

POLK COUNTY NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2019



With the last large piece of advanced processing equipment installed and the final platforms, chutes and conveyors in place, the the final connection between Phase I and Phase II completed, expansion of the Material Recovery Facility (MRF) in Fosston has been completed.

Expansion of Resource Recovery Facility now subsequently complete

The Polk County Resource Recovery Facility (RRF) expansion project in Fosston has now been substantially completed.

The goal of the expansion project was to increase the capacity of the Material Recovery Facility (MRF) to process more waste and recyclables. The expansion project at the RRF was broken into three distinct projects: (1) Tip floor building addition, (2) Phase I MRF, and (3) Phase II MRF.

Funding for the project was received from the Minnesota Legislature via the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) CAP Grant program. The funding received for the project was broken into two parts: \$4M from the 2015

Legislative Session for the tip floor addition and Phase I MRF and \$2.75M from the 2017 Legislative Session for the Phase II MRF.

The CAP Grant covered approximately 67% of the total project cost for this project.

Phase I

The tip floor addition portion of the project was awarded to Vercon Inc. of Menahga, MN. The project was bid and awarded in 2017 and substantially completed in the winter of 2018.

The bid amount of the project was \$2.88M. It included the 18,000-square-foot addition to the east of the existing RRF. The new addition has

See RECOVERY FACILITY on Page 2

Tadman knew what sheriff job involved

After six years as the chief deputy, Jim Tadman had a pretty good idea of what the job of sheriff involved.

And, from working under retiring Sheriff Barb Erdman, who had worked in the administrative area of the office for the majority of her 31 years with the department, he had a very good teacher.

Like Erdman, Tadman had also joined the department 31 years ago in 1987.

"We have a great crew," Tadman says of the 32

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The first ton of MSW was processed on the new MRF when it 'went live' on Dec. 5, 2018

Project Financing

Phase 1

Minn. CAP Grant.....\$8.00 (m)

Phase 2

Minn. CAP Grant.....\$9.25 (m)

Local Share

County Bonding.....\$7.00 (m)

Total Project.....\$24.25 (m)

The "local share" bond included \$5 (m) for the total project and \$2 (m) for the transfer station in Crookston. The bond will be repaid with revenue from tip fees, the sale of recyclable materials recovered from the waste stream and other income.

Other Solid Waste projects:

Transfer Station..... Pages 4-5

Landfill projects.....Pages 6-7

Resource Recovery

Continued from Page 1

increased ceiling heights and opened tip floor space to allow the RRF to accept more waste and recyclable items and hold them until able to process. The east and south ends of the addition contain the Phase I MRF equipment.

Titus MRF Services of Fontana, CA, was selected by Polk County for the MRF projects. The MRF projects were contracted as a design-build project.

The scope of Titus services included: Design of the new system, engineering of the new system, preparation of specs for the equipment necessary, assisting Polk County in the selection and ordering of the advanced equipment necessary, and installation of that equipment.

Project cost reduced

The project had a value of \$8.5M, but due to combining the design, engineering and installation as one project – and allowing Titus to utilize some refurbished equipment — the project cost on the contract was \$7.9M.

By Polk County purchasing the most expensive components of the system direct and not requiring Titus to finance those costs through the term of the project, more than \$250,000 was further saved on the project.

The Phase I MRF project was undertaken by Titus MRF Services in January 2018. The Phase I MRF served two functions: (1) made up the front portion of the new MRF system to be constructed, and (2) would serve, with some modifications, as the temporary MRF in order to operate until the Phase II project was completed.

The Phase I MRF consisted of a metering bin, metering drum, infeed conveyor, enlarged sorting platform, cardboard screen, trommel screen, debris roll screen, and new auto-tie baler.

The Phase II MRF project was also undertaken by Titus MRF Services. The Phase I project wrapped up in April 2018 and Phase II began.

Phase II started with the removal of the old MRF equipment and installation of the new MRF equipment. (During this work, Polk was operating on the Phase I and temporary equipment).

Phase II

Phase II MRF consisted of two (2) ballistic separators, enlarged cross-belt magnet, three (3) dual-eject optical sorters, enlarged eddy current separator, pneumatic conveyors, material bunkers and silos for holding materials from the optical sorters. Once all Phase II equipment was installed and operational, the Phase I MRF

was taken off-line, temporary Phase I equipment disconnected, and Phase I and Phase II equipment were connected. The connection of the Phase I and Phase II equipment took a little over one week to complete and officially marked the completion of the new MRF, which went into operation on Dec. 5, 2018.

Unique capability

The new MRF is unique in that it can process two types of materials (waste or recyclables) using the same equipment and in terms of the types of materials it can remove from the waste stream for reuse or recycling. The new MRF has the ability to process both the incoming waste materials or incoming single stream recycling materials using the same equipment.

Other MRF's utilize equipment which can generally only process waste or process recyclables — but not both streams. In addition, other MRF's do not remove the same number or types of materials from the waste stream prior to disposal.

The flexibility to mechanically remove the number of material types from both waste or recycling streams is also very uncommon, though its anticipated other facilities will begin looking to do so.

Video available

Videos of the new MRF sys-

tem in operation on both waste and recycling materials can be found at the following YouTube links:

Polk MRF on Waste:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZcGQTsXDIQ>

Polk MRF on Recycles:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nXY4nwJXskU>

Project goals

Polk County's goals for the RRF expansion project were to increase the amount of both waste and recycling materials it could accept and hold for processing by the MRF, increase the processing rates of the MRF for both waste and recyclable materials, and increase the ability to remove more materials from the waste and recyclables than were previously possible.

Polk was successful in achieving each of these goals.

Polk is currently finishing up the fine tuning of the new MRF and conducting trial runs of various materials to certify market quality before making final announcements for expanding the types of materials it will accept in the recycling stream or remove from the waste stream. These efforts will conclude shortly and changes announced soon thereafter. — **Jon Steiner, administrator, Polk County Environmental Services**

Tadman—

Continued from Page 1

deputies, the 9.5 dispatch positions, the emergency management director and the office support staff that are in the Sheriff's Department.

"I'm just proud to be working with them and for the county as sheriff," he says. "We aren't planning on any big changes in the office but, like we always have, we will be looking at new ways to do things for the betterment of the county. For me, the transition period has been a very busy time."

A part of that transitioning has involved passing on what he did as chief deputy to Sgt. Mike Norland, who was selected to be the new chief deputy.

Norland, an 18-year member of the department, had headed the investigations division. His now vacated sergeant position



Sheriff James Tadman

has been filled by the promotion of Nathan Rasch, an investigator, to that rank.

Several other deputy positions that have opened over the past months are in the process of being filled. And two new dispatchers are currently in training. Another dispatcher still needs to be hired.

Norland selected as new chief deputy

Mike Norland is the new chief deputy of the Polk County Sheriff's Department.

Norland, who was selected for the position by new Sheriff James Tadman, says that he is looking forward to the law enforcement challenge of being the chief deputy in county.

An 18-year member of Polk County Sheriff's Office, Norland started in October 2000 as a contract officer for the City of Fosston. He became a road deputy in 2002, an investigator in 2008, and sergeant of the investigation department in 2013.

A native of Fertile and a 1995 graduate of Fertile-Beltrami High School, Norland earned a bachelors degree in criminal justice at Bemidji State University and also played on the Beavers baseball team. He received his law enforcement skills certification at Hibbing Community College.

Norland is a member of the



Mike Norland

statewide Internet Crimes Against Children task force and works with the Fosston American Legion baseball team in organizational roles and as an assistant coach.

He and his wife, Karen, who is the paramedic supervisor at Essentia Hospital, live in Fosston. They have a son, Zachary, 9.



Retiring Sheriff Barb Erdman and new Sheriff Jim Tadman

Cost-share funds available to address non-compliant septicics

Polk County Environmental Services has funds available in a cost-share grant program for property owners who have non-compliant septic systems.

These funds are intended to fix septic systems that are currently failing codes or functionality. These dollars are made possible through a grant received from the Minnesota Clean Water Legacy Act.

There is a limited amount of funding available and preference will be determined based upon income status, the condition of the existing system, and proximity to priority surface waters.

The county will provide a cost-share grant contributing from 75% and up to 90% of the installation cost up to a maximum of \$12,000.

Income restrictions will apply. If approved, applicants will be required to pay any match requirement up front. If you are interested in learning more about this program, please call Polk

County Planning & Zoning at (218) 281-5700 or email our staff at environmental.svs@co.polk.mn.us.

Applications can also be found on our website at www.co.polk.mn.us under the Environmental Services and Planning & Zoning pages. The deadline to apply for the Septic System Fix-Up Program is June 1, 2019. After this date, remaining funding will be available on first-come first-serve basis.

Also, remember that Polk County Planning & Zoning requires building/land permits for all construction projects throughout the county. If you are planning any building/land use projects, please contact Planning & Zoning prior to construction to see what setback and ordinance requirements apply. More information on building/land use regulations can be found on the Polk County website. — **Jake Snyder, Planning & Zoning Division administrator**

County Board Meeting Times

8:00 a.m. on 1st Tuesday of the month
 10:00 a.m. on the 3rd Tuesday
 8:00 a.m. on the 4th Tuesday
All meetings are open to the public

County Commissioners
 Dist. 1 — Jerry Jacobson
 Dist. 2 — Warren Strandell, chair
 Dist. 3 — Gary Willhite, vice chair
 Dist. 4 — Joan K. Lee
 Dist. 5 — Don Diedrich



The new Polk County Transfer Station/Environmental Services facility in Crookston

Transfer Station in use after several construction delays

It has been nearly one year since the old Polk County Transfer Station/Environmental Services building in Crookston was removed and the construction of the new building began.

In much the same way that this long winter was reluctant to give way to spring, the transfer station construction was reluctant to being fully completed. But that has finally occurred.

The \$4.6M Transfer Station project began with securing state bond funding in 2017, and then executing the grant agreement with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), which appropriated the bond monies to Polk County.

The MPCA allocated \$3M in grant funds toward the project. This was intended to be used for up to 75% of the eligible construction costs.

Upon execution of the grant, Polk County engaged Wenck Associates, Maple Plain, MN, for design, engineering and permitting services related to the project.

Contract awarded

The project was awarded by bid to Nor-Son Inc., Baxter, MN, for construction of the 28,000-square-foot structure on the same site where the former Transfer Station previously stood.

Despite the project starting on time last spring, various construction-related issues continued to emerge throughout the project that slowed the project from progressing in a timely manner, extended construction entirely through the winter of 2018-2019 and pushed project wrap-up until the spring of 2019.

The project was originally bid and divided into two phases: Phase I was completion of the new 18,000-square-foot tip floor area, and Phase II was comple-

tion of the new 10,000 -square-foot office area.

The conclusion of Phase II would mean the completion of the total project. Phase I was intended to allow Polk County to utilize the indoor space of the new tip floor for receiving and aggregating loads of waste and maintaining some measure of 'normal' operations.

That milestone was to have been reached by Oct. 1. Due to the issues mentioned previously, the tip floor area was not turned over to Polk County until Dec. 24.

Phase II was intended to mark the completion of the project, allow Polk County to occupy the new office space, fully utilize the new building, and thereby return to normal operations. That milestone was to be reached by Dec. 21 but had several delays.

Building features

Key features of the new Transfer Station/Environmental Services building:

- Additional parking to the west of the office — parking areas that don't have the self-haul traffic intermixing;
- New outdoor scale with interactive controls on the south end of the parking lot;
- Large, illuminated canopies over the outdoor waste containers for self-haulers in the south parking lot;
- Increased office space designed for its intended use including unfinished areas for future needs;
- Higher ceiling over the transfer station tip floor allowing for full use of airspace inside building;
- Exterior tip floor walls are reinforced concrete to serve also as push-walls for loading waste materials;

- Use of additional push-walls and mobile grapple loader allows more waste to be stacked higher within same footprint which increases total capacity and ability to hold waste during inclement weather;

- Larger, higher overhead doors – no worry about hitting doors with commercial vehicle boxes;

- Indoor, recessed truck scale for loading/tarping indoors, ability to see in the trailer and fill trailer to full payload for more efficient hauling;

- Recessed truck scale doubles as indoor loading dock for sending/receiving shipments;

- "Open" floor plan on tip floor allows for waste to be brought to the truck, or the truck to the waste when shipping;

- Energy efficient – in-floor heat, high-efficiency HVAC system, LED lighting, building timers/sensor control, etc.;

- Construction of a reinforced concrete storm shelter for staff and public safety during inclement weather;

- Construction of office and tip floor allow for great amount of flexibility for change as required in the future.

Construction was to have been completed by the end of March. Remaining seasonal items such as painting, grading and landscaping will be done in late spring.

The benefits of the new building, once completed, will be evident to all using the new facility. Having a building designed for use as a transfer station based on current needs, with some flexibility for modification as future needs dictate, will be realized in increased efficiencies, safety and convenience. — **Jon Steiner, administrator, Polk County Environmental Services**



Truck is loaded in the new Transfer Station in Crookston for delivery to the Resource Recovery Center in Fosston

Who is on what?

Many serve on local government bodies

• Polk Co. Planning & Zoning Commission:

Chair Mike Powers, East Grand Forks (representing East Grand Forks mayor); Vice Chair Robert Franks, Warren (Commissioner Dist. 5); Donovan Wright, Mentor (Dist. 1); Len Vonasek, East Grand Forks (Dist. 2); Courtney Pulkrabek, Crookston (Dist. 3); Pail Jore, McIntosh (Dist. 4); Bobby Baird, Crookston (Crookston mayor); Arlet Phillips, East Grand Forks (Polk County Township Officers Association); Mike Schulz, Mentor (Maple Lake Improvement District); Rolland Gagner, Erskine (Union Lake Sarah Improvement District); and County Board Chair Warren Strandell.

• Polk Co. Board of Adjustment:

Planning Commission members Mike Powers, Donovan Wright, Robert Franks, Courtney Pulkrabek, Rolland Gagner. Alternates: Paul Jore and Arlet Phillips.

• West Polk Co. Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisors:

Chair Elliot Solheim, (Dist. 4 - Lowell, Crookston, Gently, Andover, Fairfax, & Kertsonville townships); Vice Chair Derek Peterson (Dist. 2 - Farley, Brislet, Helgeland, Tabor, Angus, Brandt, Keystone, Euclid & Belgium townships); Secretary-Treasurer Mark McWalter (Dist. 1 - Higdem, Sandsville, Esther, Northland, Grand Forks, Sullivan, Rhinehart & Huntsville townships); PR/Equip. Jon Sorenson (Dist. 3 - Nesbit, Fanny, Parnell, Bygland, Fisher, Tynsid & Roome townships); Chris Cournia (Dist. 5 - Vineland, Hammond, Russia, Onstad, Hubbard, Scandia, Reis & Liberty townships).

• East Polk Co. Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisors:

Chair Al Bauer (Dist. 3 - Woodside, Garden, Winger & Knute townships); Vice Chair Kenneth Pederson (Dist. 1 - Garfield, Godfrey, Tilden & Grove Park townships); Lawrence Vettleson (Dist. 5 - Johnson, Chester, Gully, Eden & Queen townships); Treasurer Scott Balstad (Dist. 4 - Sletten, Rosebud, Columbia & Brandsvold townships); PR/Equip. David Kiecker (Dist. 2 - Badger, Lessor, Hill River & King townships).

• Polk Co. Extension Committee:

Aaron Rongen, Fertile (representing Commissioner Dist. 1); Danny Anderson, Fisher (Dist. 2); Amy Theis, Crookston (Dist. 3); Scott Balstad, Fosston, vice chair (Dist. 4); Brad Grunhovd, Euclid (Dist. 5);

Connie Hennessey, Crookston (at-large). County Commissioners Joan Lee (chair) and Gary Willhite also serve on the committee. County Director of Property Records Michelle Cote is the committee secretary.

• Marshall & Polk Rural Water System:

Michael Kasowski, Fisher (president); Paul Driscoll, East Grand Forks (vice president); Ronald Abrahamson, Warren (secretary-treasurer); Roger Stordahl, East Grand Forks; Paul Bergeron, Argyle; Wayne Nelson, Oslo; Orin Knutson, Oslo.

• Red Lake River Watershed District:

President Dale Nelson, Thief River Falls (Pennington Co.); Vice President Gene Tiedemann, Euclid (West Polk Co.); Treasurer LeRoy Ose, Thief River Falls (Marshall Co.); Secretary Terry Sorenson, Mentor (East Polk Co.); Les Torgerson, Leonard (Clearwater Co.); Brian Dwight, Washkish (Beltrami Co.).

• Sand Hill River Watershed District:

Chair Stuart Christian, Erskine; Vice Chair Dan Vesledahl, Winger; Secretary JJ Hamre, Beltrami; Treasurer Clayton Bartz, McIntosh; Roger Hanson, Beltrami.

• Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers Watershed District:

President John Nelson, Oslo; Vice President Bill Peterson, Middle River; Secretary Roger Mischel, Warren; Treasurer Robert Kovar, East Grand Forks; Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Brad Blawat, Viking; remaining two manager positions are vacant.

• Northwest Regional Development Commission Executive Board:

Chair Dr. Joe Bouvette, Hallock (at-large); Vice Chair Warren Strandell, East Grand Forks (Polk Co.); Secretary Gary Kiesow, Goodridge (Marshall Co.); Nathan Redland, Halstad (Norman Co.); Codie Hempel, Thief River Falls (Pennington Co.); Ron Weiss, Red Lake Falls (Red Lake Co.); Daryl Wicklund, Badger (Roseau Co.).

• Regional Transit Coordination Council:

President Jerry Jacobson, Polk Co.; Vice President Leon Olson, Kittson Co.; Secretar-Treasurer Cindy Pic, Northwest Regional Development Commission.



This organic material bunker is where organic waste is dewatered. When the liquid fraction has been drained to the compost pad sump, the remaining materials are placed in a windrow and covered with other matter to reduce vector issues.

As part of Solid Waste expansion project...

Organics compost pad constructed at landfill

The Polk County Landfill Complex recently constructed a new organics compost pad as part of a regional expansion project.

The funding for this project was part of the 2017 Legislative Bonding Bill, which appropriated funds to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) for distribution to Polk County as a CAP Grant for this purpose.

Approximately \$500,000 of the \$9.25M CAP Grant in 2017 was reserved for the organics compost project. It was intended to provide up to 50% state cost-share on the project.

The balance of the 2017 CAP Grant funded the MRF Phase II project in Fosston, the transfer station project in Crookston and a transfer station project in Park Rapids.

The compost pad area is an approximately 3.8 acres in size, and is located on the north-west side of the landfill complex. The compost pad is designed and constructed to meet the MPCA's "new" compost standards for organics composting that were adopted in 2014. No other new organics compost facilities have been constructed to this specification to date.

The project was awarded to Lyle Wilkens Inc. of Crookston in the amount of \$370,578. The project was bid in the summer of 2018, and was substantially completed last fall of 2018.

The key design features of the compost pad include an all-weather sloped compost surface receiving area for wet organic material, liquid collection sump for water that has come into contact with immature compost (not reached pathogen reduction stage), pad for compost windrows, liquid collection sump for nutrient-rich water that has come into contact with compost prior to finishing, and areas to stockpile finished compost and other materials awaiting composting.

In addition to the compost pad project, remaining project funds were used to acquire a portable, tracked trommel screener and payload loader for moving materials on the pad. Both pieces of equipment are required for composting but versatile enough to have other applications on-site as well.

With the legislative appropriated funding for the compost pad secured, Polk County applied for and later received two additional compost-related grants in 2017 and 2018. These other compost-related grants were MPCA Environmental Assistance (EA) Grants. Both EA Grants compliment the compost pad project and benefit the entire regional waste system, Polk County as well as Beltrami, Clearwater, Hubbard, Mahanomen and Norman counties.

The first EA Grant received in 2017 provided the maximum \$250,000 funding for the acquisition of a slow-speed shredder. The grant provided approximately 1/3 of the purchase price of the Crambo 6000-S shredder (\$709,000) from Komptech Americas of Westminster, CO.

This shredder is able to process many of the problem and objectionable materials the landfill receives, or which the landfill would otherwise reject based on its physical characteristics.

The shredder also allows the landfill to reuse, recycle or compost some materials that otherwise would have been disposed of in one of the landfill cells. As it relates to the compost pad, the shredder is used to process logs, root-balls, stumps and clean wood waste when separated from the other waste materials.

The other EA Grant was received in 2018 and provided the maximum \$250,000 funding for a multi-county organics collection project. The grant was used to purchase 16

roll-off containers specifically designed to collect organic waste and 16 air systems that connect to those containers to keep the compost materials inside from turning anaerobic or causing foul odor.

The organics containers were manufactured by H&S Manufacturing, Stephen for the sum of \$161,000. The air systems were purchased from Green Mountain Technologies, Bainbridge Island, WA, for the sum of \$81,000.

The program will appropriate these organics collection systems to the counties of Beltrami, Clearwater, Hubbard and Polk.

The program is intended to try various methods of organics collection for composting from large quantity generators and from the public. The collection systems will be appropriated to interested large organic material generators who were interested in being part of the pilot project such as Bagley Middle School, Bemidji State University, Park Rapids High School, Sanford Health and the University of MN-Crookston. Drop-off sites for the public are intended to be established at the various transfer stations in those counties.

The organic materials from the 2018 EA Grant are required to be managed on a compliant organics compost pad such as the one funded in the 2017 CAP Grant. As those organic materials collected from the 2018 EA Grant require a significant amount of compostable carbon material in order to undergo the composting process efficiently, the shredded stumps/rootballs that are generated by the shredder purchased with the 2017 EA Grant will be utilized.

Both materials delivered by the 2017 and 2018 EA Grants are new revenue sources for

See ORGANICS on Page 7



In this photo, wood is being shredded at the Polk County Landfill by equipment that was funded by the grant. Shredded wood can be used in compost containers to provide air circulation at the bottom of the organics bunker to promote liquid drainage. Shredded wood can also be placed in compost windrows or re-used in pads for other work around the landfill.



This photo shows the last days of work last fall on the compacting pad. This is where organic material will be deposited for dewatering before it is placed in windrows for composting. The work was being done by Lyle Wilkens, Inc. of Crookston.

Organics compost pad

Continued from Page 6

the organics compost pad, and the materials diverted for composting by these three compost-related projects will create additional

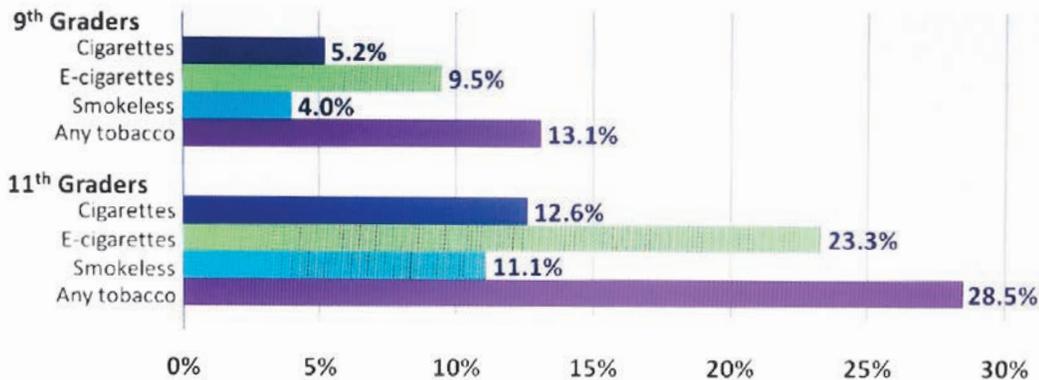
capacity for waste and recycling at the Fosston Resource Recovery Facility and extend the life of the various waste cells at the landfill complex.

In short, each of the three compost-related

grants rely upon and compliment the other two, and together support the entire regional solid waste program. — **Jon Steiner, administrator, Polk County Environmental Services**

Youth tobacco use in Polk County

Tobacco use among Polk County's 9th and 11th grade students, 2016



Statewide, over 17% of 11th graders use e-cigarettes, while only 8.4% use cigarettes and 5.1% use smokeless tobacco.

Young being targeted by tobacco industry

E-cigarette use up dramatically

Following national trends, youth e-cigarette use has risen dramatically across Minnesota in the last three years. Along with our community partners, the **Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP)** grant at Polk County Public Health is working to raise awareness of this public health concern.

SHIP strives to reduce healthcare costs and chronic disease rates by creating more opportunities for Minnesotans of all ages to eat healthy, be active and live tobacco-free.

Chronic disease costs Minnesota an estimated \$22 billion annually.

A comprehensive health strategy coordinated across all of Minnesota's 87 counties and 10 tribal nations, SHIP is statewide, providing \$17.5 million per year in state funding to support critical primary prevention activities led by local public and tribal health partners.

Polk County Public Health and its partners at Norman-Mahnomen Public Health are working within our communities to make changes where we live, work and play so healthy choices are easier and accessible to all.

Still a problem

For the first time in 17 years, youth tobacco use is on the rise in Minnesota. While the use of cigarettes by youths is at an all-time low, there has been a 40% increase in e-cigarette use, resulting in 26% of youth reporting tobacco use in the last 30 days.

Youth are heavily targeted by the tobacco

industry in their neighborhood stores and on social media. Promotions of fruit and candy-flavored products make it challenging for youth to understand the harmful effects of use.

This early tobacco use is especially problematic because of ongoing and critical brain development in the late adolescent and young adult years, but also because of an increased likelihood of such early smoking, that can lead to a lifelong addiction to tobacco and/or other drugs.

In fact, more than 95% of long-term smokers started before the age of 21 and 25% of youth who experiment become committed smokers.

Vaping products

E-cigarettes are battery-powered devices that allow users to inhale, or vape, aerosolized liquid (e-juice). E-cigarettes, "Juuls", vape or hookah pens, e-pipes, and other vaping products recently surpassed conventional cigarettes as the most commonly used tobacco product among youth.

A common misperception among youth is that e-cigarettes are safer because they do not contain nicotine.

Nearly all e-cigarettes contain nicotine, which is highly addictive and can harm the developing adolescent brain.

Because the brain is still developing until about age 25, youth and young adult exposure to nicotine can lead to addiction and disrupt attention and learning.

Just not safe

No amount of nicotine is safe for youth.

Given the danger of youth nicotine use, it is important for parents and guardians to be aware and take action.

Talk with your teen. Know the facts. You can educate yourself by visiting the Minnesota Department of Health website: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/tpc/topics/ecigarettes.html>

Set a positive example by being tobacco free. Free QUITPLAN® Services: www.quitplan.com or by calling 1-888-354-PLAN (7526).

Find the right time to have a conversation.

Ask for support from other trusted adults such as healthcare providers, local public health, school counselors, etc.

Answer the questions

Keep the conversation going over time.

Questions you will likely get from your youth and talking points for you are readily available. Talk with your teens about e-cigarettes: Parent Tip Sheet: https://ecigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/documents/SGR_ECig_ParentTipSheet_508.pdf

For more information or questions on youth tobacco use and local prevention efforts, contact Kirsten Fagerlund or Bethany Satrom at Polk County Public Health, 218-281-3385 or email kirsten.fagerlund@co.polk.mn.us or bethany.satrom@co.polk.mn.us

SHOULD I TALK TO MY KIDS ABOUT

vaping?

ARE YOUR KIDS SCHOOL-AGE?

yes

It's likely they already know more about vaping than you do, so it's time to catch up.

E-CIGARETTES ARE NOW THE MOST COMMONLY USED TOBACCO PRODUCT AMONG YOUTH

no

They're younger.

You may be able to wait a few years, but the tobacco industry will be targeting them with marketing and candy flavored e-cigarettes soon.

no

They're adults.

Are they trying to quit tobacco use all together?

yes

Research shows that e-cigarettes should not be recommended as a tool to quit smoking. For help with quitting visit quitplan.com.

no

Some users are addicted to e-cigarettes just like any other tobacco product.

DO THEY ALREADY VAPE OR HAVE FRIENDS THAT DO?

no

Good! They are steering clear of nicotine addiction, which is great for their brain. The human brain is still developing until age 25, which means its easier to become addicted. Exposure to nicotine at this age can cause problems in learning, memory and attention.

yes

Teens are more likely to become addicted to other tobacco products if they vape.

60% OF HIGH SCHOOL E-CIG USERS ALSO USE SOME OTHER TYPE OF TOBACCO

NICOTINE ADDICTION IS DIFFICULT TO OVERCOME AND WILL LIKELY REQUIRE SUPPORT FROM A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL

DO THEY ALREADY SEE THE HEALTH IMPACTS OF VAPING?

no

That's not surprising. Since e-cigarettes have only been on the U.S. market since 2007 we're not sure what the long-term health impacts of heating and inhaling the chemicals in e-liquids will be.

yes

In the short-term, vaping can cause throat irritation and worsen respiratory conditions like asthma and bronchitis. Lithium battery explosions are also a risk and can cause burns.

E-LIQUIDS CONTAIN NICOTINE AND OTHER CHEMICALS THAT ARE NOT PROVEN SAFE TO BREATHE IN. WHEN E-LIQUIDS ARE HEATED, THE AEROSOL PRODUCED HAS BEEN SHOWN TO CONTAIN HEAVY METALS, ULTRAFINE PARTICLES AND CANCER-CAUSING CHEMICALS

TALK TO THEM!

There is a lot of misinformation about vaping and it's important young people know that it poses a serious health risk and youth are being targeted in order to make a profit.

Visit our website at www.panmn.org and learn how to talk to your children with free resources at e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov

Physician Advocacy Network

a project of Twin Cities Medical Society

New Plat Books are available

Thousands of property owners are listed in the new 192-page spiral-bound Polk County Plat Book, which is available for purchase for \$35 at the Taxpayer Service Center in Crookston.

The book features land ownership map pages showing property boundaries for all rural parcels, the name of the owner and the number of acres owned.

The landownership maps ave an enhanced LiDAR aerial view that show the actual topography of the land. There is also a landowner index for cross-referencing.

The book includes a Polk County Government Directory and maps of the commissioner districts, school districts, ambulance service districts, watershed districts, and the cities of Crookston, East Grand Forks, Fosston and 12 other municipalities.



Welfare Fraud

People who give false information or withhold facts in order to receive Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) aid, food stamps, general assistance, childcare or medical assistance are committing fraud. If you suspect someone of misusing or abusing Minnesota assistance programs, call the Polk County Sheriff's Office at this number 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

1-218-281-0431

**ask for extension 2249
YOU CAN REMAIN ANONYMOUS**

'Don't come to Minnesota' is the word

Work of drug task force agents paying off

Based upon the number of drug seizures and arrests, which were both down in 2018, the work being done by Pine 2 Prairie Drug Task Force agents is really starting to pay off.

The task force, which is made of officers provided by law enforcement agencies in the 8-county area of northwestern Minnesota, made 333 arrests for drug trafficking and other violent offenses in 2018. This number was eight less than the 341 arrests made in 2017.

Also in the process of their investigations, the 12 full-time members of the task force team confiscated 25 weapons, turned up extensive amounts of drug paraphernalia and stolen items, and seized large amounts of drugs.

Effort is working

"When people are telling us that the druggies don't want to come into Minnesota because they're going to get caught, going to get searched and they're going to go to jail, then that tells us that what we are doing is working," the commander of the Pine 2 Prairie Drug Task Force says.

"People that we are interviewing on the street are saying that many of the drug dealers know better than to come into Minnesota. That's the effect that we want."

Drugs seized in 2018 included 2,101 grams of meth, which was less than the 2,631 grams removed in 2017.

The use of cocaine and opioids, including heroin and prescription pills, also showed significant decreases in arrests and seizures from the previous year.

- The 5.8 grams of cocaine seized was down significantly from the 63 grams seized in 2017.

- Heroin seizures were down significantly, too, from the 296.26 grams collected in 2017 to 16.91 grams last year.

- Marijuana confiscations came closer to the seizures that occurred a year earlier. In 2017, 6,586.61 grams were seized, while last year 5,994.18



A .38 cal revolver was seized along with 2.2 grams of methamphetamine and 25 clonazepam pills as part of an arrest in Pennington County

grams were taken.

- Methamphetamine seizures were down from 2,131.43 grams in 2017 to 2,101.38 grams in 2018.

Of crimes committed locally, agents say, drugs and alcohol are a factor in a large percentage of them.

The cities of Crookston and East Grand Forks each provide an officer, while Thief River Falls and Pennington County cooperate to provide an investigator.

In 2018, the counties that also provided investigators were Lake of the Woods, Norman, Polk and Roseau. The investigators work under cover. The U.S. Border Patrol also commits four agents and U.S. Homeland Security provides an investigator.

While not committing a full-time member to the task force, Kittson, Marshall and Red Lake counties assisted as needed in 2018. Marshall County is, however, providing a fulltime investigator for the first time in 2019. This has increased the

task force to 13 fulltime investigators.

Marshall and Norman counties and the cities of Thief River Falls and East Grand Forks each have canine officers that are available to the task force.

The task force receives \$200,000 in state funding annually. This money is split between the cities and counties to reimburse them for a portion of the salaries of the investigators that they provide. A part of the grant is also used for training and to purchase necessary equipment.

Advisory board supervises

The team answers to a 14-member advisory board. That board is made up of East Grand Forks Police Chief Mike Hedlund (president), Crookston Police Chief Paul Biermaier (vice president), Polk County Sheriff Jim Tadman, Pennington County Sheriff Ray Kuznia, Thief River Falls Police Chief Dick Wittenberg, Crookston City Council member Bob Quanrud,

East Grand Forks City Council member Mark Olstad, Polk County Commissioner Warren Strandell, Roseau County Sheriff Steve Gust, Assistant Roseau County Attorney Mike Grover, Norman County Sheriff Jeremy Thornton, Norman County Chief Deputy Ben Fall, Lake of the Woods County Sheriff Gary Fish, Lake of the Woods County Attorney James Austad, and Marshall County Sheriff Jason Boman.

Associate (non-voting) advisory board members include Polk County Attorney Greg Widseth, Red Lake County Sheriff Mitch Bernstein, Ada Police Chief Jody Bueng, Kittson County Sheriff Steve Porter, Marshall County Sheriff Jason Boman, U.S. Border Patrol Agent Eric Kuhn, and Homeland Security Investigations Agent Josh Goldberg.

Federal court connection

In addition to their work in the field, the federal agencies provide a connection to other government resources including prosecution through the U.S. District Court system.

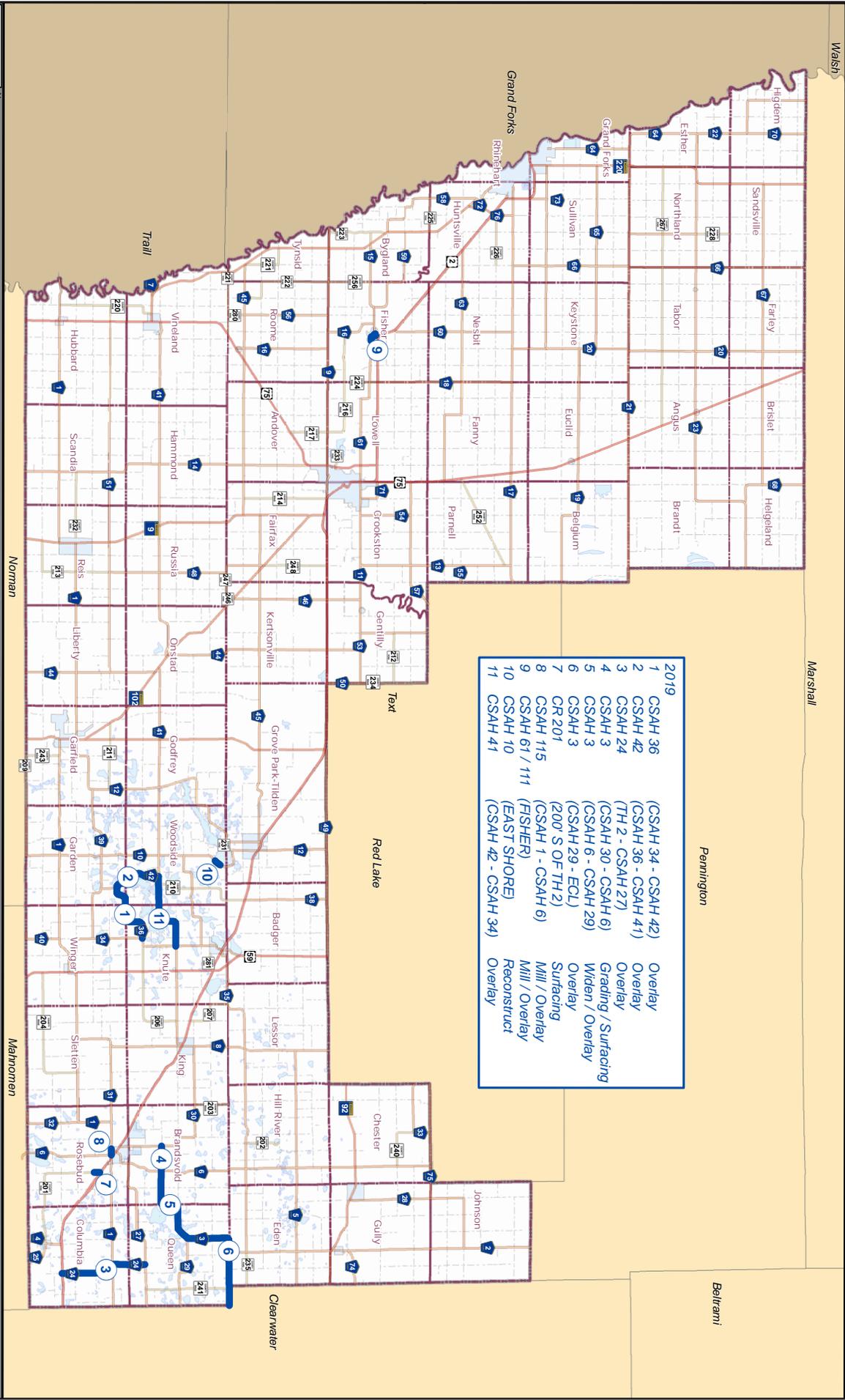
The task force has agreements that allow it to work across state lines with the Grand Forks Narcotics Task Force and to work extensively with drug task forces in adjacent counties and throughout Minnesota. The task force's unique location along the International border with Canada has resulted in a working relationship with Canadian agencies including the RCMP and Canadian Border Services Agency.

Suspicious activities should be reported to local law enforcement offices.

Information can be reported to the Polk County Sheriff's office (218-281-0431), the Crookston Police Department (218-281-3111), the East Grand Forks Police Department (218-773-1104), or to Polk County's Help Us 2 Fight Meth and All Crime anonymous number (877-204-7505).



**2019 PROPOSED ROAD CONSTRUCTION
POLK COUNTY, MINNESOTA**



This data was provided on an "AS-IS" basis. While the accuracy of any data is not intended to be warranted, it is not intended to be used for any purpose other than for any particular purpose.

After long winter, road work set to blend grading, overlays

The 2019 construction season has been cancelled due to snow and wind. We will resume construction work in 2020.

That was the joke in mid-March with the snow piling up instead of melting. Instead, with a return to some semblance of normal, we will again have a blend of grading and overlay work this year. Most of the work will be done in the eastern half of the county.”

CSAH 3 will be our most expensive project this year. We will be grading and surfacing the new portion of CSAH 3 from CSAH 30 to CSAH 6.

We will grade widening and overlaying the stretch from CSAH 6 to CSAH 29 and overlaying the remainder of the road to the Polk/Clearwater County line. This project will include purchasing right of way, realigning the township roads coming into the curves east of CSAH 6 and providing wider shoulders and flatter in-slopes.

We will also be reconstructing CSAH 10 at East Shore of Maple Lake. It is time to make East Shore safer.

How do we plan on doing that?

First, we are going to remove the old roadway that runs along the shore between CSAH 10 and Maple Lake.

Second, we are going to reconstruct CSAH 10 to allow

for “back in diagonal parking.” This will allow swimmers, picnickers and fishers to use East Shore and not have to worry about vehicles driving past on the old roadway. And it will allow for parking that is easy to use and safer than parallel parking or pull-in diagonal parking.

This year’s overlay projects are:

- CSAH 36 from CSAH 34 to CSAH 42;
- CSAH 41 from CSAH 42 to CSAH 34;
- CSAH 42 from CSAH 36 to CSAH 41; and
- CSAH 61/CSAH 111 in Fisher.

We will also be doing another 20 miles of gravel road stabilization using a product called BaseOne. The roads to be stabilized are:

- CSAH 44 from TH 102 to CSAH 45; and
- CSAH 45 from TH 9 to CSAH 44.

Remember to drive safely through our work zones. Not only will that keep the workers safe, but yourselves as well.

If you have any questions concerning this year’s construction program, please give our office a call at 218-281-3952 and talk with either Darin Carlstrom at ext. 8254 or me at ext. 8253. — **County Engineer Richard Sanders**

Diedrich re-elected to Minnesota counties insurance board

Polk County Commissioner Don Diedrich was re-elected to another 4-year term on the Board of Directors of the Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust when the organization had its annual meeting in Minneapolis on Dec. 3.

MCIT is a joint powers entity made up of Minnesota counties and associated public entities that pool resources to provide

property, casualty and workers compensation insurance coverage to members. MCIT also offers risk management and loss control services.

Diedrich, who was first elected to the MCIT board in 2010 and then re-elected in 2014, became its secretary-treasurer in 2017. He has been a member of the MCIT Governance Committee since 2012.



Pok County Engineer Richard Sanders (left) was presented the Minnesota County Engineer of the Year Award by the Minnesota County Engineers Association at its annual meeting in January. Aitkin County Engineer John Welle made the presentation.

Sanders named Minnesota County Engineer of the Year

Polk County Engineer Richard Sanders has been the recipient of two very significant honors.

He was named the “outstanding county engineer of the year” by the Minnesota County Engineers Association (MCEA) at its annual awards banquet in January. MCEA members are the county engineers from each of Minnesota’s 87 counties.

The MCEA honor followed his selection in October by the Minnesota State Departments of Transportation, Public Safety and Health as one of 10 individuals and organizations to receive Star Awards for their efforts in improving traffic safety through the Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) Program. This award recognizes work in the areas of enforcement, emergency medical and trauma services, education, engineering, child passenger safety, and judicial/court systems.

A member of the Polk County Highway Department since 1991 and the county

engineer since 2002, Sanders has been a leader in transportation organizations both in Minnesota and nationally. He was president of the MCEA in 2013 and is the current president of the National Association of County Engineers (NACE). Sanders has been involved with and chaired several MCEA and NACE committees, including the Minnesota Local Road Board’s Research Implementation Committee.

A founding member of the Polk County TZD coalition, Sanders advocates for TZD goals on local and state levels to key decision makers and stakeholders. He has been instrumental in assuring that Buckle Up messaging is broadcast throughout Polk County and makes it a priority message on all roads leaving the county. Sanders encourages communities to have a plan for a sober ride home and for the establishments to receive Responsible Beverage Server Training.

Polk County Employee Anniversaries in 2019

<u>Hire</u>	<u>Employee</u>	<u>Position</u>
30 Years		
4/24/89	Teresa Genereux	Accounting Technician
5/17/89	Todd Tranby	Landfill Technician
6/19/89	Betty Solie	Support Services Supervisor
25 Years		
1/24/94	Randall Sondrol	Sheriff's Dept.-Sergeant
4/1/94	Karen Warmack	Social Services Supervisor
5/2/94	Karen Biermaier	Child Support Officer
5/11/94	Pamela Cournia	Administrative Assistant I-A
6/6/94	Debra Hanson	Case Aide
6/6/94	Nancy Shafer	Dispatch Supervisor
8/1/94	Randall Olson	Highway Maintenance Foreman
8/29/94	Randy Huot	Highway Maintenance Supt.
20 Years		
9/1/99	Karen Broekemeier	Social Worker
11/15/99	Todd Lewis	Highway Maintenance
12/13/99	Scott Oliver	Engineering Technician-IIIB
15 Years		
4/1/04	Jeff Durbin	Lead Transfer Station Operator
5/3/04	Debra Manecke	Secretary/Bookkeeper (ES)
8/13/04	Kathy Gilder	Public Health Lead Coord.-RNIII
9/9/04	Jesse Haugen	Deputy Sheriff Patrol
11/22/04	Michelle Ostgard	Social Worker
10 Years		
1/12/09	Debra Nelson	Lead Custodian
3/9/09	Jaclyn Martin	Lead Eligibility Worker
5/1/09	Jeffrey Jorgens	Highway Maintenance
6/8/09	Brad Driscoll	Highway Shop Foreman
9/14/09	Sue Thompson	Wellness Coordinator
5 Years		
1/22/14	Kyle Olson	Deputy Sheriff Patrol
1/13/14	Tereva Bohm	Eligibility Worker
2/19/14	Tracy Smith	Social Worker
2/24/14	Emily Bibow	Registered Nurse II
2/26/14	Scott Vilven	Transfer Station Operator
2/28/14	Alyson Bergstrom	Environmental Technician
4/9/14	Wayne Larson	Baler/Forklift Operator
6/1/14	David MacDonald	Maintenance Worker
6/9/14	Thomas Brault	Deputy Sheriff Patrol
6/10/14	Daniel Jackson	Deputy Sheriff Patrol
8/4/14	Kristina Cowen	Social Worker
8/11/14	Nanette Widseth	Registered Nurse II
9/8/14	Katherine Lehrol	Eligibility Worker
9/10/14	Charles Curtis	Assistant County Attorney
9/29/14	Thomas Hibma	Deputy Sheriff Patrol
11/3/14	Jody Trandem	Office Support Specialist
11/12/14	Holly Blilie	Registered Nurse II
11/13/14	JaNan Erickson	Clerk Typist Cashier III-SO
11/17/14	Jamie Opheim	Support Enforcement Aide
11/19/14	Anna Colter	Family Based Service Provider
12/1/14	Amy VanDenEinde	Registered Nurse II
12/22/14	Ross Olsen	Mechanical Maintenance Tech. II

Klein now managing East Polk SWCD

After serving as the interim district manager for several months, Rachel Klein had the interim portion of her title removed by action of the East Polk County Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors on Feb. 19. Klein, who succeeds Lisa Erickson, had been the district technician.

A native of Grand Forks where she graduated from Central High School in 2010, Klein earned a B.S. in agronomy with a minor in agricultural business at the University of Minnesota-Crookston. She initially worked for the East Polk District as an area certification specialist, then left for a brief time to sell seed and chemicals before returning a year ago as the district technician. Her duties included working the Buffer Program, serving as the Polk County feed lot officer, administering the Wetland Conservation Act program, assisting the lake monitoring program, administration of the financials, and day-to-day operations of the office.

Klein and her husband have a Minnesota Ag Water Quality certified hobby farm/feedlot in Red



Rachel Klein

Lake County where they have horses, laying hens, dairy goats and small herds of cattle and sheep.

Kelsey Hedlund is the new district technician. A native of East Grand Forks who studied natural resource management at the University of Minnesota-Crookston, Hedlund works with shoreline restorations, tree sales, the Wetland Conservation Act, and lake and stream monitoring. She had previously worked for the soil conservation district in Stutsman County in North Dakota.

West Polk SWCD now has full complement of supervisors

With the election of Chris Cournia, Crookston, to the District 5 position in November the West Polk County Soil & Water Conservation District now has a full complement of supervisors.

The District 5 position representing Hammond, Hubbard, Liberty, Onstad, Reis, Russia, Scandia and Vineland townships had been vacant.

Other supervisors are: District 1 — Mark McWalter, East Grand Forks (secretary); Dist. 2 — Derek Peterson, Warren (vice chair); Dist. 3 — John Sorenson, Crookston (PR & I); and Dist. 4 — Elliott Solheim, Crookston (chair). Cournia serves as the treasurer.

District 1 includes Higdum, Sandsville, Esther, Northland, Grand Forks, Sullivan, Rhinehart

and Huntsville townships; District 2: Farley, Brislet, Helgeland, Tabor, Angus, Brandt, Keystone, Euclid and Belgium townships; District 3: Nesbit, Fanny, Parnell, Bygland, Fisher, Tynsid and Roome townships; and District 4: Lowell, Crookston, Gently, Andover, Fairfax and Kertsonville townships.

Supervisor responsibilities deal include a wide variety of resource management issues, including wetlands, water quality, and soil erosion. SWCDs are special purpose units of government that manage and direct conservation programs, such as the State Cost-Share program and the Clean Water Land & Legacy Amendment Cost-Share program. Supervisors conduct monthly board meetings.

Becker starts work as 4-H coordinator

New Polk County 4-H Program Coordinator Katie Becker, has begun working with the 4-H families and youth to determine needs in the county. "I've been working with schools and am looking at doing a 21st century school program yet this spring," she says of her start with the program.

Becker succeeds Mark Peterson, a Crookston area farmer who had served as the interim program coordinator following the resignation of Kristina Johnson last January.

A native of Todd County where she grew up on a dairy farm, Becker was a 4-H member "for 14 years...for as long

as I could be." Her 4-H involvement began as a Cloverbud when she started kindergarten and continued until one year past high school.

During her time as an active 4-H member she was involved in the livestock areas, showing dairy cattle along with dairy and meat goats, and rabbits while also doing many different static projects. Becker also took great pride in being a county ambassador.

Becker, who graduated from Staples Motley High School in 2006, earned an associate's degree in early childhood at Minnesota State Community & Technical College in Wadena in 2008 and a bachelor's

degree in liberal studies at Bemidji State University in 2010.

She worked two years as an AmeriCorps member with Minnesota Alliance with Youth through the Crow Wing County 4-H Program. In that job, she created an after school program for two different schools in Crow Wing County and also shadowed the 4-H program coordinator in work with the county fair, day camps and other county events.

More recently, Becker was the Clearwater County 4-H Program coordinator for the past 4 1/2 years beginning in 2014. Becker says that she is



Katie Becker

very excited about her new role as the Polk County 4-H program coordinator and is looking forward to continuing to grow the program.

Swenby succeeds Wilkens at Sand Hill Watershed



April Swenby

April Swenby has succeeded the retiring Dan Wilkens as administrator of the Sand Hill Watershed District.

The new job for Swenby, amounts to an expansion of what she has been doing for the past 18 years during which she served as the district's assistant administrator.

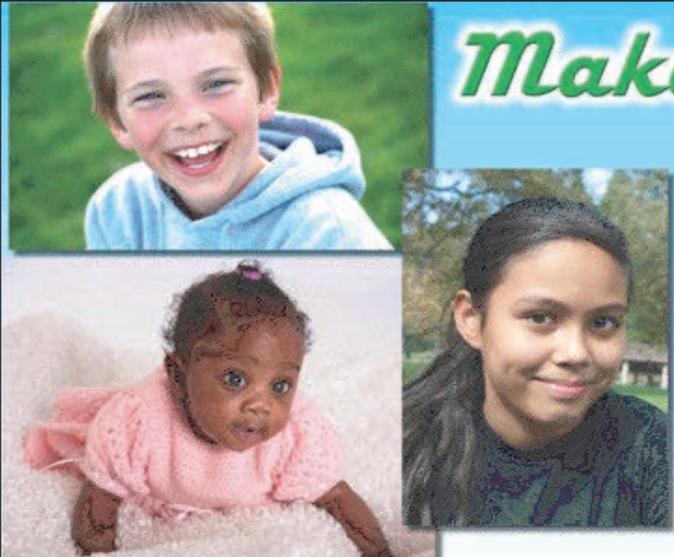
For Wilkens, retirement comes after 19 years as administrator of the Sand Hills Watershed District and some 46 years of work with water issues. He was instrumental in the creation of the district in 1975 and then served on its board of managers until 1999 when he became administrator.

"I'm looking forward to working our board of managers," Swenby says of her new role. "I don't foresee making any changes. You don't change something that's not broken and the Sand Hill Watershed is certainly not broken. We have a very good group of board managers and have done a lot of good things in the district. I have been handed a nice, clean slate and feel blessed."

A native of Fertile where she grew up as a daughter of Bonnie and Mel Bohnenkamp, Swenby graduated from Fertile-Beltrami High School in 1997 and then completed

accounting and software programs at the East Grand Forks Vocational & Technical College. She started work for the Sand Hill Watershed District in 2001 and, while working, also completed web graphic design and communications programs at Moorhead Technical College.

Swenby and her husband, Aaron, have four children: Alexa, 17; Aubree, 15; Allyson, 12, and Noah, 9. They are students in the Fertile-Beltrami School System. Swenby is in her first year as a member of the Fertile-Beltrami School Board.



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Polk County Social Services
1-877-281-3127



Aaron Rongen



Brad Grunhovd



Connie Hannesson

County Board re-organizes for 2019

Warren Strandell, East Grand Forks, succeeded Joan Lee, McIntosh, as chair when the Polk County Board of Commissioners re-organized at its first meeting of 2019.

Commissioner Gary Willhite, Crookston, is the new vice chair. The chair and vice chair positions rotate through the commissioners on an annual basis.

Key subjects that will be on the table this year will include Enbridge Energy's proposed Line 3 pipeline replacement project and the outcome of that company's tax appeal, which is now in the courts.

The focus of the board in 2018 involved completion of the \$25.25 million project that expanded and upgraded the Resource Recovery Facility (incinerator) in Fosston and constructed a new transfer station in Crookston.

Construction of the new transfer station in Crookston proceeded through the winter with completion marked in March.

Financing for those projects included \$17.25 million in Minnesota Capital Assistance Program (CAP) grants. The \$7 million "local-share," of the project that was provided by bonding will be repaid through the collection of tipping fees collected when waste is delivered to the facilities.

3 new members join Polk County Extension Committee

Aaron Rongen, Fertile; Brad Grunhovd, Euclid, and Connie Hannesson, Crookston, are new members of the Polk County Extension Committee.

The committee hears reports and provides input on Extension Service activities, both those that are agriculture-related and those involving the 4-H program. The committee also makes recommendations to the County Board concerning staffing and budgeting.

Rongen, who once served as the 4-H coordinator four years in a part-time role, is the new committee member from Commissioner District 1. He succeeds Cheryl Byrne, Erskine, who had reached the two-term limit for serving as a committee member.

As the new representative from Commissioner District 5, Grunhovd is filling the final year of the unexpired term of Paul Aakre, Warren. Grunhovd will be eligible for appointment to a full three-year term starting next year.

Hannesson is the new at-large member on the committee. A retired elementary school teacher, she succeeds Nancy Capistran, Crookston, who had completed the two-term limit.

Rongen grew up and helped his father on the family farm near Fertile where he and his family now live.

He worked at Bergeson Nursery, rural Fertile, for two spring and summer seasons during high school. After he graduated from Fertile-Beltrami High School in 1993, he then spent 7 months on a work exchange program at a nursery in Australia.

Upon returning to the area, he continued helping his father on the farm as well as working at Bergeson Nursery, where he still works. Rongen attended the University of Minnesota-Crookston and he and a brother raised cattle for four years.

Rongen and his wife, Mary Elizabeth, have three children who are members of the Fertile 4-H Club: Arthur, who is 8; John Douglas, 6, and Mary Cate, 4. That's the same club that Aaron was an active member in when he was from 8 to 18 years old.

Grunhovd is in the same position that his wife,

Kaydi Strickler-Grunhovd served from 2011 until she completed the maximum two terms as a committee member in 2017.

After studying computer science at North Dakota State College of Science in Wahpeton, Grunhovd worked at the Fargo Forum for 13 years before becoming service administrator at Valley Plains Equipment in Crookston four years ago.

He is also a board member of the Red River Valley Development Association, a member of the Emerging Leaders Advisory Committee, and a member of the Fertile Conservation Club.

Hannesson grew up on a small grains and dairy farm near Ada in Norman County. From age 9 through 19, she was active in the Norman County 4-H Program where her main project was the showing of Holstein dairy cattle. As a senior, she participated in the Minnesota-Georgia 4-H Exchange Program and also received the 4-H Key Award.

After earning a degree in elementary education with a concentration in physical education and health, Hannesson was hired by Crookston School District 593 to teach fifth grade. She spent the next 34 years teaching fifth and sixth grades in Crookston and has continued to substitute teach since her retirement.

The 4-H tradition continued in the Hannesson household when each of her four children became members of the Community Star 4-H Club in Crookston and she served as both a project and key club leader.

Hannesson has continued to be involved in the 4-H Program by judging 4-H exhibits and demonstrations at local county fairs. Her biggest wish for the Polk County 4-H program is to see the membership numbers increase.

Other committee members are Danny Anderson, Fisher (Dist. 2); Amy Theis, Crookston (Dist. 3); and Scott Balstad, Fosston (Dist. 4). County commissioners Joan Lee and Gary Willhite also serve on the committee. Polk County Director of Property Records Michelle Cote serves as secretary of the committee.

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Fight Crime
The Polk County
Sheriff's
Tip Line is completely
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Help us to fight drugs and all crime. Your tips, especially when combined with other information that we already might have, could help someone's child, parent, relative or friend.

Sheriff Jim Tadman
1-218-435-7872

Commissioner assignments

Jerry Jacobson (Dist. 1) — Polk County Social Services Board, Polk County Board of Health, Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) Environment & Natural Resources Policy Committee, Sand Hill Watershed District Advisory Committee, Minnesota Rural Counties (delegate), Northwest Mental Health Board (sec.-treas.), Region 1 Area Agency on Aging Committee (v. pres.), Retired Senior Volunteer Program, Northwest Regional Development Commission, NWRDC Regional Transit Coordination Council (pres.). Regional Solid Waste Advisory Board (alternate), President Jerry, Lake Agassiz Regional Library Board (alternate), Polk County Parks Committee, Judicial Ditch 60 Committee, Polk-Red Lake Joint Ditches 1, 3 & 66 Committee, Red Lake-Polk County Ditches 64 & 71 Committee, Red Lake-Polk County Joint Ditch 2 Committee, Red Lake-Polk County Judicial Ditch 72 Committee, Crookston Downtown Task Force.

Warren Strandell (Dist. 2) — Chair Polk County Board, Chair Polk County Social Service Board, Chair Northwest Regional Corrections Board, Vice Chair Northwest Regional Development Commission (NWRDC) and Executive Board, Polk County Board of Health, Polk County Planning & Zoning Commission, Polk County Emergency Preparedness Committee, AMC Public Safety Policy Committee, Northwest Regional Emergency Communications Board, NWRDC Transportation Advisory Committee (vice chair), MnDOT Dist. 2 Area Transportation Partnership, Polk County Public Safety Committee, Pine to Prairie Drug Task Force, Polk County Building Committee, Polk County Hazardous Mitigation Committee, 911 Planning Committee, Red Lake Watershed Advisory Committee, Grand Forks-East Grand Forks Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

Gary Willhite (Dist. 3) — Vice Chair Polk County Board, Vice Chair Polk County Social Services Board, Polk County Board of Health, Lake Agassiz Regional Library Board (vice chair, executive committee), Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Polk-Norman-Mahnomen County Joint Community Health Board, AMC General Government Policy Committee, Northwest Regional Emergency Communications Board (alternate), Polk County Parks Committee, Polk County Senior Health Care Providers, Polk County Public Safety Committee, Polk County Building Committee, Judicial Ditch 60 Committee, Polk County Extension Service Committee, Crookston Downtown Task Force.

Joan Lee (Dist. 4) — Polk County Social Services Board, Polk County Board of Health, AMC Health & Human Services Policy Committee, AMC Futures Committee, AMC Training & Education Committee, AMC Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators Subcommittee, State Community Health Services Advisory Committee (SCHSAC) delegate, SCHSAC Executive Committee member for northwest Minnesota, Regional Solid Waste Advisory Board, Polk-Norman-Mahnomen Joint Community Health Board, Polk County Finance Committee, Polk County Household Hazardous Waste Advisory Committee (chair), Polk County Extension Service Committee (chair), Polk County Public Works Committee, Polk-Norman-Clay Agassiz Trail Advisory Committee, Pine to Prairie Drug Task Force (alternate), Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force, Red Lake-Polk County Joint Ditches 1, 3 & 66 Committee, Red Lake-Polk County Joint Ditches 64 & 71 Committee, Red Lake-Polk County Judicial Ditch 72 Committee, Red Lake-Polk County Joint Ditch 72 Committee, Red Lake River Corridor Joint Board, Inter-County Community Council Board, East Polk County Development Achievement Center Board (treasurer), Fosston Law Enforcement Committee, Water Resource Advisory Committee; Chair Wild Rice-Marsh River Watershed District.

Don Diedrich (Dist. 5) — Vice Chair Northwest Mental Health Board, Polk County Board of Health, Northwest Regional Corrections Board, Polk County Tax-Forfeiting Property Viewing Committee, Secretary-Treasurer of Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust Board of Directors representing Minn. Dist. 3, Polk County Finance Committee, Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, AMC Transportation Policy Committee, One Watershed One Plan, Joint Powers Board of the Red River Basin Commission in Minnesota, Red Lake-Polk County Joint Ditches 1, 3 & 66 Committee, Red Lake-Polk County Joint Ditches 64 & 71 Committee, Red Lake-Polk County Joint Ditch 2 Committee, Red Lake-Polk County Joint Judicial Ditch 72 Committee, Polk County Judicial Ditch 60 Committee, Red Lake River Corridor Joint Board, Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers Watershed District Citizens Advisory Committee, Polk County Public Works Committee, Law Library Board of Directors, Red Lake River Corridor Joint Board, Grand Forks-East Grand Forks Metropolitan Planning Organization (alternate).

Like Winter, Some Issues; Like Spring, Other Issues

Chuck Whiting, County Administrator



As the never-ending winter slogs to its conclusion, so do some issues that do not seem to go away.

Foremost is the Enbridge tax appeal, an expensive situation that keeps growing but does not end.

To refresh the situation, Enbridge Energy has appealed the valuation of one of its pipelines with the state's Tax Court. The valuation of this pipeline is determined by the state's Department of Revenue. The county is notified of that valuation and it is included in the overall valuation of all properties in the county.

When the county sets its annual budget levy, each property pays its property taxes according to its share of the overall valuation, with a few variables the state throws in depending on the type of property.

Enbridge's pipeline is approximately 1% of the county's overall valuation, making it the largest taxpayer in the county. As is their right, Enbridge filed an appeal to the valuation back in 2013 and has for each subsequent year since.

The Tax Court, then the Supreme Court and again the Tax Court have been going back and forth on how the property valuation was determined, all while subsequent years get added now leaving quite a pile of tax appeals waiting for resolution. Kind of like piles of snow waiting for spring!

The problem this creates, however, is similar to all the snow melting at once. Since counties collect the property taxes, any valuation change well after the fact as appears may happen has meant the counties must refund the property tax differential.

Enbridge, to their credit, has been upfront with Polk and 12 other counties affected by their appeal. In 2016, they told us they see a \$1.8 refund coming for the tax years 2013 to 2015.

That's like a 75-degree day after four feet of winter snows. While the court case continues, those years since have been appealed as well. The compounding nature of the potential for a refund is problematic; these are amounts that are way out of scale for normal tax refunds. So we have appealed directly to the Legislature to cushion potential refunds.

It seems logical that if the state is determining these valuations, then the state ought to pay for refunds resulting from court determinations that the state's valuations were incorrect. For the amounts in question, it may be the only way to assure county taxpayers are not socked with a blizzard level of refund payback.

So far, this is resonating with our legislators but word has it that the courts may not resolve the valuation issues for another couple of years. Kind of like how the Ice Age started, the snow never melts!

Ah, but spring does come eventually and like spring, something new comes into being. The county committed to building improvements in our East Grand Forks building to expand our leased space with Northwest Mental Health. Not only will these improvements help address building issues we have had, it gives the county better service with a close working partner we have addressing growing needs seen in the region.

Northwest Mental Health is adapting to the state's priorities helping our residents in various mental health related circumstances. And as a tenant, ease of access for clientele and sharing of the cost of the building should mean long-term service availability in our region.

Like spring, something to look forward to. Their space should be ready for occupancy by mid-April. Perhaps all of the snow will be gone by then!



Youth Advisory Board is created on visit to County Board

The Youth Advisory Board (YAB) for Polk County Public Health was created by County Board action in December. The board provides an opportunity for young people to become involved in public health services, civic engagement and leadership. Advisory board members will serve a two-year term. Pictured from left are: Commissioner Jerry Jacobson, Kolton Crocker (Win-E-Mac), Autumn Patterson (Fertile-

Beltrami), Commissioner Don Diedrich, Caidyn Johnson (Fertile-Beltrami), Samuel "Sam" Modeen (Sacred Heart), Commissioner Joan Lee, Maia Bowman (East Grand Forks), Eliza Meyer (Crookston), Audrey Harbott (Crookston), Commissioner Gary Willhite, and Commissioner Warren Strandell. Not pictured: Teagan Paulson (Win-E-Mac) and Naomi Swanson (Fosston).

More than a million pages of paper records now converted to electronic form

More than one million pages have been scanned in the ongoing effort to convert paper records into the electronic form.

And, that's probably only half the job, according to Michelle Cote, who as the county's director of Property Records and head of the county's Taxpayer Service Center, is directing the project.

The conversion of boxes and boxes of paper records to electronic form is being done both to save valuable storage space and to make those "papers" much more easily accessible when there is a need to reference them. The content of all boxes is logged before being destroyed.

The estimate of the more than one million pages that have been scanned during the now three-year old project involves the 172,603 "records" converted thus far. The key the word in that statement is "records," since a single record can include from one to more than

100 pages. Not only is the archival of records important but a look at current work flow processes is critical so no more paper is amassed.

The scanning effort is being done by several part-time employees hired specifically to do scanning and by full-time staff from the Taxpayer Service Center and from other county departments, too, when they are available. In all, some 30 plus people have been involved with the work.

Records scanned thus far include:

- 310 Social Service Board minutes;
- 9,758 discharges of military veterans;
- 5,967 tax book records;
- 3,631 assessment list books;
- 29,226 (old) assessment field cards;
- 1,664 personnel records;
- 1,017 County Board information packets;
- 2,355 County Board minutes; and

- 118,675 (or 857 boxes) of Sheriff's Department records.

Currently underway is the conversion of County Board packets, marriages, and vital statistics (births & deaths) to digital form. Old road orders and old school records are next on the list.

In addition to the work it is doing, Cote and some from her team of scanners are initiating and or have gotten conversion efforts started in these other departments:

- Public Health - immunization records;
- Victim's Assistance - records/workflow;
- Environmental Services - building permit records;
- Environmental Services - flood acquisitions;
- Tri-County Community Corrections - 16,294 jail records;
- Public Works - 1,041 construction plans, 1,064 projects, and easements.

Building permits required for all construction

As the construction season is gearing up for the year, it is a good time to remind residents about zoning requirements in Polk County.

Polk County requires building/land use permits for all construction projects in the county — new homes, storage buildings, agricultural buildings, septic systems, or any other structures.

If you are planning building/land use projects, please contact Polk County Planning & Zoning prior to construction to determine setback and ordinance requirements that may apply.

People sometimes forget to apply for a building permit or don't think they need a permit for a deck, small shed, septic system work, etc. However, permits are required for almost any construction project within the county.

Any land alterations or landscaping activity in the shoreland or floodplain zoning districts may also require a permit.

More information on building/land use regulations, including new buffer regulations, can be found on the Polk County website at www.co.polk.mn.us under the Environmental Services and Planning & Zoning Department page.

Please do not hesitate to give our staff a call to inquire more about your specific building project and permitting requirements.

Our office is located at 320 Ingersoll Ave. in Crookston, or contact us at 218-281-6445. We look forward to working with you. — **Jacob Snyder, Planning & Zoning administrator**

DWI Court Program soon to have 17th graduate

“Things have gotten better” was the heartfelt understatement made by James, a Polk County DWI Court participant.

James is gearing up to be the 17th graduate from the DWI Court program in April. During his recent graduation interview James spoke about his life prior to DWI Court and the effect that lifestyle had on his family.

He shared that he had drank alcohol for more than 25 years and that, until recently, it was the focus of his life. At the time of his second DWI arrest, he was drinking a case of beer and a bottle of vodka every day and knew he had to make a change.

At his graduation interview James was 18 months sober, had regained family connections, made big commitments in the AA world, and even restarted his favorite hobby of building airplanes.

What is a DWI Court?

A DWI Court, a type of treatment court, is dedicated to changing the behavior of alcohol and other drug dependent offenders who have been arrested for driving while impaired.

An eligible defendant who enters a guilty plea or is convicted of a DWI may qualify for the program, which is an alternative to traditional criminal probation. Treatment courts are led by a multi-disciplinary team that includes judges, law enforcement, probation officers, chemical and mental health counselors, social services, attorneys, and a program coordinator.

Polk County DWI Court is funded through a grant from the Minnesota Office of Traffic Safety. In 2014, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration evaluated DWI courts and found that the courts reduce recidivism and save taxpayer money.

Who are DWI Court participants?

In its four years of operation, 41 people have entered the Polk County DWI Court. The majority of participants have been charged with a first or second degree DWI. There are currently 16 active participants and 15 program graduates. There have been 10 terminated participants, which can occur for reasons such as obtaining new charges or not complying with program standards.

What happens in a DWI Court?

DWI court participants are intensely supervised, include frequent drug and alcohol tests, and require an expectation of lifestyle changes for participants.

The program is set up for participants to complete in 18 months. But setbacks can extend a participant's time in DWI Court. The average Polk County DWI graduate takes 623 days, or a little over 20 months to complete the program.

To date just one graduate has had a new driving after revocation charge. Three participants, have received new charges while in the program. These and any other setbacks, big or small, are discussed in the DWI court and reviewed to determine whether continued participation is appropriate.

Recidivism among terminated participants is 75 percent, compared to 20 percent recidivism among total program participants. If a participant is terminated from the Polk County DWI Court they may face additional jail time, more fines, or more probation. — **Melora Bergee, Polk County DWI Court coordinator**

Buffer zone compliance can be achieved by seeding perennials

Agriculture fields in Minnesota require water resource protection (buffers) along designated Public Waters and Public Drainage systems.

Minnesota Statute §103F.48, the “buffer law,” has been incorporated into the Polk County Land Use/Zoning Ordinance and current compliance will be actively evaluated by on-site/field checks on an individual parcel basis.

Required buffers on Public Waters (50 feet) were to have been established (seeded) by Nov. 1, 2017; buffers on Public Drainage systems (16.5 feet) were to be seeded by Nov. 1, 2018.

SWCDs are obligated to perform compliance tracking and monitoring and report findings to Polk County and the Minnesota Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR).

Compliance with the buffer law can/must be achieved this growing/ farming season by seeding required buffers with one or more perennial (grass) species to the above prescribed widths.

To facilitate/expedite compliance status, please inform SWCD staff when your buffers are seeded. West Polk SWCD has provided technical guidance and worked directly with many landowners/tenants to identify Polk County parcels applicable to the buffer law and determine compliance

status.

If you are an absentee landowner, we recommend that an arrangement is made to seed/establish buffers this season. Notification of seeding and SWCD buffer compliance field checks are certainly the most effective way to avoid official notices from Polk County including potential monetary fines.

If a Notice of Noncompliance or Corrective Action notice is issued to you, the resolution is simplified by timely seeding buffers on applicable parcels to the prescribed widths as outlined in Minnesota statute.

West & East Polk SWCD staff are available to assist with any inquiries and maintain the commitment to work with you to achieve compliance with §103F.48 “state buffer law.”

Please view www.westpolkswcd.com and/or www.eastpolkswcd.org buffer page(s) and utilize direct links to BWSR and MnDNR web pages for current available information regarding buffers or visit our field office(s).

West Polk SWCD is co-located with NRCS at 528 Strander Ave. in Crookston. East Polk SWCD is located in the Bjella Building at 240 Cleveland Ave. in McIntosh. — **Aaron Habermehl, Wetland Conservation Act administrator, West Polk SWCD**



West Polk County Soil & Water Conservation District Manager Nicole Bernd accepted the Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation District's Ecological & Water Resources Appreciation Award at the organization's annual convention in Bloomington in December. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources North District Manager Tom Groshens made the presentation. The award recognized the conservation district for implementing innovative conservation activities, demonstrating leadership and achieving significant results in the protection of Minnesota's land and water resources. Projects highlighted in the award were restoration efforts on both the Grand Marais Creek north of East Grand Forks and the Sand Hill River east of Fertile.

AIS Task Force focuses on education, awareness

Since 2015 the Polk County Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Task Force has been working on several projects focusing on education and public awareness.

Billboards, public access signs, and several promotional items have been developed to help spread the message about the threat that AIS poses in Polk County lakes and rivers systems.

Invasive species are species that are not native to Minnesota and cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.

Minnesota waters are threatened by aquatic invasive species. It is illegal to transport any aquatic species like Eurasian watermilfoil, zebra mussels, starry stonewort, spiny waterflea or other prohibited invasive species. In Polk County, Eurasian watermilfoil is already present on Union Lake, and zebra mussels are present in the Red River. With the new infestations of starry stonewort in Beltrami County and other counties around the state, it is critical that every boater take the steps necessary to limit the spread of AIS.

This summer the task force is planning to hire two seasonal AIS technicians to conduct watercraft inspections, work on monitoring projects and help with other AIS outreach and educational activities. With two AIS technicians last summer, we were able to conduct over 1,500 watercraft inspections on public water access sites around Polk County lakes and rivers.

Lake users may notice some new tools placed at access sites to help clean off all Aquatic Invasive Species present before and after accessing water bodies.

The taskforce purchased tools and is working to place signs with these tools to aid boaters in cleaning off all types of watercrafts. These tools will be placed at Maple, Union and Lake Sarah this season and will pilot if these will be beneficial to have at other Polk County



recreational access sites.

Another fixture that boaters will notice at access sites is the I-LIDS units at Maple Lake and Union Lake.

I-LIDS stands for Internet Landing Installed Device Sensor. I-LIDS is a self-contained, solar powered system installed at boat launches to prevent AIS through video capture and remote inspection of launching boats/trailers, and audio education of boaters using the lake. These systems help our staff monitor boat launch sites on our two busiest lakes even when inspectors are not present at the access sites.

All boaters need to do their part is to clean, drain and dry watercrafts as well as equip-

ment before and after using lakes, even if those lakes are not infested waterbodies. With the spring fishing and boating season right around the corner, it is critical that every boater take the steps necessary to limit the spread of AIS. So, remember to clean, drain, and dry your boat, gear and equipment every time to help protect our lakes and rivers. For more information visit www.co.polk.mn.us/ais. — **Jacob Snyder, Polk County Planning & Zoning administrator**

Regulations You Should Know

It is Unlawful to . . .

- Transport watercraft without removing the drain plug.
- Arrive at a lake access with drain plug in place.
- Transport any prohibited species on public roads.
- Launch a watercraft with prohibited species attached.
- Transport water from Minnesota lakes or rivers.
- Dispose of live bait into the water.

Penalties up to \$1,000

STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!



- ✓ Remove aquatic plants and invasive species off your boat.
- ✓ Drain your live well and remove your drain plug.
- ✓ Dispose of used bait in the trash.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

www.co.polk.mn.us/ais

Especially in Crookston and Fosston...

Need for child foster homes becomes critical

Polk County Social Services has a critical need for child foster care homes in Crookston and in Fosston.

It is important to have foster homes in all communities as we try to be least disruptive in children's lives and prefer to have children entering foster care remain in their communities that are close to their siblings, other family members and friends, attend the same schools, team events, cultural and social activities.

Foster care is a temporary living situation for children providing a safe place to be if a child cannot live with his/her family, or on their own. Foster Parents help by providing stability, affection, consistency, and nurturing. Foster parents also provide for the child's educational, health, cultural and social needs.

In child foster care foster parents open their homes to children whose families are in crisis. They help children heal and become productive, self-sufficient mem-

bers of our society. In both child and adult foster care they provide a safe, stable, nurturing environment that is needed at a very critical time in their lives.

When children must leave their homes, placement with relatives is considered first. If this is not a plausible option, the placing agency then looks to licensed foster homes.

Foster parents are as diverse as the children they care for. Some are married; some are single; some are grandparents; some are parents with young children, adolescents or grown children; some hope to eventually adopt children. The characteristics foster parents have in common are a love for children, an ability to commit to challenges and a desire to make a difference in children's lives. It can be very rewarding, but is also something that is not to be taken lightly.

Homes are also needed for adult foster care. This is provided in a home setting

for those who cannot live independently due to physical, emotional, developmental or mental impairments.

Residents receive meals, support, supervision and, as needed, some assistance with personal care and living skills.

Foster homes are licensed through the Minnesota Department of Human Services when the licensing process is completed. Orientation and training are provided by Polk County Social Services.

Foster care parents receive a monthly reimbursement for the care of a foster child. Further information is available by calling **Jackie Jeffrey, Licensing Social Worker at 218-399-8536 or emailing:**

jackie.jeffrey@co.polk.mn.us

An informational meeting is being held on Monday, April 23rd at 6:30pm at the Crookston Library.

Seven Serious Myths Regarding Foster Parenting

Myth: A foster parent must be married, own their own home and make lots of money.

Fact: You can be married or single, a homeowner or a renter. The only financial requirement is that you have enough income to support yourself and your family.

Myth: Foster parents have to stay at home with the children.

Fact: No, they do not. Many foster parents work outside of the home. Polk County Social Services will pay the cost of childcare when you work.

Myth: My children are grown and out of the house. I'm too old to be a foster parent.

Fact: There is no age requirement (other than you must be at least 21). Many "empty nesters" find foster

parenting to be a rewarding experience.

Myth: I don't have any children and to be a foster parent you need to have parenting experience.

Fact: Not true! Many of our foster parents are childless. They are, however, responsible people who have made a commitment to children and demonstrate an ability to parent or learn.

Myth: Once licensed the foster parent must take any placement they are called to foster.

Fact: Foster parents do not have to say yes to every placement. Your willingness to accept a placement depends on what the needs of your family are at the time of a request.

Myth: You must license for 0-18 years of age.

Fact: Each family licens-

es for the age/gender that best matches the family.

Yes, some families license 0-18 years, either gender but many license within these perimeters. Some homes license only female, others only school age and still others only teens.

Myth: I can't be a foster parent because I would get too attached. It would be too hard to see them leave.

Fact: It's true. You will get attached and it will be painful when children you love leave. But these children have suffered through things no child should ever face and they need the love and care foster parents provide when they open their hearts and homes.

Truth: Being a foster parent is a rewarding experience that you and your foster child will remember for the rest of your lives!

Ways to support Foster Care in your community:

- Coordinate a diaper drive for foster parents who have infants and toddlers as foster children.
- Coordinate a photo album drive for foster children so they can create their own life books.
- Bake cookies and give them to foster families as a way to say "Thank You" or send them a card.
- Make "We Care" bags for girls coming in to foster care that include items such as headbands, earrings, cute socks, small shampoo/conditioner/body lotion.
- Sponsor or offer free music or sports lessons.
- Offer scholarships for activities such as scouting.
- Offer discounts in your business.
- Offer recreation such as paying for a day pass to a State Park.
- Offer to purchase tickets to entertainment venues.