caused by heavy trucks servicing gas rigs and disposal of liquid byproducts of hydraulic fracturing. On the plus side, the industry has the potential to bolster the flagging economies of counties that are still experiencing declining revenues, either from the recession of 2009 or the burst housing bubble.

Shale natural gas amounted to 27 percent of the overall U.S. natural gas production in 2010, according to ANGA’s website, and supported more than 600,000 direct and industry-related jobs. Shale gas’ share of production is projected to increase to 43 percent in 2015 (supporting 800,000 jobs) and 60 percent in 2035 (1.6 million jobs).

ANGA’s Whitten said shale gas development is an opportunity to “clean the air” by encouraging greater use of cleaner-burning natural gas, as opposed to other fossil fuels.

“We just feel like the newfound abundance of natural gas...is a great benefit to those communities,” he said.

Other counties, states grapple
with shale gas impacts

Western Maryland sits atop a relatively small portion of the Marcellus Shale in Garrett County, however, no drilling has occurred there yet. But that’s not stopping the State Legislature from preparing for the possibility.

Two competing bills have been introduced in the current session to impose a tax on extraction of shale gas from the Marcellus. One would allow the state to collect 15 percent, another 2.5 percent.

Both would use proceeds from the tax to mitigate possible environmental and public health affects related gas production.

Garrett County already has a local tax of 5.5 percent from historic mineral extraction activity, said County Commission Chairman Jim Raley, who also sits on the Maryland’s Marcellus Shale Advisory Committee. If the higher proposed state tax were to be passed, the gas industry would face a 20.5 percent levy in the county.

“Obviously we’re going to side with the 2.5 percent tax,” he said, calling the higher levy “pretty excessive.” About 1,000 acres are currently under lease in the county for shale gas exploration. Marcellus activity in Maryland is on hold while the state develops a regulatory regime.

State Sen. George Edwards, who represents Garrett and Allegany counties, proposed the 2.5 percent levy and called the higher proposal “ridiculous.” “I don’t know any other state that’s anywhere near that,” he told *The Washington Post*.

Raley’s other concern is that the higher the tax, the less money would be available in royalties paid by the industry to landowners with gas leases.

In Ohio, Attorney General Mike DeWine is calling for full disclosure of the chemicals used in fracking. He told the Associated Press that Ohio’s laws “simply are not adequate today.”

DeWine also wants stiffer penalties imposed on polluters in the oil and gas industry: \$10,000 per day versus \$20,000 per incident, the current maximum.

He said he is in favor of fracking and the economic benefits it brings, but only if it’s done responsibly.

“We really have to take a deep breath, do it right, make sure the public is protected, make sure our land is protected,” the AP reported.

President's budget level-funds CDBG at \$2.9 billion

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(USDA). This is a 3 percent or \$700 million decrease below the FY12 enacted level.

USDA Rural Development programs, which directly fund county infrastructure and development efforts, are funded at \$2.4 billion in budget authority to support a program level of \$38 billion in loans, grants and other assistance. This represents an increase of \$200 million in budget authority and a \$2 billion increase in program level from the FY12 enacted level.

The proposed overall increase for Rural Development is good news for counties, but must be kept in context. This increase is compared to the very low FY12 enacted level and is still \$533 million or 18 percent less than the NACo supported FY10 level. The \$2 billion program level increase in FY13 is mostly due to an increase in loan availability for counties and their rural partners, which cost the federal government little or nothing and does not represent an increase

in direct grant funding for counties.

The budget proposes to eliminate several small USDA programs that NACo supported. The programs proposed for elimination include the Rural Business Opportunity Grants (\$2 million); NRCS's Watershed Rehabilitation Program which is used by counties for rehabilitation of flood-control structures and dams (\$15 million), Economic Impact Grants which are grants for communities suffering high unemployment and outmigration (\$6 million), High Energy Costs Grants for remote communities (\$10 million); and Multi-family Housing Preservation Grants (\$4 million).

The budget proposes the Regional Innovation Initiative for the third year in a row. The initiative will target 5 percent of several existing rural development programs to fund the priority projects of rural regions. The initiative will help steer limited rural development dollars to the priorities of rural counties and their multi-county partnerships.

The budget proposes a \$654 million increase to the Food and Drug Administration's budget, including increased spending for food safety, such as stricter regulation of imported food, under the new Food Safety Modernization Act (P.L. 111-53). The majority of the increase, however, is dependent on proposed user fees that may or may not be approved by Congress.

Community and Economic Development

Overall 3 percent increase for FY13, to \$44.8 billion. Of this amount, 83 percent of HUD's budget goes toward renewing Section 8 rental vouchers, public housing needs and homeless assistance.

- Provides level funding for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) at \$2.95 billion. CDBG funding will allow over 1,200 state and local governments to invest in needed public infrastructure improvements, rehabilitate affordable housing, and create and retain jobs.

- Provides level funding for HOME program at \$1 billion. HOME program will provide funding to about 645 state and local governments to increase the supply of affordable housing for low-income families.

- Increases funding for homeless assistance grants to \$2.2 billion, a 17 percent increase from FY12.

- Includes \$75 million for an additional 10,000 housing vouchers for homeless veterans HUD-VASH program.

- Increases housing counseling funds to \$55 million, a \$10 million

increase over FY12.

- Increases funding for Obama administration initiatives of \$100 million for sustainable communities, to support local regional planning efforts — zeroed out in FY12. Also, \$150 million for Choice Neighborhoods program to revitalize neighborhoods with distressed public housing, a 25 percent increase from FY12

Environment, Energy and Land Use

Army Corps of Engineers (Corps)

Under the president's proposal, the Corps' budget is set at \$4.7 billion, this is a 5.4 decrease (or \$271 million) under 2012 enacted levels. Of that, \$1.6 billion is allotted for high-return construction projects, such as those in flood and storm damage reduction, commercial navigation and aquatic ecosystem restoration.

However, funding under the Corps' regulatory program will increase 6 percent above 2012 enacted levels in order to provide greater protection to wetlands and small streams and support a transparent and timely permit review process.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

The administration's budget proposal funds the EPA at \$8.3 billion. This is a decrease of 1.2 percent (or \$105 million) below 2012 enacted levels.

The Clean Water (CW) and Drinking Water (DW) State Revolving Funds (SRF) programs were cut by \$359 million. Under the 2012 enacted language, the CWSRF received \$1.47 billion and the DWSRF got \$918 million. But under the president's proposed budget, the CWSRF would get \$1.18 billion and the DWSRF would receive \$850 million. SRFs provide capitalization grants to states for state water infrastructure revolving fund programs. Under the state program, states provide a match and then make loans to local governments for water infrastructure projects.

The Diesel Emissions Reduction Grant (DERA) program would be cut to \$15 million from \$30 million. DERA grants are used by states and local governments to retrofit diesel engines to reduce emissions.

Department of Energy (DOE)

The president's budget gives a 3.2 percent increase over 2012 enacted levels to the tune of \$27.2 billion for the DOE. Priority areas for increased funding include clean energy research and development

and advanced manufacturing.

The budget request includes \$95 million for wind energy, including off-shore wind technologies and \$65 million for geothermal energy. Other priority activities include implementing the recommendations by the Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future on storage, transportation and disposal of nuclear waste.

Notably, on natural gas, the administration proposed \$12 million for a joint research study by the DOE, EPA and the U.S. Geological Survey to look at the "environmental, health, and safety risks of natural gas and oil production from hydraulic fracturing in shale..."

Finance and Intergovernmental Affairs

In general, the tax provisions in the president's budget seek to move towards the overall goal of fundamental tax reform. Reform that generally seeks to simplify the tax system, close loopholes and cut the deficit. Noteworthy provisions to counties are:

- The proposal that revives an idea from the president's 2011 Jobs Act — a cap on the exemption of municipal bond interest at 28 percent for high-income earners (adjusted gross income for individuals earning

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DOE consortium's tool calculates impact of LED street lighting

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Municipal Solid-State Street Lighting Consortium has released an economic cost-benefit analysis tool to help local governments and utilities estimate the costs and impacts of switching to street lighting that uses light-emitting diodes (LEDs).

Called the Retrofit Financial Analysis Tool, the Excel-based tool, developed in collaboration with Clinton Climate Initiative, is available for download at www.ssl.energy.gov/financial-tool.html.

Users input data on the relevant variables for their particular application — such as the incumbent technology, quantities, phase-in period, prevailing electricity and labor rates, sales tax, installation cost, loan interest rate and rebates — to get a detailed analysis that includes annualized energy-cost savings, maintenance savings, greenhouse gas reductions and simple payback.

This information is useful not only for planning and budgeting purposes, but also in applying for financing. In a market where the cost of LED street lighting has dropped more than 25 percent in the past year, it can help local governments accurately evaluate costs in today's dollars.

The estimated 26.5 million streetlights in the U.S. consume as much electricity each year as 1.9 million households and generate greenhouse gas emissions equal to that produced by 2.6 million cars. Solid-state LED lighting has the potential to save more energy than

traditional lighting technologies and can reduce maintenance costs, while improving visibility and customer service.

"Converting out nation's streetlights to LED technology not only could reduce our energy consumption significantly, but also improve the quality of illumination," said Consortium Director Edward Smalley of Seattle City Light. "The Retrofit Financial Analysis Tool will make it easier for local governments and utilities, and others to analyze the cost benefit of LED street lighting, by providing specific key information on costs and return on investment."

The tool is based on one that the Clinton Climate Initiative developed for analyzing cities such as New York, Los Angeles, Mumbai and Beijing. The original tool required someone from the climate initiative to run it, due to its complexity. The consortium teamed with the climate initiative to develop a simplified, more user-friendly version that locals could use on their own. To facilitate its use, the tool is accompanied by an instructional video and a sample analysis.

DOE created the consortium in 2010 to educate and provide some consistency around energy-efficient lighting, particularly the evaluation of LED streetlight products. Local governments efforts often are the result of block grants and energy mandates, and the consortium provides an easy way for them to navigate multiple sources of information in just one stop.

CONTACT@US



"Contact Us" provides members with information and answers!

Just use the "Contact Us" feature on the NACo website to e-mail your question to us. It's in the upper right corner of the NACo website ...

www.NACo.org

NACo National Association of Counties
The Voice of America's Counties

Slight decrease sought in discretionary homeland security funds

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more than \$200,000 and \$250,000 for married taxpayers). If adopted, this provision could significantly increase state and local borrowing costs.

- A proposal seen in the FY12 budget that would reform and extend the Build America Bonds Program. The 2013 budget would extend the program for two years at subsidy rate of 30 percent and then permanently extend it thereafter at a subsidy rate of 28 percent. In its earlier incarnation under the Recovery Act, the Build America Bonds Program provided a subsidy amount equal to 35 percent of the coupon interest on the bonds.

- A proposal to lift restrictions that prevent state and local governments from refinancing bonds.

Among the other tax proposals in the budget are the expiration of the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts for high-income earners (individuals earning over \$200,000; families earning over \$250,000) and permanently extending estate, gift and generation-skipping transfer (GST) taxes at 2009 levels.

Health

Medicaid Cuts — re-iterates the administration's September 2011 deficit reduction legislative proposals to cut Medicaid spending by \$55.7 billion over 10 years, including:

- Prevention & Public Health Fund (PPHF)

- \$4 billion cut — proposes legislation to reduce mandatory PPHF spending over 10 years

- Reallocation — reallocates mandatory PPHF funds to backfill other program cuts, for example, Community Transformation Grants (\$80 million cut)

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration — proposes cutting \$196 billion, a 6 percent reduction from FY12

Human Services and Education

The president's budget proposes once again to cut the Community Services Block Grant by almost 50 percent, to \$350 million from \$677 million. Congress rejected a similar proposal for the FY12 budget.

The budget proposes significant increases in child care, in both

the entitlement and discretionary programs. The entitlement program would receive \$3.42 billion, a \$500 million increase; and the discretionary \$2.6 billion, a \$325 million increase. There would also be an additional \$300 million for quality improvements in the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge that is jointly administered by the departments of Education, and Health and Human Services.

The Supplemental Grants under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant, would be made permanent. TANF Supplemental Grants expired in April 2011. The budget also proposes to restructure the TANF Contingency Fund but gives no details; however, it appears the funding for the Supplemental Grants would come out of the Contingency Fund.

The budget proposes once again to give states the option to suspend the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) time limits for able-bodied single adults. Additionally, the SNAP enhanced benefit, which expires Nov. 30, 2013, would be extended through March 31, 2014.

Congress funds NACo priority

D-BLOCK from page 1

– 512 MHz) within 11 years; and provide for a governance model for the network that will include state, local and tribal officials. The bill will generate \$15 billion for the U.S. Treasury from spectrum auctions in other bands, and provide funding for a Next Generation 911 system.

NACo and other associations representing state and local governments in conjunction with the public safety community have been working for years to bring this issue to a conclusion.

NACo Executive Director Larry E. Naake said the legislation provides first responders — most often county public safety officials — reliable public safety communications capabilities for years to come.

"NACo is thankful that Congress has finally passed this life-saving legislation," Naake said. "More than 10 years after 9/11 our nation's first responders will now have critical access to the most reliable emergency communication systems available."

The two big elementary and secondary education programs, the Title I Grants to Local Education Agencies (\$14.5 billion) and grants to states under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (\$11.6 billion) would receive the same level of funding as 2012.

The Older Americans Act nutrition, home and community services, and family caregiver programs would be funded at current-year levels, but there would be some new funding for demonstration grants in adult protective services and Alzheimer's services.

Justice and Public safety

Department of Justice

President Obama's FY13 budget requests \$27.1 billion in discretionary funding for the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). This is a 0.4 percent decrease below the FY12 enacted level. However, core federal programs including law enforcement, litigation, and prisons and detention are funded at 1.2 percent above 2012 levels.

The budget requests \$430 million for Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)'s Byrne-JAG program. This is a \$60 million increase compared to FY12 enacted levels. Byrne-JAG provides grants to state and local governments to support a broad range of activities that prevent and control crime based on local needs and conditions.

The administration's FY13 budget request provides \$70 million for BJA's State Criminal Alien Assistance Program. This is a \$170 million decrease compared to FY12 enacted levels. Never the most popular program with the last two administrations, SCAAP provides federal payments to states and localities that incur correctional costs for incarcerating illegal aliens.

Department of Homeland Security

The budget requests \$39.5 billion in discretionary funding for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). This is a 0.5 percent decrease below the FY12 enacted level. However, the budget supports the disaster recovery of states and communities that have been devastated by disasters and emergencies with \$6.1 billion for FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund.

The administration requests \$1.55 billion in discretionary funding for a new National Preparedness Grant Program (NPGP). The new NPGP would replace some 16 separate state and local grant programs. How these funds would be awarded to units of local government remains

unclear. This is a vast departure from how these funds have been awarded over the past nine years.

Labor and Employment

The Obama budget request:

- Provides \$3.2 billion in discretionary funding for Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (ETA), Training and Employment Service (TES) activities, a 1.2 percent increase from FY12 levels.

- Provides funding for Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I Formula Programs, at current FY12 levels: Adult Employment and Training Activities, \$769 million; Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities, \$1.2 billion and Youth Activities, \$824 million

- Continues support of the Workforce Innovation Fund, providing \$125 million, of which \$100 million from the Department of Labor, and \$25 million from the Department of Education, will be contributed. The Departments of Labor and Education jointly will oversee this fund, which will use competitive grants to support systemic and evidence based reforms in the workforce system.

- Creates the Community College to Career fund, a new initiative designed to improve community college students' access to job training in high-growth industries, and support state and community college partnerships with businesses. The budget provides \$8 billion dollars over three years. The Department of Labor will contribute \$4 billion, and the Department of Education will contribute \$4 billion.

- Creates the Pathways Back to Work Fund, a new initiative designed to support summer and year-round jobs for low-income youth and connecting the long term unemployed and low-income adults to employment and work-based training opportunities, and

- Funds Job Corps at \$1.65 billion, a 3.1 percent decrease from FY12 levels.

Public Lands

Department of the Interior

The 2013 budget request proposes to extend the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program as a mandatory program through 2013 at the full entitlement level (\$398 million).

It eliminates geothermal revenue-sharing payments to counties. Thirty-one counties in six states currently benefit from geothermal



Photo by Charlie Ban

Jacqueline Byers (l), NACo's director of research and outreach, is surprised Feb. 24 when Executive Director Larry Naake presents her a plaque recognizing her 13 years of coordinating NACo's annual Black History Month celebration. The observance, named in memory of Haron N. Battle, a former NACo lobbyist who died in 1999, includes a book discussion and guest speakers, and ends with a potluck lunch.

Secure rural schools funding would take a significant hit

BUDGET from page 9

revenue-sharing receipts. Geothermal revenues have contributed to the delivery of critical county services and the development of much-needed capital improvement projects such as road maintenance, public safety and law enforcement, conservation easements, capital for leveraging federal and state resources, and the critical stabilization of operations budgets in tough economic times (\$4.1 million cut).

The 2013 budget request proposes to eliminate discretionary payments to counties authorized by the Refuge Revenue Sharing Act (16 USC 715s) to be made to offset tax losses to counties in which service fee and withdrawn public domain lands are located (\$13.9 million cut).

Department of Agriculture Forest Service

The FY13 budget request calls for a multiyear reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act. The administration's proposal would provide extensive cuts to the county payments titles of the program, effectively abandoning a 100-year compact between the federal government and rural forested counties. Specifically:

- The Title I roads portion would be reduced by 20 percent for the first year, followed by an additional 10 percent in 2013, and 25 percent each year following. Starting in year three of this proposal, any state receiving

less than \$10 million in payments would cease to be eligible for the program and all funding would be eliminated for counties within that state.

- Title III dollars for county fire assistance would be immediately cut by 50 percent, followed by complete elimination in year two.

Telecommunications and Technology

As part of the National Wireless Initiative, the budget proposes legislation to provide authority for "voluntary incentive auctions" that will enable spectrum licensees to auction the rights to use their spectrum in return for a share of the proceeds.

This step is critical both for real-locating spectrum and re-purposing it over the coming decade to greatly facilitate access for smartphones, portable computers and innovative technologies that are on the horizon. Voluntary incentive auctions, along with other measures to enable more efficient spectrum management will provide more than \$10 billion that will enable the United States to:

- Build an interoperable wireless broadband network for public safety that would allow for seamless use by first responders across the country and reserve additional spectrum for public safety use.
- Establish a Wireless Innovation Fund to accelerate the research and development of cutting-edge

wireless technologies and applications in support of a nationwide public safety broadband network.

Transportation

While the president's FY13 proposal tracks closely to its FY12 budget, it does not acknowledge that the administration recently endorsed S. 1813, the Senate's bipartisan surface transportation reauthorization package. It also does not acknowledge that the president will soon sign a four-year Federal Aviation Administration authorization.

Highway – Funding would be increased by \$2.7 billion to \$41.8 billion.

Transit – \$410.8 billion is proposed for the transit program, an increase of \$233 million.

Surface Transportation Framework – The administration's FY13 budget proposes a \$476 billion, six-year (FY12–17) authorization framework that re-introduces many of the same policy proposals from last year's \$556 billion outline.

Source of Funding – In addition to \$261 billion collected from existing surface transportation taxes, the administration proposes applying \$231 billion from military savings from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars to fund its six-year authorization.

Highway Trust Fund Expanded – The administration's FY13 proposal again renames the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) the "Transportation Trust Fund" (TTF) and expands the accounts beyond highways and transit to include passenger rail and other programs like National Infrastructure Investment

(formerly "TIGER") competitive grants.

National Infrastructure Bank (NIB) – The administration proposes the NIB again, but as an independent, nonpartisan federal agency.

Aviation – The Airport Improvement Program (AIP) is level-funded at \$3.3 billion, which is consistent with the funding in the recently enacted FAA bill. Essential Air Service (EAS) is proposed at \$214 million, somewhat higher than the FAA bill.

Rail – \$2.5 billion is proposed for combined Amtrak and high-speed rail spending, up \$1.4 billion. The FY13 framework would again merge both Amtrak subsidy accounts with the High-Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail accounts and establish two accounts for passenger rail: network development and system preservation.

Bipartisan speaker roster lined up for 2012 NACo Legislative Conference



Ray LaHood
U.S. Secretary
of Transportation

Tom Vilsack
U.S. Secretary
of Agriculture

Nancy Pelosi
U.S. House Minority
Leader

Sen. Dick Durbin
(D-Ill.)

Sen. Mike Enzi
(R-Wyo.)

In Case You Missed It ...

News to Use from Past County News

► NACIO opens Awards of Excellence competition

The National Association of County Information Officers (NACIO) is seeking entries for the 2012 Awards of Excellence. These awards recognize the outstanding public information work being done in counties across the nation to increase understanding and strengthen trust in county government.

Entry fees are \$35 for members and \$50 for non-members for each submission (multiple submissions are permitted). Entries should be sent to Awards Coordinator Dave Rose, El Paso County Public Information, 200 S. Cascade Ave., Colorado Springs, CO 80903. All entries must be postmarked no later than 5 p.m. April 1 in order to be eligible for standard entry rates.

For any additional information or for any questions please contact Dave Rose at daverose@elpasoco.com or 719.520.6540.

► NCGM media resources available

NACo has free media resources available to assist counties in celebrating National County Government Month (NCGM). On the NACo website at www.naco.org/NCGM, you will find a comprehensive planning and tips booklet—the NCGM Handbook—and a NCGM Media Resources Kit.

For additional information, contact Jim Philipps at 202.942.4220 or jphilipps@naco.org.

CONFERENCE from page 1

will protect vital county programs, effectively serve our common constituents, and promote job creation."

Kirk will address the NACo International Economic Development Task Force on Monday, March 5, at 3:30 p.m. in the Fairchild Room. He will discuss U.S. trade policy and its impacts on and opportunities for local economic development.

Counties on Capitol Hill Day

On Wednesday, March 7, county officials will meet with their congressional representatives on Capitol Hill. Counties are deeply concerned that federal deficit-reduction talks in Washington have focused too much on reductions to domestic, discretionary spending programs that will affect the American people. To review NACo 2012 Key Legislative Priorities,

visit www.naco.org/legislation/Pages/2012LegislativePriorities.aspx.

Educational Opportunities

In addition to carrying the county government message to Capitol Hill, county officials will participate in a variety of educational workshops. Some workshop titles include The Future of the Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Planning and Development Programs; Making Rural Development a Priority in the Farm Bill; Creating Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Jobs in Your Community; and Highways, Bridges, Buses and Airports: When Will Help Arrive?

Other Business

NACo's 11 steering committees will meet during the conference to review and make recommendations on issues and legislation important to counties and communities. The issues that the committees cover include

justice and public safety, agriculture and rural affairs, taxes, environment and energy, telecommunications, economic and community development, health care, human services, education, labor and employment, public lands, and transportation.

The policy development process initiated by the steering committees leads to the publication of the American County Platform, which NACo uses as a guide to deliver the county government message to the administration, Congress and the American public.

In addition to the steering committees, NACo has organized caucuses—the Rural Action Caucus and the Large Urban County Caucus—to perform targeted advocacy efforts focused on specific needs of large urban counties and rural counties.

For more information, contact Jim Philipps at 202.942.4220 or jphilipps@naco.org.

At the 2011 NACo Legislative Conference ...

Stop by the Social Media Tech Room

If you're not using social media sites like Facebook and Twitter, then you're missing out on some of the most effective ways to connect with peers, resources and county residents.

Located in the Embassy Room on the Terrace Level, this room will be open during the following hours. Come on in!

Hours of Operation:

Saturday, March 3:	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 Noon 2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 4:	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 Noon 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Monday, March 5:	1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Tuesday, March 6:	By appointment only*

* Please email mfellows@naco.org to schedule



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Use tag #NACoLeg



Model Programs From the Nation's Counties

Broward County, Fla.

Libraries Are THE Place to Be for County Youths

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

Broward County isn't content to let its students out of school and hope their neighborhoods serve as academic incubators.

After establishing an after-school program at five locations, the county library expanded After School@Your Library to 12 branches in 2010.

For students ages 6–12, the program offers access to homework help from qualified tutors, reading help, computer-skills training and opportunities for cultural development. The program's name represents its emphasis on computer competency.

"Last year, we purchased laptops and almost every student uses them, either playing educational games or learning research skills," said James Boyles, an account clerk with the program. "They all have access to a computer, and it's better than when they had to share the libraries' terminals."

Program locations try to capitalize on neighborhoods without many adequate after-school programs and youth populations that showed low literacy scores in standardized testing. The library also looks for technologically underserved popu-

lations, so as to make a difference with computer skills programs. The program's participants have typically been 70 percent African-American and 25 percent Hispanic.

The program is free to students who are not enrolled in other child-care arrangements, many of the program costs are underwritten by the Children's Services Council. It is staffed through a partnership with Senior Volunteer Services-Foster Grandparent Program, with food provided by the University of Florida Family Nutrition Program and arts education from Arts in Education. Each day's 3.5-hour program includes a mix of quiet, educational play, homework support and social skills development activities.

It also gives students a safe place to be after school.

A funding shift has given administrators a new incentive to keep participation high. Where the program was once given a lump sum from the Children's Services Council, it is now funded on a unit-based system in which the costs for each student are reimbursed.

"It motivates us to keep our attendance up," Boyles said. "The kids have to keep good attendance to stay in the program, but we're trying to keep them here, too."

Students earn "dollars" in a positive reinforcement plan that encourages attendance, academic achievement and good character. Students can trade in their dollars for prizes at the end of each week.

For the 2009–2010 school year, evaluations before, during and after children's participation indicated a 79 percent improvement in basic reading skills and a 70 percent increase in social skills and interaction. A total of 338 students participated in the program, which added up to a total of 66,075 hours spent on reading activities and homework and 140 hours of computer skills development total.

Model Programs from the Nation's Counties highlights award-winning programs.



Photo courtesy of Broward County, Fla.

Students at After School@Your Library enjoy activities such as arts and crafts.

Financial Services News

NACo, Nationwide Announce 7th Annual Scholarship

This spring, four high school seniors will earn \$2,000 for college from the NACo-Nationwide Scholarship. Winning applicants will have written a short essay describing why it's important for a public sector employee to start saving early for retirement.

To be eligible, applicants must be graduating high school seniors who are legal U.S. residents, their parent or grandparent must be enrolled in and contributing to the NACo 457 Deferred Compensation Program, and the student must enroll in a full-time undergraduate course of study no later than the fall term of the 2012–2013 school year at an accredited two- or four-year college.

Application and entry may be submitted on line between March 1 and April 16.

This is the seventh year in a row that Nationwide and NACo have teamed up to encourage high-school seniors to think about retirement.

Why spur students who haven't even started full-time work to think about retirement? Three reasons — by applying for the scholarship the students:

- Must consider the financial impact of their decisions about college and their career and realize it is never too soon to start thinking about saving for retirement

- Begin to recognize the value perspective in turbulent financial times when often difficult decisions are required, and

- Identify specific actions that help prepare for a financially successful future.

The NACo-Nationwide Scholarship is just one of the services arising out of a 32-year relationship between Nationwide and NACo. As provider of the NACo Deferred Compensation Program, Nationwide regularly reports to the NACo Deferred Compensation Advisory Committee on industry trends, updates statistics on the program and provides ongoing education on retirement issues. NACo receives from Nationwide Retirement Solutions payment for NACo's endorsement and license of its name and logo for use by Nationwide in connection with the NACo Deferred Compensation Program and related products and services. These funds are used by NACo to

enhance programs and services for the benefit of its members.

For More Information about the Scholarship

All information about eligibility, judging criteria and notification process are on the NACo and Nationwide websites. For more information, go to www.naco.org/retirementscholarship or www.nrsforu.com/scholarship.

Nationwide Retirement Specialists are registered representatives of Nationwide Investment Services Corporation, member FINRA.

Nationwide Retirement Solutions (Nationwide) makes payments to the National Association of Counties (NACo) and the NACo Financial Services Center Partnership (FSC) for services and endorsements that NACo provides for all its members generally related to Nationwide's products and services sold exclusively in public sector retirement markets. More detail about these payments is available at www.nrsforu.com.

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NRM-4186AO.5 (02/2012)

NACo on the Move

» NACo Officers and Officials

- **Lenny Eliason**, NACo president, spoke about his presidential initiative on Healthy Counties at the Police Jury Association of Louisiana Annual Conference in Terrebonne Parish Feb. 23.

» NACo Staff

- **Carrie Clingan**, senior associate, led a discussion to plan an upcoming training in the Mississippi gulf coast, discussed NACo's role in a scheduled training in the Great Lakes region and presented the background behind the Coastal County Snapshots website at the Digital Coast Partnership Meeting/Social Coast Conference in Charleston County, S.C. Feb. 13–16.

- **Jacqueline Byers**, director of research and outreach, was a panelist on an early bird session titled "Government Consolidation Insight and Updates" at the 2012 Outlook in the States and Localities Conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. Feb. 1.

On the Move is compiled by Christopher Johnson.

Keep up with NACo online ...

www.naco.org



Research News

Counties Look at Take-Home Vehicle Policies

With the continuing rise in gas prices and tightening of budgets, many counties have been reviewing vehicle take-home policies for county employees.

Although some see this as a luxury for certain county employees, in many cases, it may be more practical or economical for the county to allow employees to keep a vehicle overnight. A carefully crafted policy can ensure that the right employees are utilizing this practice to efficiently carry out county duties.

A take-home vehicle policy generally identifies the type and the circumstances of county employees who may take vehicles home. Many take-home vehicles are limited to emergency responders or other public safety staff who are on a 24/7 call basis.

Most policies lay out factors for department directors to assess before considering a take-home vehicle such as job responsibilities, productivity, vehicle availability, and the cost to the county of a take-home vehicle versus the reimbursement for use of a personal vehicle. It also provides specific instructions as to how the vehicle may be used and tax reporting rules for employees.

Current Information Snapshots on Take-home Vehicle Policies

■ King County, Wash.

King County policy establishes three categories of criteria for allowing employees to take home vehicles. The first category includes emergency responders who are required to immediately respond to emergency situations and are called out at least 12 times per quarter. The second category looks at whether there is an economic benefit to the county. For example, the cost of travel reimbursement would exceed the cost of the take-home vehicle or an employee requires a vehicle with special equipment to respond to emergency situations.

The final category concerns contracts that provide the option of approval of a take-home vehicle.

For all of these categories, supporting documentation must be provided to prove the employee's circumstances and the request must be approved by a supervisor and the fleet manager.

■ Douglas County, Colo.

Take-home vehicles in Douglas

County are limited to those who routinely need to respond to emergencies or who have limited access to emergency vehicle pools. They are provided for use while commuting to work and for business purposes during the day.

Department directors must submit a list of staff assigned a take-home vehicle to the county manager for approval. All employees who use a county vehicle are given specific guidance as to the proper use of county vehicles including being prohibited from being used for personal reasons. This policy excludes the sheriff's office and coroner's office.

■ Montgomery County, N.C.

To be considered for taking a vehicle home, county employees must have a valid North Carolina driver's license, maintain a safe driving record and receive approval from a department director. Employees are considered if they are required to respond to emergency calls or other unscheduled work for emergency situations on a regular basis. Employees such as maintenance employees who are subject to on-call schedules are also eligible for a take-home vehicle during the period they are on call. Public safety employees may also be assigned a take-home vehicle.

The assignment of vehicles is reviewed annually and department heads are encouraged to consider requirements of the job, productivity, availability of county vehicles and the cost to the county when evaluating take-home vehicle requests.

■ Ulster County, N.Y.

The policy for Ulster County clearly states that the assignment of a county vehicle is not based on status but upon job function. To be eligible for a take-home vehicle, emergency responders must be called out at least 12 times per quarter or 48 times per year and have no alternative form of transportation, or need a special-equipment vehicle. In addition, employees may be granted a take-home vehicle if there is an economic benefit to the county. The policy also allows the occasional use of a take-home vehicle due to inclement weather or seasonal work by employees. All vehicle requests must be reviewed every six months.

■ Los Angeles County, Calif.

In addition to the allowance of take-home vehicles for emergency

responders or those needing special equipment vehicles, the Los Angeles County policy also includes an allowance for those workers who exceed 5,000 miles of vehicle usage in a calendar year. This number excludes the daily miles for commuting from home.

Those employees who travel different parts of the county but do not reach 5,000 miles may also be eligible if work is required after normal business hours.

All employees with a take-home vehicle must sign a form which outlines the county policy, including the use of the vehicle only for business purposes. The form must be renewed each year.

■ Orange County, Va.

The Orange County policy and procedure clearly lays out the

use policy and tax procedures for employees. County vehicles may not be used for personal business, other than commuting from home to work, without specific written approval from a county constitutional officer. In addition, no passengers are allowed in the vehicle except other county staff or those assisting with county business.

The policy also provides guidance on how to report the use of the vehicle to the IRS. This guidance includes how to keep mileage logs for tax purposes, how to determine which vehicles and trips are taxable, and how to calculate the annual lease value of the vehicle being used for reporting purposes.

(Research News was written by Kathryn Murphy, senior research associate.)

What's in a Seal?

» Caswell County, N.C.
www.caswellcountync.gov



Known as the first new county created in the state of North Carolina, Caswell County was established May 9, 1777. It was carved from Orange County to make governmental agencies more accessible to the area's residents and was named after Richard Caswell, the first governor of North Carolina.

As it remains today, tobacco was the leading agricultural product of the county during the antebellum period. It was in this county that the Slade family discovered the bright-leaf tobacco curing process that revolutionized the tobacco industry and brought great wealth to the region.

The year 1861 saw the start of the Civil War and the completion of the magnificent Caswell County Courthouse. The county also saw the development of various mills (flour and lumber), most dependent upon water power.

The seal shows two tobacco leaves representing how it helped the county prosper and the courthouse built at the start of the Civil War.


(If you would like your county's seal featured, please contact Christopher Johnson at 202.942.4256 or cjohnson@naco.org.)



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News From the Nation's Counties

► CALIFORNIA

• Joining several other California counties, the **MONTEREY COUNTY** Board of Supervisors urged Gov. Jerry Brown (D) to take another look at a controversial, **highly toxic agricultural fumigant**.

The board passed a resolution urging Brown to re-examine the state's approval of the use of methyl iodide, a carcinogenic fumigant. The **SANTA CRUZ COUNTY** Board of Supervisors passed a similar resolution several months ago.

The fumigant is used mainly on Monterey County's strawberry crop. The state approved methyl iodide's use in 2010 but was then sued in **ALAMEDA COUNTY** on allegations that the state violated the California Environmental Quality Act. The judge's decision on that suit is pending. The lawsuit also alleges that the California Department of Pesticide Regulation failed to consult the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment on worker protection.

There have not yet been any applications to use methyl iodide in Monterey County, according to *The Californian*.

• The state Supreme Court **will not hear a lawsuit** as to whether the **TULARE COUNTY** Board of Supervisors violated state open-meetings laws in a series of lunch gatherings in 2009.

A resident, along with several newspapers, filed suit in 2010 based on reporting that the supervisors had charged on their county-paid credit cards 228 lunches, nearly all of which were solely attended by county officials, and 46 of which had a quorum present. From the beginning, the supervisors insisted they did not discuss county business.

The plaintiff claimed that the lunches violated the state's public meetings law. The supervisors denied it, claiming they didn't talk business or make decisions. The supervisors and other county officials said the lunches were a legitimate public expenditure because they were "team-building."

At the trial-court judge ruled that the plaintiffs were unable to claim that they had personal knowledge of what was being discussed at the private lunches.

► COLORADO

Hoping to jump-start home building in unincorporated parts of **GARFIELD COUNTY**, commissioners have **suspended developers' obligations** to build affordable housing until March 2015.

The county's affordable housing regulations had recently been trimmed to affect only residential subdivisions in two high-cost areas, the trigger point to spur the requirements was raised and the proportion of deed-restricted units in subdivisions was decreased, the *Post Independent* reported.

► FLORIDA

• The 17th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida is forming a **Veterans' Court** in **BROWARD COUNTY** to provide rehabilitative services to veterans facing criminal charges. The courts give vets a chance to avoid jail or prison through comprehensive, court-monitored programs that address underlying issues often related to post-traumatic stress disorders.

State legislation that would allow the establishment of separate courts for veterans was unanimously passed in House Appropriations Committee. The chief judge in each judicial circuit would be allowed — but not required — to create a vet court. Two similar bills are making their way through the Senate.

South Florida has nearly 287,000 veterans along with thousands more expected as the United States continues its military pullouts from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Chief Judge Peter Weinstein told the *Miami Herald* he hopes to establish the first docket in the spring, complete with a Veterans Administration representative, a judge and volunteer mentors who have military backgrounds and a certain understanding that comes from shared experiences.

• In an attempt to deal with theft, **CHARLOTTE COUNTY** has placed **restrictions on recyclable metals**.

Among the numerous requirements, sellers will have to offer their thumbprint and prove what they're selling belongs to them, which could mean more paperwork for businesses.

In the past two years, the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office reported more than 1,300 incidents of metal thefts. Investigators told WZVN-TV the metal ordinance gives deputies the tools need to tackle the growing crime. One of the biggest targets has been copper wiring, sometimes from air conditioning units, stolen from people's homes, and pulled from utility poles.

HERNANDO COUNTY commissioners also approved a resolution requiring recyclers to keep more detailed records of every transaction. The ordinance also



► IDAHO

At the state capitol, **GEM COUNTY** Commissioners Sharon Pratt and Michele Sherrer wear plaid and pink tennis runners, to make a symbolic point to Idaho lawmakers about the vital role of county government. "Counties are where the rubber meets the road — that's our theme this year," said Dan Chadwick, executive director of the Idaho Association of Counties, who sported a pair of faded red Converse Chuck Taylor's (middle). About 320 county elected officials, from commissioners to assessors to sheriffs, were in Boise for IAC's annual meeting earlier this month. Many attended the first-ever joint meeting of the House and Senate tax committees, which heard testimony on proposals including eliminating the personal property tax.

requires recyclers to register with the Florida Department of Revenue, the Hernando County Tax Collector's Office and sheriff's office, *Hernando Today* reported.

• A new policy limits **PINELAS COUNTY** commissioners' use of **county purchasing cards** to expenses for travel on official business and registration for training seminars.

The policy gives the County Commission the final decision in determining whether a member has abused the card. A majority decision that the card was misused could result in loss of the card. The wrongdoer might also have to reimburse the county, the *Tampa Bay Times* reported.

► IDAHO

WASHINGTON COUNTY passed a requirement that companies get county approval before **drilling for natural gas** or building gas refineries or other facilities.

The county regulations also include bond requirements and an approval process that conflicts with state rules already in place. A bill that passed an Idaho House committee last week would reserve to the state many of the regulatory

powers presumed in the ordinance.

County officials acknowledged to the *Idaho Statesman* they could lose in a showdown with the state and may have to revise their ordinance. A key difference between the county and the state plans is that the county would have more public involvement in its "special-use permit" planning process than the administrative process proposed by the state.

The county's plan, with public hearings, is the approach counties traditionally use for land use decisions.

► INDIANA

Home and business owners with an alarm system in **VIGO COUNTY** could face fines in the future for **not properly monitoring their security system**.

County commissioners passed a false-alarm ordinance that will fine home and business owners that experience multiple false alarms. The original ordinance required that everyone with an alarm would have to pay a \$30 permit fee. If a home owner or business has more than two false alarms, then they will face a \$100 fine. The fines will increase as the false alarms increase, topping off at \$400 by the

eighth false alarm.

The Vigo County Sheriff's Department responded to more than 1,200 false alarms in 2011, according to VTHI-TV.

► NEVADA

Two counties and the state of Nevada have been selected by the Center for Infrastructure Assurance and Security (CIAS) to perform a **cyber security assessment** for Nevada.

Nevada was one of two states awarded for the highly competitive program, and **CLARK** and **WASHOE counties**, including Carson City, were the communities chosen to participate.

CIAS is an extension of the University of Texas — San Antonio. The 14-month training and exercise program focuses on community cyber security in public and private sectors.

► NEW YORK

NIAGARA and **ORLEANS** counties' common interests include sport fishing, agriculture and the Lake Ontario shoreline, and county officials say a new alliance will help them to share services and pool resources, *The Daily News* reported.

Recently, the Orleans County Legislature approved the Niagara-Orleans Regional Alliance; its Niagara County counterpart did so in January.

Among their common needs are upgrading emergency radio systems, and the counties could also work together on tourism promotion, economic development, lakeshore protection and other issues, said William Ross, chairman of the Niagara's legislature.

The alliance will include county legislators and each county's economic development leaders.

► NORTH CAROLINA

• **COLUMBUS COUNTY** commissioners aren't taking the county's last-in-the-state ranking on health indicators sitting down. They've joined a county health department version of the TV weight-loss competition "**The Biggest Loser**."

Commissioner Edwin Russ challenged his fellow commissioners to join a countywide effort. County employees who participated put \$5 into a pot, Health Director Kim Smith told the *Fayetteville Observer*. At the end of six weeks, the biggest loser is the big winner.

The commissioners' version of the challenge began in mid-January and was to last two months. In their

The H.R. Doctor Is In

Aches, Pains and Groans

January marked not only the beginning of the New Year, but also the beginning of another year of life for the HR Doctor. New Year's celebrations and anniversaries remind us of the passage of time. So too does the gradual increase in the aches, pains and groans as we try to be as nimble in our 60s as we were in our 20s.

These aches often center in our parts related to mobility — our ability to respond quickly or move nimbly. Areas such as knees, hips or ankles may be particularly vulnerable. The answer to some of these pains is to “move more, eat less,” as my wonderful doctor friend Niamh Seavy told me. In other words, being healthy means being diligent about

practicing mobility. Another part of the solution is to take in nutrients which are helpful as well as healthful in insuring that the body is able to move its various parts effectively. Maybe it has to do with fish oil or glucosamine as well as eating the most important of the health foods regularly — chocolate.

As it is with our individual

bodies, so it is in the body of a bureaucracy. An organization which remains static, which is not very mobile or very nimble, is not going to do well in an environment of change. The inherent definition of bureaucracy centers around stability — doing the same thing tomorrow as was done yesterday.

If today was a day of innovation, of recognition of the staff, making clear what the expectations are, the bureaucracy will be better able to meet its obligations and respond rapidly and positively to challenges. However, if yesterday was a day of rigid adherence to practices which haven't been looked at in decades, and tomorrow will be the same, the organization becomes increasingly unable to perform well.

A bureaucracy is less able to have a daily dose of fish oil or chocolate, however the need is just as great in the body politic as it is in the human body. A successful leader is one who keeps feeding the organization and its staff members with a daily dose of challenge to improve practices and do things more humanely and efficiently.

The leader sets forth clear expectations, makes unexpected visits to

say thank you or offer an invitation to lunch, or even an assignment to a particularly important new project. This may be developmental, in the sense of conference attendance or additional schooling.

The aches and pains of aging are the same in a bureaucracy as they are in a human body. If we don't pay attention to the exercises of our brains and bodies to enhance mobility and agility, the result can be system failure and wholesale replacement. The replacement may be made of titanium, with all that means when visiting with the lovely TSA staff members during airport scans.

It may also mean the replacement of an elected or appointed official who doesn't seem to “get it,” that the way to organizational longevity and enhanced ability does not lie in being static and resistant to challenge. On the contrary, it lies in a mandate to change for the better and in providing people with the opportunity to work out the changes as a positive challenge.



Phil Rosenberg
The HR Doctor • www.hrdi.net

Virginia, Maryland counties vie for new suburban FBI headquarters location

NEWS FROM *from page 14*

contest, they agreed the winnings would be given to a department or charity of the winner's choosing.

Columbus is last among North Carolina counties in health outcomes as ranked by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

• **CURRITUCK** and **CAMDEN** counties received good news when the U.S. Navy recently announced it has suspended work on the draft environmental impact statement for construction and operation of an **outlying landing field** (OLF). OLFs are auxiliary landing sites associated with fixed naval air bases.

The news is seen as a victory for the counties which for several years officially opposed construction of an OLF in northeastern North Carolina. During its effort to prevent construction of an OLF, Currituck County worked closely with neighboring Camden County, both of which received strong support from citizens, and state and federal legislators.

► OHIO

Commissioners in **FRANKLIN COUNTY** have invested \$1.5 million in an effort to **lower infant mortality** and recently approved another \$500,000 — a grant to Nationwide Children's Hospital — that is part of the county's five-year commitment to reducing infant deaths.

The county's infant-mortality rate in 2009 was 8.6 deaths per 1,000 live births, *The Columbus Dispatch* reported, up from 8.2 in 2008 but down from 8.8 in 2007. The county intends to spend \$7 million through 2014. The national average was 6.75 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2009.

The money helps support Ohio

Better Birth Outcomes, a collaboration involving central Ohio's four hospital systems, the Columbus Public Health Department and government and community organizations, according to the *Dispatch*.

“Nationwide Children's is just an amazing institution,” Commissioner Paula Brooks said. “If we can do this here, we can spread this strategy to other parts of Ohio.”

► VIRGINIA

FAIRFAX COUNTY and **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY**, Md. are vying to be the next **home of the FBI**. The Fairfax Board of Supervisors recently voted to send a letter to Congress asking lawmakers to consider a vacant warehouse site in the county.

Officials in Prince George's County are working on their own proposals, *The Washington Post* reported. Prince George's County Executive Rushern Baker says his county offers an ideal location.

“If you look at what the government has said they're looking for, in terms of availability around a Metro (subway) site, the ability to be in a place that's going to expand, Prince George's County has all of that,” he said.

The FBI's move from its downtown Washington, D.C. headquarters to a suburban location is expected to take place in the next few years.

► WISCONSIN

In preparation for upcoming elections, **DANE COUNTY** Executive Joe Parisi and County Board Chair Scott McDonnell are taking steps to **protect voter rights** and help citizens who would be disenfranchised by a new voter identification state law.

They propose that the county provide anyone needing an official ID to vote with a free birth certificate,

which is needed to obtain the ID.

“The state's Voter ID law continues to have flaws that could lead to the disenfranchisement of voters — particularly minorities, those who are homeless, the elderly, or students,” Parisi said. “The county's effort is critical to protecting the integrity of our elections and preserving our citizens' right to vote.”

(News From the Nation's Counties is compiled by Charles Taylor and Charlie Ban, staff writers. If you have an item for News From, please email ctaylor@naco.org or cban@naco.org.)

Job Market & Classifieds

► DEPUTY DIRECTOR, ADULT DETENTION CENTER – SAN JUAN COUNTY, N.M.

Salary: DOQ.

San Juan County, N.M., located in the northwest corner of New Mexico, is seeking a dynamic, seasoned professional with outstanding leadership skills to assist the Administrator in directing and overseeing the activities and operations of the Adult Detention Center (a 1,044 bed facility with an average daily population of 650 inmates; 145 employees with a budget of approximately \$13 million). Salary depends on qualifications. San Juan County offers a comprehensive benefits package. Comprised of 5,500 square miles located in the beautiful “Four Corners” area, San Juan County government is one of the finest employers in the region.

The County prides itself on its strategic planning and progressive operational style to achieve the mission of building a stronger community. The locale is recognized worldwide for premier big game hunting and abundant fishing, particularly in the quality waters of the three rivers (Animas, La Plata and San Juan Rivers) which flow through the area. With an average of 273 sunny days per year numerous outdoor activities, including camping, boating, swimming, water skiing, wind surfing, golfing, and hiking

may be enjoyed year round. Spectacular snow skiing is available just minutes away in the scenic mountains of Colorado. The diverse geography includes fertile river valleys surrounded by high desert, mesas and plateaus, and mountains.

For further information for this position and to apply, please visit our website at www.sjcounty.net, or contact the Human Resources Department at 505.334.4518. Applications must be received no later than April 20. We look forward to hearing from you! Equal Opportunity Employer.

► COUNTY MANAGER – LA PLATA COUNTY, COLO.

Salary: \$125,000–\$145,000 annually; DOQ.

The La Plata County Board of County Commissioners in Durango, Colorado is seeking a County Manager. The ideal candidate will be a strong, visionary leader with solid management, organizational and financial skills. The County Manager will provide leadership, focus and direction to the BoCC, the Leadership Team, and community as a whole. Critical success factors for the new County Manager will include strategic planning, economic development, financial oversight, regionalism, succession planning, collaboration and consensus-building skills, innovative

problem solving, long- and short-term planning, and strong, enthusiastic leadership.

The new County Manager will have a minimum of a B.A. degree from an accredited 4-year college or university in Public or Business Administration or closely related field, Master's degree strongly preferred; and 8-10 yrs of increasingly responsible public sector experience. Salary: DOQ with extensive benefits. Apply online at <http://co.laplata.co.us/jobs>.

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Celebrate National County Government Month

Healthy Counties, Healthy Families

NACO National Association of Counties
The Voice of America's Counties
www.naco.org/NCGM

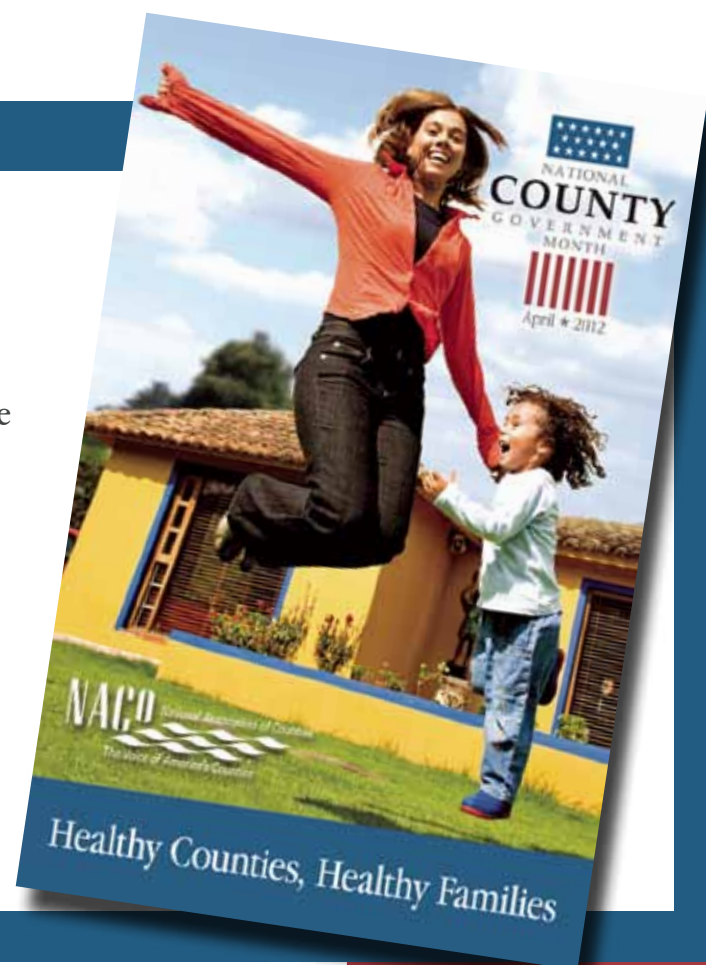
This year's National County Government Month theme is "Healthy Counties, Healthy Families." Start planning today to hold fun and interactive events to promote your county's health care and wellness services and recreational programs.

A special feature of NCGM is the National County Government Month Award. The purpose of the award program is to encourage counties to participate in NCGM and recognize nationally counties that sponsor outstanding programs during the month of April.

Visit www.naco.org/NCGM for more information about specific judging criteria. Applications must be received by Friday, May 25 to be eligible. All entries will be posted online to serve as a database of ideas for other counties to use.

For more information contact Jim Philipps at jphilipps@naco.org or 202.942.4220

Sponsored by the National Association of Counties to raise public awareness about the roles and responsibilities of counties.



National County Government Month

April ★ 2012

