

## Counties step in to continue federal programs

By CHARLIE BAN  
STAFF WRITER

Congress may tolerate closing national parks, keeping children from their Head Start programs or limiting nutritional support for children, but not so for some counties, who have stepped into the shutdown gap with their own funding.

Salt Lake County, Utah was looking at a temporary layoff of 64 workers and the loss of food assistance for approximately 25,000 people in its Women, Infants and Children (WIC) supplemental nutrition program. The morning of Oct. 1, the day the federal shutdown began, the County Council added an emergency item to its agenda — allocating \$137,500 of its general fund to cover the program for a week: \$73,000 to keep staff and \$64,000 for food supplies.

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## CountyNews Features



Photos courtesy of National Parks Conservation Association

(Clockwise) Yellowstone Park, the house where Lincoln died, and Lincoln Memorial.

## Shutdown's impact affects dozens of county programs

By MARILINA SANZ  
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

With the congressional shutdown of the federal government now on the record, here are some details from the federal agency plans about what to expect in programs that are important to counties.

### Department of Agriculture

- Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) inspectors will remain on the job, although FSIS support functions, such as administrative appeals and labeling, could be impacted.

- Conservation Reserve Program and the Wetlands Reserve Program will stop enrollment.

- Foreign Agricultural Service's Foreign Market Development Program and the Market Access Program could stop.

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits will continue through October. There is also a \$2 billion fund available to reimburse states for SNAP administrative costs.

- Child Nutrition programs such as school lunch and breakfast will also continue through October. There is a contingency fund but it might not cover all of October.

- There will be no new funding for the Women, Infants and Children Supplemental Feeding Programs and the Commodity Assistance Programs.

### Department of Education

- School districts that receive funding for disadvantaged students under Title I and II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) are not affected because the school year

See SHUTDOWN page 7

## Guidelines released for Internet sales tax legislation

By MIKE BELARMINO  
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR



House Judiciary Committee Chairman Robert Goodlatte (R-Va.) has released his much anticipated principles designed to guide discussion on Internet sales tax and the Marketplace Fairness Act, a bill that would allow the enforcement of existing sales and use tax laws on goods sold over the Internet. As a legislative priority, NACo supported the Marketplace Fairness Act of 2013 (S. 743) that passed the Senate in May of this year.

Although Goodlatte has not been supportive of the Senate-passed version, the release of his

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# County social services battle increased heroin use

By CHARLIE BAN  
STAFF WRITER

**WEB\*  
CONTENT**

It's pure, cheap and out of control. As they're seeing heroin overdose deaths rise, many counties are focusing on trying to reduce demand for the drug, more than trying to control the supply.

Ocean County, N.J. saw nine deaths in eight days in April, and the county is on pace to more than double its 53 overdose deaths during 2012. Immediately to the north, Monmouth County overtook Essex County for drug reporting, which prompted the Acting Prosecutor Christopher Gramiccioni to take a different approach to combating the drug use.

"We're right off of I-95, between Philadelphia and New York, the supply is going to be a problem," said Charlie Webster, the office spokesman. "We can't do as much to stop the supply as we can to try to prevent our citizens from getting hooked. And it's so pure, this is a dozen times more potent than we saw in the '70s."

A study by the British Medical Association subsidiary MBJ Group found the average inflation-adjusted and purity-adjusted price of heroin in the United States decreased by 81 percent between 1990 and 2007, and average purity increased by 60 percent.

For Monmouth, that means hitting the schools. Gramiccioni is in the middle of a swing through the county schools' back-to-school

nights to recruit parents to help the fight.

"You get a lot of denial from parents; they don't want to hear there's a problem," Webster said. "We have to use a shock-and-awe presentation to let them know how bad it is. They think, 'It could never be our kids.' It has been their kids."

Given the 34-percent increase in use among 18–25 year-olds in New Jersey over the course of one year, the high school age group seems to be a sweet spot. Between 2011 and 2012, the number of 18–25 year-olds who took heroin intravenously increased by 30 percent, according to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Smoking the drug saw a 23 percent increase and snorting it an 18 percent increase.

"For the most part, we're the

## SpeedRead » » »

- » Heroin usage is increasing across the country
- » The supply of heroin and its potency have skyrocketed recently and price has dropped dramatically
- » Many people are moving to heroin from prescription painkillers

She still plans to focus on trying to affect the supply, in addition to reducing demand.

"I think we have to do both, stop how much is available, it's too easy to get," she said.

In addition to prior drug users trying heroin out, many transition to the drug from prescription painkillers, and they have been nudged, in part, by stricter regulations on opiate prescriptions. Jefferson County, Wis. saw a shift in the last six years. The stretch from 2008 to 2010 saw higher incidences of opiate abuse, which Margo Gray, a detective sergeant for Jefferson County Drug Task Force said resulted from overprescription of oxycodone for sports and occupational injuries.

"Doctors would give it to a football player with a bad back, a worker with a bad shoulder; it seemed like the right fix for people," she said. "Now pharmacies are more strict and these patients are finding a new way to feed their addictions."

Midway through 2013, Jefferson County authorities had seized five grams of heroin, more than all of 2012. Though five grams seems insignificant, Gray said a typical

See **HEROIN** page 4

## Counties eye social impact bonds to fund human services needs

By CHARLES TAYLOR  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

**WEB\*  
CONTENT**

Two counties more than 2,100 miles apart — Santa Clara County, Calif. and Cuyahoga County, Ohio — are among the first counties in the nation to explore a new financing model to address some of their thorniest social problems.

The Santa Clara County, Calif. Board of Supervisors recently voted to put financial skin in the game, allocating \$75,000 toward hiring a consultant to structure two Pay for Success pilots aimed at improving services and outcomes for the mentally ill and homeless populations. It's the county's share of \$225,000, the balance of which will be paid by

foundations and nonprofits.

Pay for Success uses performance-based contracting to address human services needs that typically are the responsibility of government by securing up-front funding from philanthropic investors. It's also known as social impact financing or, commonly, social impact bonds (SIB). Investors are repaid only if predetermined targeted outcomes are achieved — as judged by an independent evaluator.

"We determined not only did it make enough sense on paper, but there was enough of a start in a couple of other places that we're not completely alone in this," said Dave Cortese, the Santa Clara County supervisor who has been one of the leading proponents of

pay for success.

Cuyahoga County is evaluating responses from agencies and organizations interested in partnering with the county on Pay for Success projects and is close to announcing which social issues are to be addressed, according to David Merriman, the county's deputy chief of staff for health and human services. The Santa Barbara County, Calif. Board of Supervisors recently approved a feasibility study of a pilot program to reduce recidivism.

The largest-scale SIB project to date, started in 2010 at Peterborough Prison near London in the United Kingdom, targets recidivism. Early results have shown a slight drop in reconvictions of released short-term inmates, according to a U.K. Ministry of Justice report. Social Finance UK,

See **SUCCESS** page 5

## How 'Pay for Success' works

Santa Clara County, Calif. provided the following example of how a Pay for Success might be structured:

- A foundation or private investor agrees, for example, to pay upfront \$100,000 to contract with a nonprofit or community organization for health services for homeless individuals and families.
- The contract spells out outcomes that must be reached before the county reimburses the investor or foundation. For example, the nonprofit must provide basic health care for 100 clients in a year.
- A health clinic is set up and the nonprofit works with other agencies and nonprofits that help the homeless to bring in clients to receive the care.
- The county pays only when outcomes are reached as determined and evaluated by an independent partner. The investor or foundation recovers the \$100,000 with interest, or reinvests it in the program so more homeless can receive health care.

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## In Case You Missed It

### News to Use From Past County News

#### » NACo introduces new Grants Clearinghouse

On Sept. 23, NACo launched a significant upgrade to the Grants Clearinghouse. The new clearinghouse now boasts enhanced search features, up-to-date listings of federal, state, corporate and foundation grants available to counties and community-based organizations. It also offers nearly 10 times as many grant opportunities.

Visit [www.nacogrants.org](http://www.nacogrants.org) and use the comprehensive search engine to find a grant for your county.



# Partnerships key to Miami-Dade parks' success

By CHARLES TAYLOR  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Laura Ortiz might not be a drill sergeant, but she knows how to put her “recruits” through their paces.

Ortiz is one of two dozen military veterans in Miami-Dade County, Fla. who will be leading adult fitness classes for the county's parks department under a program called Troops for Fitness.

The partnership is the latest example of several collaborations Miami-Dade parks department is involved in, a trend that's growing nationwide, according to the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

Due to economic conditions, Miami-Dade's Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces department has shed 450 full-time employees over the past five years, according to Jack Kardys, parks director.

The downsizing has hit neighborhood parks in unincorporated areas of the county especially hard, he added, and that's where the Troops for Fitness program will focus. Unlike larger parks, these community parks don't collect



Photo courtesy of Miami-Dade County, Fla.

Laura Ortiz, a military veteran who lost her leg in a motorcycle accident, greets a group of kids on the launch day of the Coca-Cola Troops for Fitness program. She and two dozen other vets will lead fitness programs in Miami-Dade County parks.

parking fees or charge users.

Instructors will work part time, about 30 hours a week, Kardys said, earning about \$10 per hour or “a little north” of that. A three-year,

\$192,000 grant from Coca-Cola and managed by NRPA, announced last month, funds the program.

Ortiz, a former Army reservist, lost her right leg below the knee in

a non-service-related motorcycle accident. She's “thrilled” about the program's potential to help veterans as well as residents, and sees it as the county's way of giving back.

“It's kind of saying thank you for your service and we haven't forgotten about you, and here's this great program you can be a part of,” she said. “In your eyes, I might have a disability; I don't look at it as that. I might do things a little different to adapt to my reality, but ... this body's built to move.”

Troops for Fitness instructors will be able to use state-of-the-art exercise equipment at 14 county parks—the result of another collaboration. The Trust for Public Land helped secure \$500,000, matched by the county, to purchase and install the equipment, Kardys said.

Clusters of outdoor gym equipment called TPL Fitness Zones are being installed in designated parks. Funding was provided by MetLife Foundation, Health Foundation of South Florida and The Miami Foundation.

The equipment is similar to what you might find in a private gym, but is more durable to resist weather and vandalism and appropriate for use by kids age 13 and older, and adults of all fitness levels.

See **TROOPS** page 6

## [cover your assets]

October marks National Cyber Security Awareness Month (NCSAM) and in honor of this awareness campaign, NACo is excited to offer a number of cybersecurity educational opportunities!

NACo's new publication, the Cyber for Counties Guidebook, is now available for download via [www.cyberguidebook.com](http://www.cyberguidebook.com). Check it out for resources, best practices, and tangible tools that county officials and IT staff can use to protect themselves and their counties from a cyber-attack.



There are 3 more webinars in the Cyber for Counties Webinar Series streaming live from 2 p.m.–3:15 p.m. EDT Wednesdays in October! Join us on October 16 to learn about Cyber Education and the Next Generation of Cyber Leaders, on October 23 to explore Cyber Crime and on October 30 for the last installment focusing on Cybersecurity and Critical Infrastructure. Visit [www.naco.org/research/Education/Pages/Webinars.aspx](http://www.naco.org/research/Education/Pages/Webinars.aspx) to register today!





# Broward County among first to 'tweet' for public safety

By CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON  
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT



In a growing number of counties, the use of social media as a primary mode of communication is fundamentally changing the way counties interact with the media and citizens.

Broward County, Fla., whose Twitter account @ReadyBroward is an official source of emergency information for its residents, is among the first counties in the nation to participate in Twitter's new public safety service Twitter Alerts.

"Twitter Alerts is another 'tool in the toolbox' for getting emergency alerts and other public safety messaging out to the public," Ric Barrick, Broward County assistant director in the office of public communications, said. "We are honored to be one of the first counties to participate in this."

The alert allows subscribers to receive emergency information

## SpeedRead » » »

- » Broward County, Fla. among the first to use Twitter Alerts
- » Building on success of using Twitter during Hurricane Sandy to convey damage and available services
- » Security a main concern with the alerts, counties will need to monitor

such as public safety warnings and evacuation instructions from vetted, credible organizations, immediately and in real time, through their traditional Twitter timeline feed, and as a special notification or text message on a mobile device. The tweets are distinguished by an orange bell and the hashtag #Alert.

Users who sign up can receive smartphone notifications via Twitter as well as SMS text messages from the county. Residents can

also sign up for alerts from several organizations directly.

Other counties and organizations participating in the program include El Paso County, Colo. Emergency Management, the American Red Cross, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

According to Twitter, participating counties and organizations can only use these alerts for "warnings for imminent dangers, preventative instructions, evacuation directions, urgent safety alerts, information on access to essential resources, critical transit and utility outages, and crowd management."

The program begins a year after Twitter showed its potential as a lifeline during Hurricane Sandy, when stranded residents on the U.S. eastern seaboard reported the storm's progress and sought help on the mobile network. But counties need to keep an eye out

for tweets of misinformation that can cause problems down the line.

Last fall, the New York City Fire Department used Twitter to communicate during Hurricane Sandy but had pranksters spreading misinformation including a rumor that the New York Stock Exchange was submerged under water. Twitter, for its part, has maintained a strictly hands-off attitude toward monitoring its content and denies responsibility for ensuring its accuracy, leaving it up to the account holders to monitor their tweets.

To ensure authenticity, Broward County currently has a five-step system to verify the tweets in a timely manner:

- PIO drafts the tweet
- the assistant director or director of public communications edits or approves
- director or assistant director

of emergency management edits and approves

• in case of an evacuation, the Broward County Sheriff's Office would approve, and

• lastly it would go to the county administrator for approval and then to the social media coordinator in the office of communications, the only person authorized to send the tweet.

"As our tweets are thoroughly vetted, rumor control is basically a reactive exercise based on what non-county employee chatter is produced by other Twitter accounts," Barrick added. "The best thing other counties can do is have a system in place to ensure accuracy of the alerts."

*\*To learn more about how counties can use Twitter Alerts, read this story online at [www.countynews.org](http://www.countynews.org).*

## Price, ease of access fuel heroin growth

HEROIN from page 2

dosage amounts to between one-hundredth and four-hundredths of a gram, each fetching \$20 on the street.

"It's actually cheaper than oxycotin," Gray said, "so it makes more sense, especially when their tolerance builds up and they have to buy higher quantities to get the same high."

Jefferson County authorities are opening their ears and listening to whatever users can tell them about their heroin habits, to reverse-engineer the addiction.

"We get them to educate us, any way they're willing," Gray said. "How does it make them feel? How did they wind up in this situation. We'll pick anybody's brain to get some insight."

Jackson County, Ore. is going to be the source of some of the gateways

to opiate abuse — the doctors who prescribe them — to prevent people from being hooked in the first place.

Jim Shames, medical director for Jackson County Health and Human Services, gathered doctors and other health care providers and put more responsibility to physicians to level with patients on the risks of painkiller addiction.

"If they don't prescribe them properly, they're being irresponsible," said Michele Morales, addiction services manager for Jackson County. "Opiates only work for chronic pain in a small population, for everyone else there are more appropriate treatments."

Shames and the county produced a booklet on opiate prescription guidelines. The county's law enforcement agencies are also doing prescriber postmortems, for which a drug overdose death is reported to the doctor who prescribed medicine

to the victim, if a medication bottle is found in their home, so the doctor can look into the patient's history.

A federal grant of nearly \$400,000 will help Jackson County address several aspects of opiate abuse.

It will connect physicians to the state's prescription drug monitoring program, pay for public education campaigns and crisis intervention training for law enforcement.

Many Florida counties have cracked down on "pill mill" pain management centers, where prescriptions for painkillers could be easily obtained. And doctors have been prosecuted.

Jefferson County's Gray said beyond the people addicted, heroin use affects the entire community.

"When people have a \$200-\$300 a day habit, they need money," she said. "We see an increase in property crimes, scrap metal thefts, car break-ins. They'll steal, pawn everything."

That also means stress on landlords not getting rent payments, human services agencies caring for children of addicts and worries about people who drive under the influence.

"Everything law enforcement-related is affected when drug addictions are involved," she said.

*\*See this story at [www.countynews.org](http://www.countynews.org) to see Jackson County, Ore.'s opiate prescription guideline publication.*

## Profiles in Service



### » Nancy Schouweiler

NACo Board of Directors  
Justice and Public Safety Steering Committee  
vice-chair

Commissioner, Dakota County, Minn.

**Number of years active in NACo:** 11

**Years in public service:** 24 – 10 years school board; 14 county board

**Occupation:** county commissioner

**Education:** M.A. in public administration

**The hardest thing I've ever done:** my first campaign for county board

**Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner:** Dr. Martin Luther King, Barack Obama and my son Russell

**A dream I have is to:** run for re-election unopposed.

**You'd be surprised to learn that I:** have seen a professional baseball game in 38 different Major League ballparks.

**The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:** run for elected office.

**My favorite way to relax is:** play with my grandkids.

**I'm most proud of:** my two children.

**Every morning I read:** *The St. Paul Pioneer Press*; my emails.

**My favorite meal is:** turkey with all the fixings.

**My pet peeve is:** people who complain but fail to act.

**My motto is:** "Destiny is not a matter of chance, it is a matter of choice. It is not something to be waited for but rather, something to be achieved" — Wm. Jennings Bryan

**The last book I read was:** *Lots of Candles, Plenty of Cake* by Anna Quindlen.

**My favorite movie is:** *Rear Window* starring Jimmy Stewart.

**My favorite music is:** anything by Neil Diamond.

**My favorite president is:** Harry Truman.

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# No stats now – no stats later: Access to county data shut

If you're hoping the shutdown ends soon so you can have access to county-level data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis, think again — because if the shutdown doesn't get you, sequestration will.

The impact of sequestration and reduced FY13 funding levels for the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) translates into reductions in the bureau's local area personal income (LAPI) program, including county-level statistics.

BEA's personal income and employment statistics have provided all counties and parishes — ranging in size from almost 10 million residents in Los Angeles County to just 71 residents in Loving County, Texas — with detailed,

time-series, information on their varied economies. According to BEA, the reductions to its LAPI program will impact the ability of individual counties to understand the industrial composition and track changes over time to their local economies.

Fairfax County, Va. spokeswoman Merni Fitzgerald agrees with BEA's assessment. "This plan would discontinue a valuable source of information on state and local economic indicators such as state and metro area GDP. We use the state GDP to develop an estimate of Fairfax County's GDP, which in turn is used by our county staff in econometric models to forecast county revenue sources. Eliminating this data will

negatively impact our forecasting capabilities," she said.

As part of the reductions, BEA will eliminate the release of employment-by-industry statistics for all counties and metropolitan areas. These statistics, which include both wage and salary employment and proprietors' employment, have provided counties with information about the structure of their workforces. For example, users can track if a county's employment situation has shifted from a manufacturing-based workforce to more of a service-based one over time.

In addition to discontinuing local area employment statistics, BEA is also reducing the amount of industrial-level statistics it provides on the earnings and compensation of employees at the county. Statistics will only be available for broad industry groups

such as mining, durable goods manufacturing and retail trade. As an example, counties will no longer be able to determine how the earnings of people working in the durable goods manufacturing sector differ between such diverse sub-industry groups as wood product manufacturing and computer and electronic manufacturing.

BEA is also eliminating the publication of detailed statistics underlying the Current Transfer Receipts and Farm Income and Expenses components of personal income. The transfer receipts statistics provide information on programs such as Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid payments, which help local jurisdictions, both rural and urban, plan their economic strategies and future expectations based on the impact of retirement and medical benefits received by their residents.

The farm income and expenses statistics (Table CA45) provide counties with large agricultural economies information on cash receipts from sales of specific commodities and related production expenses; giving context to an extremely volatile sector of the economy.

Finally, BEA is planning to eliminate the production of statistics for "BEA Economic Areas." These county-based geographic aggregates define relevant regional markets surrounding metropolitan or micropolitan statistical areas that serve as regional centers of economic activity.

For further questions on the impact of the sequestration on BEA's county estimates of personal income and employment, please contact BEA — when the shutdown ends — at [reis@bea.gov](mailto:reis@bea.gov) or 202.606.5360.

## CFPB Toolkit helps with student debt

Do you have recent college graduates in your public safety, or parks and recreation or information technology departments? If you have, chances are they came with student loan debt.

To help employers provide information about student loan forgiveness programs to their employees, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) has published a toolkit — the Employer's Guide to Assisting Employees with Student Loan Repayment.

Public sector employees with student debt are eligible for special repayment plans.

The toolkit offers practical advice to public sector employers and employees, advising that an early start can make the difference of thousands of dollars. It includes:

- an action guide for employers that details the steps they should take in providing information to their employees, such as helping employees certify and checking in with them annually about their repayments
- an action guide for borrowers that tells them how to qualify for benefits, what their options are and important things they should consider
- a sample letter from public service employers to employees that says they are a qualified employer under the federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, and
- a set of frequently asked questions, like how employers can help their workers know whether they are in the best repayment plan.

### Toolkit Tips

- Take advantage of the Income-Based Repayment plan, a federal student loan program that allows all federal loan borrowers to set their monthly payments at a fixed percentage of their income.
- Check out Repay Student Debt, a Web tool that can help borrowers understand all of their repayment options for both private and federal loans, and
- Include student loan forgiveness programs in benefits packages when new employees come onboard, during open season for benefits enrollment, and when sending out IRS W-2 forms.

### A Public Service Pledge

The CFPB is also launching a new public service pledge on student debt to empower thousands of public service employers to help their workers tackle student loans.

The pledge asks employers to make a commitment to talk to their workers about student debt, help them understand their options, and assist them in enrolling in student loan repayment benefits.

Interested public service employers can take the Public Service Pledge by visiting [www.consumerfinance.gov/pledge](http://www.consumerfinance.gov/pledge).

## Foundations, nonprofits see potential in pay for success pilot programs

**SUCCESS** from page 2

which is managing the pilot, said the first data for evaluation of the pilot is expected in early 2014.

"Because the concept of SIBs is so new... information about how — and how well — they could work is currently very limited," according to a May 2012 report by McKinsey & Company, From Potential to Action: Bringing Social Impact Bonds to the U.S., which analyzed the feasibility and potential of SIBs.

Despite the newness of SIBs, the counties interviewed for this article see enough potential — with little risk to themselves — to try this prevention-based approach to social problems.

George Graves, Santa Clara County's chief operating officer, said if there is risk, it appears to be minimal. "I don't know that I'd describe it as a risk other than the \$75,000 that we're putting up," he said. "I think that at this point in time, considering the economic circumstances, I think it's our responsibility to fully explore any option that has the potential of bringing resources to address the kinds of problems we're talking about, whether they are homelessness or recidivism or how to better provide options for step-down [mental health] services."

Cuyahoga County was also approached by the local philanthropic community with a concept that fit into County Executive Ed

FitzGerald's new results-oriented approach to county government. The George Gund Foundation is supporting the work in Cuyahoga County.

Caroline Whistler is a co-founder of Third Sector Capital Partners, Boston-based consultants working with Cuyahoga and Santa Clara to help structure their pilots. "In some cases, nonprofits are absolutely driving this," she said, "but it's also something that private foundations are pushing forward as well as, in some cases, governments themselves."

Third Sector is serving as what's known in SIB parlance as an "intermediary." The role varies, according to Rebecca Leventhal of Social Finance US, another social finance consultant and sister organization Social Finance UK. Intermediaries work with governments on social impact pilots in roles that range from identifying potential funders and evaluating which social is-

suces to tackle, to structuring the financing and choosing agencies to provide services.

Though Graves is a bit skeptical about the county's realizing "cashable" savings through pay for success pilots, he said there may be value if service providers who receive social innovation funding can achieve desired outcomes more quickly or at no greater cost than if there county were providing the service. Cortese, the Santa Clara supervisor, agrees.

"The good news is that we're structuring these two pilot projects, and that's exactly what they are, let's see if they work," he said. "These are the ones that are the lowest hanging fruit. And it's going to get harder from here on out in terms of finding projects where we can really expect to see any kind of savings to be shared."

\* See this story at [www.countynews.org](http://www.countynews.org) for more.



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## RESILIENCE MATTERS

# Three Tips for Getting Emergency Information to the Public

By JENNIFER KAPLAN  
GOVDELIVERY

(On the 2013 anniversary of 9/11, GovDelivery posted an article on its blog about communicating to the public in times of emergencies. The following is excerpted from the post.)

### 1. Build Your Audience

While organizations should focus and plan for outbound communications during an emergency, it's even more critical for them to focus on who they will communicate with. Powerful technology tools and strategies are critical for emergency messaging, but your message won't matter if no one sees it.

When an emergency strikes, that's not the time to try and find an audience of people in an affected area. Emergency groups must collect and engage a digital audience throughout the year, making it easier

to connect with more people during an emergency.

All departments within government organizations should be building a direct audience of email addresses and phone numbers daily. If someone signs up for parks and recreation updates, they should be prompted to sign up for emergency communications at the same time.

### 2. Reaching People in a Mobile World

Most emergency communicators have an e911 list that gives them the ability to call landlines in an affected area. But the plain truth is that in today's world, landlines are dying. Data from a recent CDC study that showed more than 50 percent of Americans don't have or use landline phones. Combine that with the fact that there are more than 322 million wireless phones in the United States, and emergency com-

municators now have a daunting task of reaching everyone on the go.

While it's important to reach landlines, emergency managers who rely mainly on e911 technology are not reaching everyone they need to. Government organizations charged with keeping citizens safe and informed need to find new ways to communicate, across old and new channels, to provide safety information to citizens during an emergency.

To reach the broadest audience, emergency communications need a multichannel approach: send emails, SMS text messages, voice messages, social media posts and display emergency information with a prominent Web banner. And if you want to take your efficiency to the next level, you should be able to disseminate your emergency message across all these channels from one platform.

Bonus tip: make sure your organization is able to integrate with FEMA's IPAWS system, which can further disseminate your message across TV, radio, digital signs, and mobile push notifications (like Amber Alerts).

### 3. Focus on the Content, not the Process

But what about when an emergency really does hit? Are you focusing on content or process? Is it easy for you to get a message out, or are you fumbling with a system that you haven't used in months?

Earlier I mentioned the importance of working across departments to build an audience, and the execution process is no different. If emergency management and other departments combine forces and integrate communications, the key communications staff will be familiar with the system and will be prepared and trained on how to send a message.

Having an emergency response plan in place is critical, but emergency management personnel also need to use updated technology to take advantage of communications tools that are simple and automated. Because during an emergency, if you can save a few hours, minutes or even seconds by using automation, that matters.

A Google vice president advises government organizations to publish alerts using open Web formats like RSS. Not only does that make this data available to Google (making it searchable), but it also makes the data available for automated and immediate outbound messaging on services such as email, SMS, social media and more.

The most successful emergency managers will leverage the strategies around sending critical information directly to the public, while also making that information available and open online. In the end, the more people you reach, the more people you'll save.

(Excerpted with permission from a Sept. 11, 2013 GovDelivery.com blog post. Visit <http://bit.ly/182NmRt> to read the post in its entirety.)

## Counties march on after federal shutdown

COUNTIES from page 1

When the council reconvenes Oct. 8, it will evaluate whether to continue funding the program, which will, of course, depend on whether the federal budget situation has been resolved.

"The hope is the shutdown ends before they have to take any further action," said Mike Maxwell, aide to Council Chairman Steve DeBry. "There was talk of seeing if local nonprofits could pick up the slack, but in the end the council decided to make sure everything was provided for the program while the government worked things out for a week."

The program serves more than 25,000 people, out of more than 1.1 million in the county.

Maxwell said it was unclear whether, when the federal funding resumes, the county would be reimbursed.

"We hope so, but these people are important and we did what we could for them," he said. "We're crossing out fingers on the reimbursement."

Palm Beach County, Fla.'s Head Start program was also at risk until the County Commission passed stopgap funding through Oct. 25, to the tune of \$1.5 million. It will consider an extension Oct. 22.

"There's a big unknown, how long the process will take for the feds to get their act together," said Jon Van Arnem, an assistant county administrator.

Disruption would have directly furloughed 225 employees, and between 100 and 200 contracted employees. More than 2,300 children are cared for in the full-day, year-round preschool program.

"The commissioners felt despite the risk of not getting funds back (by reimbursement), it was still the right thing to do," he said.

## Parks foundation leads partnership efforts

TROOPS from page 3

In another public-private collaboration, more than three dozen low-income children are receiving scholarships to Miami-Dade Parks' Fit2Play after-school program.

It's a partnership between United Healthcare, CBS EcoMedia and the Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade that supports evidenced-based programming which the University of Miami has shown to prevent obesity and decrease hypertension in children. United Healthcare provided \$74,000 toward the program this year.

"Corporations respond to measurable results, and with a program studied and endorsed by the University of Miami, we can literally prove our programs," Kardys said. "That carries a lot of weight with companies careful about how and where they invest."

"There are a lot of companies that share the same objectives as we do, and just getting them together and connecting those dots really has helped sustain an awful lot of programs here in Miami-Dade County."

In all of these partnerships, the Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade County has played a leading role. Last year, it raised \$800,000 to enhance parks and park program-



Photo courtesy of Miami-Dade County, Fla.

A Miami-Dade County employee encourages a park user at Blue Lakes Park on TPL Fitness Zone exercise equipment, purchased through a partnership between the Trust for Public Land and Miami-Dade Parks.

ming, according to its 2012 Annual Report. "More and more, well-respected companies are keenly aware of the economic, social and health benefits of investing in parks and parks programming," said Dick Anderson, president of the parks foundation and two-time Super Bowl champion with the Miami Dolphins.

NRPA is helping to broker additional roll outs of Troops for Fitness nationwide and works with parks departments across the country to help them leverage outside

funding. Jimmy O'Connor is in charge of partnership and business development.

He praised Miami-Dade's efforts and its leaders for making parks and rec a part of a "larger conversation" about infrastructure and building community.

"Miami-Dade Parks, Recreation and Open Space, they are at the table and often sort of leading the conversation. That does make them unique," he said. "It's a model that we think is successful, and we would like to see other counties look at."

### Quick Takes

#### Funny Town Names

Tightwad, Mo. (Henry County)  
Why, Ariz. (Pima County)  
Boring, Ore. (Clackamas)  
California, Pa. (Washington County)  
Florida, N.Y. (Montgomery County)

AARP, July 2013



# Online sales tax law needs simplicity

INTERNET SALES from page 1

principles acknowledges that the inability to collect sales taxes on online purchases hampers local brick-and-mortar businesses, and hurts state and local governments.

Goodlatte’s seven principles are intended to guide discussion, although no clear timeline for House legislative action has been revealed. The principles are:

- Tax relief – No new or discriminatory taxes should be created for Internet users.
- Tech neutrality – All business, whether exclusively online or brick and mortar, should be on equal footing with no particular model having any additional burden or advantage.
- No regulation without representation – Those who would bear state taxation, regulation and compliance burdens should have means to protest unfair, unwise or discriminatory rates and enforcement.
- Simplicity – The law should be so simple for businesses to comply with that a small-seller exemption would be unnecessary.
- Tax competition – Governments should be encouraged to compete with one another to keep tax rates low and American businesses should not be disadvantaged compared to foreign competitors.
- States’ rights – States should be sovereign within physical boundaries and the federal government should not mandate that states impose sales tax compliance burdens, and
- Privacy rights – Sensitive customer data must be protected.

Enacting marketplace fairness legislation, a top NACo priority, would not only create a level playing field for local businesses, it would also grant state and local governments the ability to enforce existing sales tax laws and stop the loss of billions of dollars in uncollected sales taxes in e-commerce every year, estimated to be more than \$23 billion in 2012.

Yejin Jang, associate legislative director, contributed to this report.

*\*Read this story online at [www.countynews.org](http://www.countynews.org) to see NACo’s policy brief on remote sales taxes.*

# FEMA emergency operations continue during shutdown

SHUTDOWN from page 1

is funded from FY13 appropriations.

- The Career and Technical Education Grant funding will also continue because the program is funded from FY13 appropriations.
- Pell Grant and Direct Student Loans obligations and payments will continue.

## Environmental Protection Agency

- Most of the 17,000 employees are furloughed.
- EPA programs that involve state and local partners, such as the Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) and Superfund programs will continue.

## Department of Health and Human Services

- State Medicaid programs should not be disrupted since the federal match is distributed prospectively on a quarterly basis. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) administrative functions, like processing state waiver applications will be halted.
- Implementation of the Affordable Care Act should largely proceed because mandatory funding was included in the act itself.
- States will not receive quarterly payments for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Block Grant, but will be able to use carryover funds from FY13.
- Foster Care IV-E and Child Support operations will continue.
- There will be no new funds for Head Start and no quarterly fund distributions for the Social Services Block Grant, Child Welfare, Child Care and Refugee programs, except that some essential activities under the Unaccompanied Alien Children program will continue.
- The Administration for Community Living will not have new funds for the senior nutrition programs.

## Department of Homeland Security

- Emergency operations under the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) will continue.
- Non-emergency FEMA disaster grants will not have new funding.
- State and local grants will not have new funding.

- Border enforcement will continue.

## Department of Housing and Urban Development

- Federal Housing Administration (FHA) will be able to endorse single-family loans and FHA staff will be available to underwrite and approve loans.
- HUD will continue to disburse payments to cities, counties and states for CDBG, HOME funds and other block grant funds in cases that have been appropriated and authorized under a grant agreement.
- Disaster Recovery Assistance Programs will be funded through multi-year appropriations.
- Essential housing and emergency services for homeless persons will continue.
- There will be no processing of Sustainable Communities grants.
- Additional payments to Public Housing Authorities (PHA) will stop. PHAs could still issue vouchers during a shutdown. However, HUD will be unable to provide additional funds.
- Nearly all of the Fair Housing agency housing activities will cease.

## Department of the Interior

- All areas of the National Park and National Wildlife Refuge systems will be closed and public access will be restricted.
- The Bureau of Land Management will terminate all non-emergency activities on public lands.
- Only those activities needed to respond to emergency situations will be conducted by the Office of Surface Mining.
- The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement will continue to ensure the safety of drilling and production operations and issue drilling and other offshore permits, however renewable activities and five-year plan work will be terminated.
- A total of 7,707 personnel are exempt from being furloughed in order to protect life and property, including law enforcement, wild-land fire, emergency response and security, animal caretakers, maintenance and other personnel who will be focused on the custodial care of lands and facilities, and protection of life and property.

## Department of Justice

- State Criminal Alien Assistance Program reimbursement claims will not be processed.
- There will be no new funding

for grant programs such as Byrne JAG, Juvenile Justice, the Office of Violence Against Women and Community Policing, but they can continue operating with carryover funds from FY13.

- Training for state and local officers will be discontinued during the shutdown.

## Department of Labor

- Unemployment insurance operations will function except for administrative costs reimbursements.
- Workforce Investment Act adults, dislocated workers and youth grants that have already been obligated can continue to be drawn down. Any of those to be issued after Oct. 1 will not be available for draw down until the government reopened. Technical assistance will be limited.
- Disaster National Emergency Grants will be accepted.

## Department of Transportation

- Federal highway programs are not affected because they are

funded through the Highway Trust Fund.

- Air traffic controllers will stay on the job.
- Most of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will be furloughed, which will affect new grant applications.
- The FTA has exempted individuals working on Hurricane Sandy recovery efforts from the furloughs.

## Department of the Treasury

- Fiscal Service will maintain payments, collections, and daily cash management and processing of essential authority-appropriation transactions based on applicable statutes. This includes resources to support disbursement of interest on the debt, and disbursements of Social Security and other federal benefits.
- Internal Revenue Service Office of Tax Exempt and Government Entities will be limited to five employees to ensure statute protection during the shutdown period.

## Word Search

### Marin County, Calif. Facts

Learn more about this featured county in 'What's in a Seal?'

C	P	T	A	K	C	R	D	S	Y	O	Q	F	O	A	S	K	G	J	Y
S	A	E	C	Z	G	E	I	T	T	Q	L	Q	O	K	T	E	V	F	T
U	O	L	D	T	C	X	P	Z	H	A	K	I	Y	E	R	J	P	R	S
G	L	K	I	E	L	O	S	O	E	T	R	W	G	M	V	W	R	A	X
X	S	F	I	F	T	B	E	D	E	Y	A	T	A	P	W	K	B	N	A
K	P	J	O	N	O	A	A	L	T	L	H	N	R	F	V	C	V	K	Z
A	M	O	N	O	S	R	P	V	K	O	Z	G	I	E	B	U	A	L	P
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C	D	B	C	Q	O	C	A	F	C	G	Y	O	J	S	I	C	K	R	F
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G	N	I	K	I	B	N	I	A	T	N	U	O	M	I	X	V	P	G	E
J	V	S	S	E	J	V	N	J	R	J	Q	K	Q	A	S	Q	Q	H	P
J	D	U	I	U	I	G	Q	J	I	F	A	H	P	F	E	T	D	T	I
O	I	E	B	C	F	M	V	C	S	A	N	Q	U	E	N	T	I	N	E
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L	I	V	G	Y	S	B	M	O	K	S	Q	B	S	H	C	N	O	I	O

**BARBARA BOXER** (California senator from county)  
**CALIFORNIA FLORISTIC** (province that is home of the giant sequoia tree)  
**CIVIC CENTER** (on county seal, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright)  
**DIPSEA** (America's oldest cross-country running event)  
**FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT** (famous American architect)  
**GERMAN** (lineage that makes up 16 percent of county population)

**MOUNTAIN BIKING** (created in Marin County)  
**SAN FRANCISCO** (county to the south)  
**SAN QUENTIN** (prison in the county)  
**SIX** (number of state parks in county)  
**SKYWALKER RANCH** (George Lucas' home in county)  
**SONOMA** (county to the north)  
**STAR TREK IV** (1986 movie shot in county)  
  
Created by Christopher Johnson



**Under the leadership of President Linda Langston, the National Association of Counties is embarking on an initiative in 2013 and 2014 to strengthen the resilience of the nation's 3,069 counties.**

In order to remain healthy, vibrant, safe and economically competitive, America's counties must be able to anticipate and adapt to all types of change. Through the Resilient Counties initiative, NACo will work with counties and their stakeholders to bolster their ability to thrive amid changing physical, social and economic conditions.

Within this initiative, NACo will sponsor trainings, peer networking and resource development to support county executives and other public- and private-sector partners seeking to build county resilience. Watch [NACo.org](http://NACo.org) for information about upcoming forums, workshops, webinars, publications and more!

Photo courtesy of Linn County, Iowa



Linn County, Iowa's Emergency Operations Center was in full swing in June of 2008 as its county seat, Cedar Rapids, underwent some of the worst flooding in the city's history. About 1,300 blocks or 10 square miles, including most of the downtown area, were inundated. Pictured here are Linn County Supervisors Linda Langston and Jim Houser (left) discussing media strategy with Sony Dagget (right), who was contracted by the county to assist with communications.

## Contact

For more information and details on how to get involved, contact NACo Program Director Kathy Nothstine at [knothstine@naco.org](mailto:knothstine@naco.org) or 202.661.8807.

Visit [www.naco.org/resiliency](http://www.naco.org/resiliency) or scan the QR code for instant access on your mobile device.







# County Innovations and Solutions

Suffolk County, N.Y.

## Stripped-Down Food Inspection Aids Disaster Recovery

By CHARLIE BAN  
STAFF WRITER

When the power goes out, food goes bad.

The realities of preserving large quantities of food get complicated during a disaster that takes out electricity for a highly populated area. When residential refrigerators stop working, their owners are going to look for somewhere else to get food. That means the commercial food establishments have to be ready and able to supply it safely.

Suffolk County, N.Y. has more than 4,500 such businesses, and after 2011's Hurricane Irene, the Bureau of Health Protection (BHP) management realized it needed a stripped-down approach to checking on health conditions where people could buy food.

"While BHP personnel are not first responders at an emergency scene, they aren't far behind," said Stephen Kane, assistant chief of the bureau. "Our 'second responders' will be the ones on the ground making sure everything is stored properly."

Kane and his department had to figure out the best way to get a lot of inspections done quickly. Their solution: concentrate on the basics and temporarily expand the number



Photo courtesy of Suffolk County, N.Y.

A member of the Suffolk County, N.Y. Department of Health Services conducts a health inspection at a restaurant.

of inspectors.

As conditions warrant, the bureau conscripts employees from other areas and sends them out to do an emergency-level inspection, part of an emergency inspection protocol revision it calls the "emergency response kit."

"It's not quite what would be part of a routine health inspection," he said. "We're not worried so much about the floors, the ceilings, baseboards, walls. We just want to know the food is stored safely so it won't make a disaster even worse. That makes it a lot easier to send the uninitiated out to do these inspections."

"You hope a lot of places have made contingency plans: restricted menus, refrigerated vehicles to store food."

These newly minted inspectors are looking for whether wastewater is being disposed of properly, if there is a clean water supply, if food is being kept cold and if all the basic bases of environmental health are covered. They're usually paired up with more experienced inspectors and sent to the same area.

They're uninitiated, but not unqualified. The personnel pulled to emergency inspection duty have basic public health training, but work in other arenas.

"The roadblock that we have to overcome is developing confidence," Kane said. "That comes quickly with doing rapid number of inspections. After a dozen or so, they not only know the drill but feel comfortable not having to look at notes too much."

A little more than a year after Hurricane Irene put the program in motion, the bureau of public health inspection put the emergency response training and "go packs" to use.

Superstorm Sandy hit and in five days, inspectors visited 2,332 food service establishments, 44 hotels and 39 mobile home parks, which resulted in three million pounds of unhealthy food being thrown away. It was a 69 percent increase in the total number of inspections performed as part of the Irene response.

The training was free, the supplies were already on hand and untold numbers of residents were spared the risk of eating food that had spoiled.

"Sandy, if nothing else, was fortuitous in terms of improving our inspection processes," Kane said. "We viewed it as a success for the department."

*County Innovations and Solutions highlights award-winning programs.*

## The H.R. Doctor Is In

## Looking Up: Astronomy Breeds Optimism

Optimism is the breeding ground of success. We are learning that our brains reject negativity. We are also learning that being optimistic helps a person live longer and engage more enjoyably with family, friends and coworkers.

My own clinical observations as a human resources leader confirm that optimism also helps get you recognized as a go-to person. This, in turn, leads to more responsible assignments and supervisory opportunities. When important projects are assigned and a person succeeds in completing them, positive feedback loops are created in which additional opportunities come your way. A career built around

optimism will be a successful and rewarding one.

As the wonderful British humorist Oscar Wilde put it, "Some cause happiness wherever they go; others whenever they go." Lighting up a room is also the purview of people whose optimism spreads like a positive contagion.

One of the HR Doctor's prime hobbies has been a lifelong interest in astronomy. Searching the skies is a wonderful way to appreciate how many amazing wonders are available to see without paying cable or satellite TV bills. Perhaps helped by telescopes and other equipment, looking up and looking out are also manifestations of seizing opportunities.



Recently three incredible astronomical events connected to optimism have appeared in the sky. The first is that our largest telescopes have seen the oncoming comet ISON. Comets are interesting objects. While their orbits are

quite predictable, not so with how glorious they will appear when they move closer to the Earth in their path around the sun. Comet ISON has the potential to be the comet of the century. It may be bright and beautiful as it approaches. We can only hope so. Best views will be between late October and mid-December. My telescope, Olivia, and I will be ready and hopeful.

Likewise an amazing human achievement took place this past month as the Voyager 1 probe, launched 50 years ago, became the first human-created object to enter deep space. Voyager has left the area of influence of the sun. As it waves goodbye to the solar system, it literally is boldly going

where no human creation has gone before.

Third, one of the Mars Rovers had confirmed the presence of significant amounts of water. This opens new doors to our understanding of planetary geology and to the prospect that future settlers on the Red Planet could have access to the essence of life.

Astronomy and optimism are close relatives of each other. Being amazed at what is "up there" helps treat and cure the greatest scourge ever to afflict humanity — arrogance. We can now appreciate that there are literally billions of planets in the universe.

See HR DOC page 11





# News From the Nation's Counties

## ► CALIFORNIA

• Following in the footsteps of neighbor **SISKIYOU COUNTY**, the **MODOC COUNTY** Board of Supervisors voted to pursue **secession** from the state of California. As with Siskiyou, the Modoc supervisors cited the feeling that the rural northern part of the state lacked adequate representation in the Legislature.

Though the secession efforts face obstacles in getting both state and federal approval, the movement's goal is to create a state named Jefferson, the *Redding Record-Searchlight* reported.

• A rash of **bit pull** attacks in **RIVERSIDE COUNTY** has prompted officials to consider an ordinance in unincorporated areas that would require the dogs to be sterilized.

The *Los Angeles Times* reported an ordinance affecting pit bulls older than 4 months passed its initial reading by the Board of Supervisors. It would not apply to dogs owned by licensed breeders, law enforcement or people who need them for assistance. Dogs in special training would also receive an exemption.

Pit bulls in Riverside County constitute one-fifth of all dogs impounded and 30 percent of the dogs that are euthanized.

## ► FLORIDA

• **BROWARD COUNTY** officials are pushing back against the state's decision to **ban Affordable Care Act counselors** from conducting outreach at county health departments, arguing the county owns the buildings used by the department.

The county commission passed a resolution that will allow counselors with educational information on "Obamacare" to conduct outreach at all county facilities, including seven buildings leased by the state health department. **PINELLAS COUNTY** officials recently made a similar argument, the Associated Press reported.

The county is also holding seminars at various libraries starting next month in an effort to educate the more than 392,000 Broward County residents who are uninsured or underinsured about health plans available starting Oct. 1 under the new online state exchange.

• The **FLORIDA ASSOCIATION of COUNTIES** was honored recently with a commendation from the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs (FDVA) for "**exceptionally meritorious service** and outstanding contributions in support of Florida's 1.6 million veterans and their families." Col. Mike Prendergast, FDVA executive, visited FAC headquarters to present commendation certificates to the FAC President Bryan Desloge and FAC staff.

The commendations recognized the work done — and funds raised — as a result of the silent auction that was held during the 2013 Annual Conference and Educational Exposition. More than \$6,000 was raised to support the work of the Florida Veterans Foundation.

## ► ILLINOIS

**LAKE COUNTY** is reexamining the requirements for residents looking to turn their backyards into barnyards, and raise chickens or bees by reducing the **acreage required for chicken coops and bee hives**.

A bill is being drafted and officials will hold a public hearing in October to gauge community response, the *Chicago Tribune* reported.

If the new Lake County ordinance passes, all residents in unincorporated areas would be able to have backyard chickens. The ordinance could go before the Lake County Board as soon as November, officials said.

## ► INDIANA

A county sheriff told Indiana legislators he doesn't believe school security would be improved by **having teachers or principals carrying guns**.

**VIGO COUNTY** Sheriff Greg Ewing told a legislative committee about how his department worked with Terre Haute's police department and school district officials to put people trained as police officers in all schools in the county after the deadly elementary school shooting last December in Newtown, Conn.

The committee is reviewing school safety issues after legislators earlier this year briefly considered a proposal that would've required all public schools to have a teacher or another employee carrying a gun during all school hours.

Under Vigo County's program,

the security officers are all former police officers, many retired, who now have full-time jobs with the school district to be the first line of defense in case of a violent attack, the *Tribune-Star* reported.

## ► MAINE

An effort to examine **Maine's foundering jail network** — and find a fix — now rests with a 15-member group of appointees. Maine's counties administer jails.

The Commission to Study Board of Corrections was scheduled to hold a public hearing in Augusta Oct. 5. Meanwhile, appointees are gathering in three-member subcommittees to discuss issues ranging from the establishment of state standards for jails to the board's lack of authority and whether more money could be found to support corrections, the *Sun Journal* reported.

For the last two years, the work of the four-year-old group has been dominated by budgets. Several jails, including the **AROOSTOOK** and **PENOBSCOT** county jails, have been sorely overcrowded. Yet, several jails, including the **CUMBERLAND COUNTY**'s are below capacity due to budget constraints.

## ► MARYLAND

• **ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY** Council chambers are going to be quieter and less profane, thanks to some new rules.

The council passed a **resolution outlining acceptable behavior** and describing what will prompt ejection. The resolution bans visual demonstrations inside chambers, including signs, balloons and banners. Personal, defamatory or profane remarks and loud, threatening or abusive language are also prohibited, WJZ News reported.

The chairman can remove anyone who does not abide by these new provisions and can also suspend testimony that's not relevant to the subject of the hearing.

Speakers must also sign up before the meeting and provide their name, address and any organization they represent.

• As **BALTIMORE COUNTY** police **replace nearly 2,000 service weapons**, they won't allow the old ones to be sold in gun shops — a decision that will prevent firearms from entering the open market but could triple the agency's cost.

Officials will instead try to sell the weapons to county police officers or to other law enforcement agencies.

The department had planned to sell its 15-year-old guns to a wholesaler, but realized it couldn't be certain they wouldn't wind up in private hands, the *Baltimore Sun* reported. The change will cost the county nearly \$700,000. Maryland police departments have struggled with how best to dispose of used weapons since 2007, when a bill to allow resale passed the General Assembly.

Baltimore has since declined to sell guns back to manufacturers, forgoing substantial incentives. Maryland State Police and departments in **HARFORD** and **ANNE ARUNDEL** counties have continued to sell used guns back to the companies that made them.

## ► NEVADA

**CLARK COUNTY** commissioners voted to hire a consultant to assess the financial benefits of **selling about 1,100 acres of county-owned land** that currently is leased to businesses.

The county received the land in 1999 through the federal Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act, according to the *Las*

*Vegas Review-Journal*.

County officials said the consultant is needed because the financial complexity of the leases involves more than paying a flat rate to lease out property.

Most of the leases are participatory leases, said Jerome Stueve, the county's director of real property management. That means the county and the lease holder are in a partnership, which, in some cases, allows the lessee to recoup initial costs before the two start sharing in net revenue.

## ► NEW YORK

Four counties are uniting to stop the **trafficking of untaxed cigarettes** from Indian reservations to elsewhere in the state, the *Watertown Daily Times* reported.

The district attorneys of **ST. LAWRENCE**, **FRANKLIN**, **CHAUTAUQUA** and **SUF-FOLK** counties recently reached an agreement with an Ohio-based transportation company that it will stop shipping cigarettes that don't bear state tax stamps, which is a violation of state law.

See **NEWS FROM** page 11

# What's in a Seal?



» **Marin County, Calif.**  
[www.marincounty.org](http://www.marincounty.org)

Marin County is one of the original 27 counties of California, created February 18, 1850, following adoption of the California Constitution of 1849 and just months before the state was admitted to the Union.

The origin of the county's name is not clear. One version is the county was named after Chief Marin, of the Coast Miwok, Licatiut tribe of Native Americans who inhabited that area and waged fierce battle against the early Spanish military explorers. The other version is that the bay between San Pedro Point and San Quentin Point was named *Bahía de Nuestra Señora del Rosario la Marinera* in 1775, and it is quite possible that Marin is simply an abbreviation of Marinera.

San Quentin Prison is located in the county, as is George Lucas' Skywalker Ranch. America's oldest cross country running event, the Dipsea Race, takes place annually, attracting thousands of athletes. Mountain biking was also invented on the slopes of Mount Tamalpais in the county.

The seal shows the Marin County Civic Center, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, which draws thousands of visitors a year to guided tours of its arch and atrium design.

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

## Join the NACo Network...



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twitter.com/NACoTweets  
linkedin.com/in/nacodc  
youtube.com/NACoVideo



# Two Pa. counties challenge each other on ACA enrollment numbers

NEWS FROM *from page 10*

The agreement says the company, R&L Carriers, denies wrongdoing. However, it agreed to contribute \$140,000 to the American Lung Association and American Cancer Society.

## ► OHIO

• The **COLUMBIANA COUNTY** Emergency Management Agency is hoping there's strength in numbers when it comes to applying for federal **Homeland Security grants**.

After going it alone for the past dozen years, Columbiana is joining with five neighboring counties to seek combined funding as a group. The other counties are **HARRISON, CARROLL, JEFFERSON, STARK** and **MAHONING**.

County Commissioner Tim Weigle said grant amounts to Columbiana County have been declining over the years. "If we went after the money as only one county, you wouldn't stand any chance," he told the *Tribune Chronicle*. "It's a complicated

grant, and the only way to go for it is to go big. These grants are so competitive now that we decided to go regional."

The counties are jointly seeking \$5.58 million.

• **CUYAHOGA COUNTY** wants to follow the city of Cleveland's lead and start taxing hotel rooms given away by the Horseshoe Casino, *cleveland.com* reported.

County Executive Ed FitzGerald wants to apply the county's 5.5 percent **hotel tax to "comp" rooms**. In July, the city imposed a 3 percent tax on free rooms the casino gives out at a hotel it owns.

The proposed change would apply to every hotel room in the county, not just the casinos. It could raise as much as \$2 million a year to be split between the region's tourism bureau, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, the Global Center for Health Innovation and the county, said Mark Parks, the county's fiscal officer.

## ► OKLAHOMA

**CLEVELAND COUNTY** has become the first county in the state to add compressed **natural gas pickup trucks** to its fleet.

The CNG-powered vehicles were purchased through a factory contract secured by Gov. Mary Fallin (R) as part of an initiative to convert the state fleet to natural gas-powered vehicles.

**OKLAHOMA COUNTY** is not far behind, according to Commissioner Brian Maughan. He and Cleveland County Commissioners Darryl Stacy and Rod Cleveland have joined together to launch a county CNG initiative similar to Fallin's.

Cleveland said each vehicle

is expected to save the county \$20,000 in fuel costs over its lifetime, *The Oklahoman* reported.

## ► OREGON

The State Legislature, meeting in special session, passed a bill supported by counties that limits local government regulation of genetically modified plants, *The Oregonian* reported.

The measure bars counties, other than **JACKSON COUNTY**, from regulating GMO agriculture. Jackson County is exempted because it already has a proposed GMO ban on the May 2014 ballot. In 2012, county residents learned that a Swiss biotech company had been contracting with local landowners to grow GMO sugar beets on their vacant lots, according to the group GMO Free Jackson County.

"Counties don't have the expertise or the staff or the money," Mary Stern, **ASSOCIATION OF OREGON COUNTIES (AOC)** president, said at an earlier legislative hearing. "Please don't let cities and counties provide this regulation. We can't do it."

Even though the bill would limit local control, it cushions counties against expensive testing and staffing requirements, said Cara Fischer, AOC deputy director.

About four months ago, the USDA found unauthorized GMO wheat growing in eastern Oregon, but hadn't determined the source, she said.

## ► PENNSYLVANIA

People will bet on anything. If you need more proof of that proposition, listen up: **PHILADELPHIA** Mayor Michael Nutter

and **ALLEGHENY COUNTY** Executive Rich Fitzgerald are betting one another that their jurisdiction will win — what they've dubbed the Affordable Care Act Challenge — by enrolling the most new participants in the federal government's health care insurance exchanges.

Both execs are going all out to encourage enrollment in their jurisdictions. Pennsylvania is defaulting to a federally operated exchange

## ► SOUTH DAKOTA

**BENNETT COUNTY** voters have passed a **property tax "opt-out"** designed to stave off the possibility of bankruptcy by generating an extra \$350,000. Under the South Dakota's property tax laws, the county can raise property taxes only 2.1 percent (the inflation rate) next year, absent voter approval, *The Argus Leader* reported.

The county has faced a budget crisis for more than a year, largely due skyrocketing criminal justice system costs. Bennett County's crime rate is the highest per capita in the state, and the county's public safety budget was slated to consume \$863,277 of the county's \$1.8 million projected budget next year.

The commission already had built the \$350,000 into its FY14 budget. If the opt-out had failed, the county would have been forced to zero-out that amount.

(News from the Nation's Counties is compiled by Charles Taylor and Charlie Ban, staff writers. Bev Schlotterbeck, executive editor, also contributed to this report. If you have an item for News From, please email [ctaylor@naco.org](mailto:ctaylor@naco.org) or [chan@naco.org](mailto:chan@naco.org).)

## NACo on the Move



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors Chair Marina Dimitrijevic (r) and NACo President Linda Langston share a moment at the Wisconsin Counties Association Annual Conference.

### » NACo Officers, County Officials

• NACo Executive Director **Matt Chase** gave an update on NACo federal policy and 'Why Counties Matter?' at the Association of Indiana Counties conference in Switzerland County, Ind. Sept. 24 and the New York State Association of Counties Annual Conference in Saratoga County Sept. 26.

### » NACo Staff

• **Kathy Rowings** has been named the new justice associate in the County Solutions and Innovations Department. Rowings is a 2012 graduate of the Northwestern University School of Law and most recently worked at the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law.

• **Yejin Jang**, associate legislative director, spoke on a panel during "A View from the Hill" at the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisers Conference Sept. 18 in Orange County, Fla.

### » Coming Up

• **Andrew Goldschmidt**, director, membership marketing, will be exhibiting on behalf of membership recruitment and retention at the Tennessee County Services Association Fall Conference and Trade Show in Hamilton County Oct. 9-11 and the Missouri Association of Counties Annual Conference in Camden County Oct. 20-22.

*On the Move is compiled by Christopher Johnson.*



Kathy Rowings

## New perspectives inspire discovery, learning

HR DOC *from page 9*

We can now also understand the real likelihood that humans are not the only life form in existence. These realities should make us stop and realize how unfortunate it is for people to act with arrogance as though they are personally the center of the universe.

The comet and the space probe represent reasons to celebrate. They provide an opportunity for looking with perspective at our careers and our service to the public as ways to express and renew individual hope and optimism.

The HR Doctor looks forward to pleasant times in the observa-

**Lighting up a room is also the purview of people whose optimism spreads like a positive contagion.**

tory with friends working on photographs of what I hope will be a truly wonderful time of Comet ISON watching. I will be thinking about what it means to strive for success and to explore beauty. I will be thinking about being open to possibilities for personal achievements at work and at home.

If you have any doubt about

whether there is a connection between what we can observe in the sky and the philosophies and approaches we use in our lives, try this simple experiment. Figure out a way to go with children to an observatory or to let them look through a telescope for the first time. When they see the moon, Saturn, or the Great Nebula in the winter-dominating constellation of Orion, watch the expressions on their faces. What you will really be seeing will be picture windows into their imaginations.

*Phil Rosenberg*

Phil Rosenberg  
The HR Doctor • [www.hrdr.net](http://www.hrdr.net)



## Financial Services News

# Cooperative Contracts Valuable Resource for Emergency Preparedness

When it comes to emergency preparedness, we often think of large-scale disasters. But your county also needs to have plans for situations such as a local water main break or regional power outage. Having a plan to ensure the safety, security and infrastructure of your community is critical when an unplanned event occurs. Getting help can be as easy as calling the suppliers available through U.S. Communities.

The U.S. Communities suppliers that specialize in solutions for emergency preparedness have dedicated operations as well as trained staff to support emergency response, recovery and rebuilding. They have had extensive experience in dealing with emergency situations and provide an important resource when ensuring your plans are as comprehensive as possible. Their vast experience can help you walk through various scenarios and answer questions that may not have been considered.

**Having a plan to ensure the safety, security and infrastructure of your community is critical when an unplanned event occurs**

Using a purchasing cooperative versus a traditional RFP process provides many advantages including ensuring contract pricing during an emergency, having the products you need to immediately respond and begin recovery, and most importantly, having trained and dedicated support that will help you get your county quickly restored.

Companies such as Safeware-Mallory can assist with public safety support; the Home Depot Crisis Demand Center provides planning, products and resources; and Hertz Equipment Rental can plan and make sure you have the

needed pumps, generators and clean-up equipment before a disaster strikes. Other solutions are available for electrical, communications, technology, staffing and more. These planning and support services are a value-added benefit when using cooperative purchasing solutions available through U.S. Communities.

For more information about U.S. Communities, and the various products and services offered to local governments, please contact Sarah Lindsay, NACo Financial Services Center, at 202.942.4228 or [slindsay@naco.org](mailto:slindsay@naco.org).

Also visit [www.uscommunities.org/solutions/emergency-preparedness](http://www.uscommunities.org/solutions/emergency-preparedness) for more information on how the program can help with emergency prevention, response and recovery.

*(Financial Services News was written by Sarah Lindsay, marketing specialist, NACo Financial Services Corporation.)*

## Job Market & Classifieds

### ■ COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – GREENE COUNTY, OHIO

Salary: DOQ.

County Administrator—Greene County Board of Commissioners Xenia, Ohio.

For more information, see our website at [www.co.greene.oh.us](http://www.co.greene.oh.us). EOE/M/F/D.

### ■ DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTOR – DUPLIN COUNTY (KENANSVILLE), N.C.

Salary: \$59,165 – \$82,116 annually; DOQ.

The Duplin County Board of Social Services is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Director of the Duplin County Department of Social Services. The Director works under the direction of the Board of Social Services, follows the policies of the Office of State Human Resources formerly the Office of State Personnel, and administers the annual budget as governed by the Duplin County Board of Commissioners. The duties and responsibilities of the Director of Social

Services are governed by NCGS 108A-14. The department operates its office in the county seat of Kenansville, NC.

The Duplin County Department of Social Services has an annual budget of \$90 million and a staff of 110 employees. Master's Degree in Social Work and two years of supervisory experience in the delivery of client services preferred but equivalent combination of training and experience will be considered. Candidate will be required to live in Duplin County. Candidate must pass pre-employment drug screening, Criminal Background and DMV check. To apply, submit a N.C. State Employment application form (PD-107), a Duplin County application and college transcript. Mail applications to Kathy Wallace, Duplin County Personnel, P.O. Box 910, Kenansville, NC 28349.

The PD-107 form is available at <http://www.osp.state.nc.us/jobs/pd107ltr.pdf>. Duplin County applications are available at <http://www.duplincountync.com>.

## NACo JOBS-ONLINE

NACo provides a method for counties to find the right person to fill that key vacancy.

Visit [www.naco.org/programs/jobsonline](http://www.naco.org/programs/jobsonline) or **scan the QR code** to find quality staff.



# DID YOU KNOW?

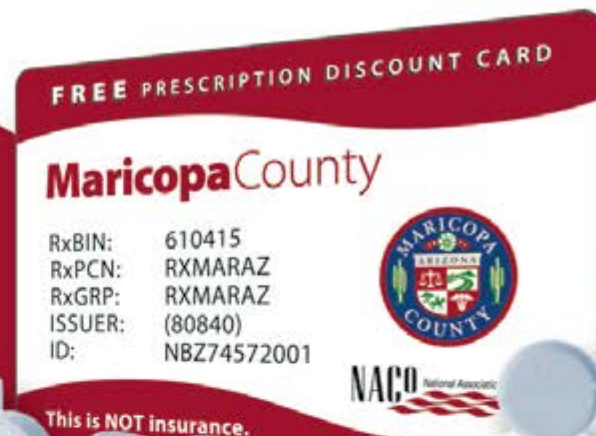
**\$500 MILLION**  
IN SAVINGS

**40 MILLION**  
PRESCRIPTIONS FILLED

SAVINGS UP TO  
**75 PERCENT**

**65 THOUSAND**  
PHARMACIES

**NACo** National Association of Counties



### The NACo Prescription Discount Card Program

can provide cards that can be inserted into county mailings – property tax bills, water bills, etc. – without increasing the cost of the mailing.

Cost to you to accomplish this awareness effort? **ZERO.**

To learn more about the program or to request assistance with your current program, go to [www.naco.org/drugcard](http://www.naco.org/drugcard), call 1-888-407-6226 and ask for “membership” or scan the QR code.

\*Average savings 24%. Savings may vary by drug and by pharmacy. Operated by CVS Caremark. This is NOT insurance. Discounts are only available at participating pharmacies. 106-9003NCS5(06) 02.13

