



## Peoria County GIS now an iTunes application

Real estate professionals, residents, and other consumers can now download a free iTunes application to check the assessed value of Peoria County properties. The application provides access to tax parcels and related public assessment information. The application can be found by searching "Peoria County GIS" on the App Store on any Apple device.

Users can search by address or Parcel Identification Number (PIN) or use the iPhone's GPS technology to locate where the user is in the county. The user can then select the property that they are interested in by touching that parcel. An aerial photo basemap is also available. Existing sales data are for valid sales in calendar years 2009 and 2010 only. There is no cost for the app, but data rates may apply.

"It's really great for the public," said Geographic Information Systems Manager Micah Williamson. "This is what the county board would want. They would want to be an efficient organization. So this is just that next step in all of the applications that we have available for the public."

GIS stands for Geographic Information Systems. The goal of the Peoria County GIS Division is to provide customers with efficient and dynamic geographic interfaces (digital maps) that are as dependable as they are useable. This application is the next big step in enabling consumers to be able to access the information they need independently and in a timely manner.

For more information, please call Micah Williamson at 309-495-4840.

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## Message from the ICA President

by Ruth Anne Tobias, DeKalb County Vice-Chair



As is the case with many Illinois counties, budget season is just about over. I think all of us are experiencing fiscal distress to some degree trying to balance our budgets, and it has become increasingly difficult to make decisions about personnel and services. FY2012 is not going to be easy.

The Illinois state budget outlook is dismal and that filters down to local governments. In a recent DeKalb County Rehab and Nursing Center (County Home) meeting, the administrator told me that it's a good thing that they've had 15 hip fracture Medicare patients admitted in the last two weeks for whom the federal government will pay, because the state government is not making any payments needed to provide the services for our long-term care residents.

The National Association of Counties' (NACo) economic outlook survey for counties from October 2011 reports that half of counties indicated declining revenues from the state and federal government as the number one contributor to their shortfalls. Other factors include declining property taxes, sales tax decreases, and declining returns on investment income. Just look at the ride the financial markets have been on! Nine medium to small Illinois counties responded to this national survey, so we know that this 'new normal' is in our state as well, although we probably don't need a survey to document the stresses.

I wish I had a magic wand to wave to provide assistance, but I don't. Membership in NACo can help a little with group purchasing and information about best practices. And there are drug and dental discount programs available for your citizens. If you would like to join NACo, please contact me at [rtobias@dekalbcounty.org](mailto:rtobias@dekalbcounty.org) and I will work with the board to discuss ICA payments for member dues.

We have to hope for the best while making do with what we have. We have to encourage local economic development and ask businesses to work with us to create jobs; and we have to encourage young people to get the best education they can to prepare for a higher skilled future. People say there are jobs out there, but the workers don't have the skills needed. Providing support for your local Workforce Investment Board should pay off in the future. Good luck to you all!

Download a copy of NACo's economic outlook survey for counties at [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org).

## IRS increases retirement plan contribution limits for 2012

The Internal Revenue Service has announced higher maximum contribution limits for participant-directed defined contribution plans, effective January 2012. The announcement means county workers will be able by law to contribute more into their NACo Deferred Compensation Program and similar retirement-plan accounts as soon as the first paycheck of the new year.

The NACo Deferred Compensation Program provided by Nationwide Retirement Solutions is designed specifically to empower public workers to invest payroll-deducted, tax-deferred income that could supplement their projected pension income. Older employees can even catch up on missed opportunities to prepare for retirement.

Beginning in January, county workers can contribute as much as \$17,000 per year to their deferred compensation plan account. If they're at least 50 years old, they could contribute as much \$22,500 through the Age 50+ Catch-up provision. Certain employees who are nearing their retirement date could contribute as much as double this year's maximum limit, \$34,000, through the Special 457 Catch-up provision.

For most workers, the legal maximum may be beyond their financial reach. Their "max" is the contribution increase that matches their budget and comfort level. The federal government encourages retirement-plan participants who may need help saving for retirement through the Saver's Credit, a tax credit credited under the auspices of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 (EGTRRA). For those who qualify, it allows a credit of up to \$1,000 on their federal income tax return for contributing to their NACo Deferred Compensation Program account. Eligibility depends on filing status and modified adjusted gross income.

Nationwide is promoting the 2012 contribution limits, as well as the Saver's Credit, with an underlying theme that reminds public employees that increasing contributions by any amount right now could mean having more options in retirement.

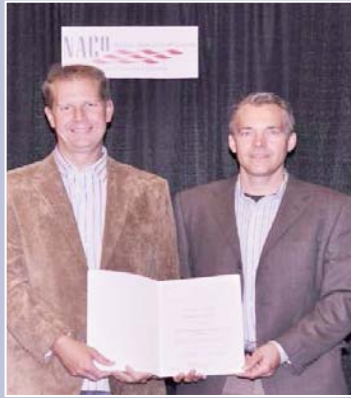


## McHenry County receives three national achievement awards

McHenry County was recognized by the National Association of Counties (NACo) for implementing innovative county government programs to better serve area residents. The 2011 NACo Achievement Awards winners were honored during the NACo's 76th Annual Conference and Exposition in Portland, Oregon. McHenry County received three awards for its Winter Snow & Ice Workshop, Community Partners – Mental Health Awareness for All, and MAPP Heart Age Assessment Tool.

The *Winter Snow & Ice Workshop* teaches public and private snow plow operators and contractors how to safely and effectively manage winter snow and ice and how to safely handle road salt and de-icing chemicals in order to minimize the potential for water pollution. The workshops are an important component of the County's continued commitment to protecting its water quantity and quality. The purpose of *Community Partners – Mental Awareness for All* is to change perceptions of mental health through education by an initiating and nurturing community group. It is a unique partnership working to reduce stigma and raise consciousness and understanding of mental illness in McHenry County. The *MAPP Heart Age Assessment Tool*, a community-based cardiovascular screening program designed to identify and educate adults 30-75+ years of age of the risks associated with heart disease; the tool measures body mass index and blood pressure against age, gender, height, weight, smoking and diabetic status and how it affects their heart's "true age".

"It is an honor for McHenry County to be recognized through the NACo Achievement Awards for these top notch programs," stated County Board Chairman Ken Koehler, "McHenry County continues to find innovative ways to meet the needs of our residents during these difficult economic times."



County Administrator Peter Austin and Planning & Development Director Dennis Sandquist accept one of the NACo awards.



## Senior Housing Development opens in Summit

Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle attended a ribbon cutting in Summit, Ill. for the grand opening of a Senior Housing Development made possible in part by a \$2.7 million HOME Investment Partnership Program loan (HOME).

"With the economy struggling right now, I am proud that Cook County is able to help residents when we can by providing loans to important projects like this one," said President Preckwinkle. "I've been a long-time advocate of affordable housing and these homes can help provide relief for people who have been hit by the foreclosure crisis or to those who have struggled during the worst economic downturn of our life time. This is clearly a vital project and a welcome addition to the Summit community."

The project, located on the site of the former Robert Allison Public Housing Development, consists of the construction of a 78 unit rental housing development in Summit. The development consists of an 18 unit, 2-story building and a 60 unit, 4 story. All units will be set-aside for low-income households earning 80 percent or less of the area median income.

The total development cost is roughly \$13.6 million. Cook County has provided \$2.7 million through a HOME loan to support some construction costs. A total of 19 units will be HOME-assisted (1 in the 60 unit building, 18 in the 18 unit building). The project will provide permanent affordable housing for seniors and will be highly energy efficient, meeting Energy Star standards and all State green building standards.

Joining President Preckwinkle at the ribbon cutting were Cook County Board Commissioners Jesus "Chuy" Garcia (D-7th), Joan Murphy (D-6th) and Jeffery Tobolski (D-16th).

## Logan County courthouse bell rings again

The bell at the top of the century-old Logan County Courthouse is tolling again for the first time since around 1970.

Earlier this year, Logan County received a \$16,000 Richard H. Driehaus County Courthouse Grant from Landmarks Illinois, a statewide non-profit group that helps promote the preservation of historic structures.

In addition to repairing the bell stand, the grant helped pay for repairs to the strike mechanism and the four Seth Thomas clocks on the courthouse dome. The cast iron bell and clocks, which are still in working order, were installed when the courthouse was built in 1905. The bell will ring once per hour, even overnight.



## 2012 NACo Legislative Conference Washington Hilton March 3-7

Registration is open at [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org)

## NACo Prescription Drug Card FREE to your County and your residents



Counties across the country are providing valuable savings for their residents through NACo's Prescription Discount Card Program.

### Is your county?

The prescription drug cards are free to NACo member counties and their residents. Residents benefit from the program by saving an average of 24% off of their prescriptions.

If your county is not one of the 1,400 counties participating in the program, get started today.



For more information contact Andrew Goldschmidt at 202/942-4221.

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P.O. Box 118 • Sherman, IL 62684  
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# Supporting Sustainable Rural Communities

## New report aims to help small towns and rural counties strengthen their economies

The HUD-DOT-EPA Partnership for Sustainable Communities and the USDA have released *Supporting Sustainable Rural Communities*, a report that discusses how the four agencies are collaborating to support rural communities. This publication highlights federal resources that are available to help small towns and rural counties strengthen their economies, provide better quality of life to residents, and build on local assets such as traditional main streets, agricultural lands, and natural resources.

Rural communities across America are working to strengthen their economies, provide better quality of life to residents, and build on assets such as traditional main streets, agricultural and working lands, and natural amenities and resources. The Partnership for Sustainable Communities—made up of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)—is coordinating with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to reinforce these initiatives and ensure that the four agencies' spending, policies, and programs support rural communities' efforts to be economically vibrant and environmentally sustainable.

HUD, DOT, EPA, and USDA already make significant investments and implement policies in rural America through mechanisms such as USDA Rural Development loans and grants, HUD's State and Small Cities Community Development Block Grant and Housing Choice Voucher programs, DOT's rural transit expenditures, and EPA's clean water and drinking water state revolving funds. Additionally, the Partnership supports community and regional planning efforts in rural areas. For example, in 2010, HUD awarded \$28 million in Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grants to regions with populations less than 500,000 and \$15 million in Community Challenge Planning Grants to rural places with fewer than 200,000 people. The 13,000-resident City of Glens Falls, New York, for instance, received funding to develop a strategy to provide affordable workforce housing downtown, identify vacant properties for infill development, and amend its zoning ordinance to increase energy efficiency. The Housing Authority of Randolph County, with a population of 28,000, received a grant to develop a county-wide plan that identifies areas for farmland preservation, assesses opportunities for expanding bus service, and increases pedestrian and bike connectivity.

Strengthening federal support for rural communities by coordinating and aligning these programs is a key Partnership goal. In August 2010, the Partnership established a Rural Work Group comprised of staff from HUD, DOT, EPA, and USDA to guide its approach to rural sustainable communities. This report, which summarizes the work group's efforts, explores how the Partnership can contribute to more resilient economies, healthy environments, and quality of life in rural America. It also sets out a framework for the Partnership's future work with rural communities.

### The report includes the following sections:

- **How the Livability Principles Support Rural Communities:** This section articulates how the six Livability Principles that guide the Partnership apply in the rural context.
- **HUD, DOT, EPA, and USDA Programs at Work in Rural Communities:** This section describes programs at work in rural communities at each of the four agencies.
- **Performance Measures for Success:** This section identifies performance measures that local, regional, and federal policymakers can use to assess the effectiveness of sustainable communities approaches in small towns and rural places.
- **Conclusion and Next Steps for the Partnership:** This section outlines a set of steps the Partnership agencies can take to support the efforts of rural communities and small towns as they invest in a sustainable future.
- **Case Studies of Federal Support for Sustainable Rural Communities:** Appendix A describes rural communities that have successfully implemented sustainable communities approaches with assistance from federal agencies.

### The Rural Context

Rural is difficult to define. A rural community in a relatively high-population state can look dramatically different from a similarly sized rural community in a less populous state. One definition cited by the USDA Economic Research Service describes rural areas as nonmetropolitan counties. By this definition, nearly two-thirds of the nation's 3,142 counties are rural, and rural communities comprise 17 percent of the population (49 million people) and about 80 percent of the country's total land area. However, these statistics, while important, do not describe the interaction between communities and their surrounding landscapes that is so integral to understanding the challenges and opportunities in rural areas.

From a land use and development perspective, rural America includes towns and small cities as well as working lands, or lands that are managed for economic value such as farms, prairies, forests, and rangelands. Historically, rural land was often used for the production and extraction of resources. Towns were developed at transportation hubs – rail stations, river ports, major crossroads – providing the places where agricultural or natural resources could be traded or shipped. Many rural communities were built around main commercial streets and relatively compact, walkable neighbor-



Rural communities often lack access to private and public capital, making it difficult for them to obtain funds for economic development and revitalization.

hoods, along with valuable infrastructure that served their civic, cultural, and social needs. The working lands surrounding the towns often provided the reason for their existence, and continue to do so in many places. The rural landscape is more than attractive vistas – it is integral to the social and economic life of the community.

Today, rural communities face an array of challenges. Resource-based economies are vulnerable to the impacts of commodity prices, technological changes, land value dynamics, and other market influences. Some communities whose economies are contracting are experiencing unemployment, poverty, population loss, the aging of their workforces, and increasing demands for social services with fewer dollars to pay for them. In some rural areas, these are not new trends, but generations-old issues. Additionally, residents of remote communities have limited access to jobs, services, and transportation options. Long, expensive commutes to distant employment centers can eat up a large percentage of the family budget, or families have to live sparsely on the small amount of local work available. People who don't have access to personal vehicles or who do not drive, such as low-income residents and senior citizens, lack mobility and have even less access to jobs, healthcare, and other services.

Other rural communities located close to metropolitan areas or amenities such as ski areas, national parks, and other tourist destinations are struggling to preserve their rural character in the face of growth pressures. These places are experiencing the conversion of farmland and natural land to development, which has an impact not only on the environment, but also on resource- and tourism-based economies. The new property development in these communities is often spread out, resulting in increasing demands for infrastructure in places where it is difficult and costly to provide.

Rural communities often lack the capacity or financial resources to address these issues. Some small, rural jurisdictions have limited local government staff, experience, or funding, which can mean few resources dedicated to comprehensive planning, regional collaboration, and other efforts to identify shared community goals and visions that can help shape growth and development. What's more, rural communities may lack access to private and public capital, making it difficult for them to obtain funds for economic development and revitalization. For example, philanthropic organizations that exist in larger communities are less present in rural areas, reducing resources that might assist local governments and organizations. The result can be development that fails to take advantage of the communities' assets, has limited long-term benefits, and creates long-term costs for the community.

An increasing number of rural communities are looking for development approaches beyond the conventional dispersed land use patterns that make it difficult for them to meet their fiscal, social, public health, and environmental goals. They are using a range of strategies to pursue economic opportunities while maintaining the rural character that residents value.

Sustainable communities approaches are as diverse as rural America itself. Communities select the most appropriate approaches for their context and adapt them to respond to local needs and interests. Some places are exploring new ways to generate income from working lands with the development of renewable energy facilities, including wind farms and solar panels. Others are directing public and private investments to main streets and village centers. Still others are planning and building walkable, convenient, and affordable neighborhoods. As the case studies in this report show, rural communities are finding solutions that allow them to take advantage of their assets, attract and retain businesses and residents of all ages, and ensure that economic development results in lasting improvements.

The Partnership for Sustainable Communities is an interagency partnership between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). *Supporting Sustainable Rural Communities* is the Partnership's first publication on public policy. To download the report visit [www.sustainablecommunities.gov](http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov).

## DuPage County recognized by Governor Quinn with Environmental Sustainability Award

Recognized as a leader for its commitment to environmental excellence through innovative sustainability practices, DuPage County received the Governor's Sustainability Award on October 27 in Champaign. It is the first county to receive this award.

"Implementing energy efficiency upgrades, fuel savings, pollution and waste reductions and other sustainability improvements requires vision, strong leadership and dedication of individuals throughout an organization. I applaud your prioritization of these important objectives and your accomplishments in these areas," said Governor Pat Quinn.

DuPage County Board Chairman Dan Cronin said he is pleased to receive the award on the 25th anniversary of the Governor's Sustainability Awards Program.

"We are honored to have our efforts recognized under the leadership of Environmental Committee Chairman Jeff Redick and to be in good company with like-minded, award-winning DuPage organizations such as Argonne National Labs and the City of Naperville along with previous award winners such as McDonalds. The award is a testament that government, businesses and residents alike can meet our social and economic needs while minimizing the impacts on the environment for future generations," said Cronin.

Throughout the past several years, DuPage County has implemented several sustainability initiatives that have reduced emissions, saved energy, increased air quality, conserved resources and diverted waste lessening its impact on the environment.

"For more than 20 years, DuPage County has been a leader in conservation and environmental protection. We have implemented several initiatives not only because they are good for the environment, but also because they are good fiscal policies," said Redick. "Today's recognition serves as a validation for our efforts to preserve the environment for future generations."

The Governor's Sustainability Awards program recognizes public and private organizations in the State of Illinois for significant achievements in protecting the environment through sustainable practices. The awards program is administered by the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center, a division of the Prairie Research Institute at the University of Illinois.

DuPage County's initiatives have impacted the environment by a reduction in energy consumption, recycling waste materials and utilizing resources in an environmentally responsible manner.

In an effort to increase traffic flow, reduce congestion and save fuel and energy, DuPage County is optimizing its traffic signal timing programs at 58 intersections on major arterial roadways and expressway interchanges. The upgrades are expected to yield an annual savings of 2.32 million hours driving time for motorists, 232,000 gallons of fuel consumed and 40,600 pounds of carbon in the atmosphere.

Since developing its first Solid Waste Management Plan in 1991, DuPage County has continually strived to generate less waste and divert it from landfills. The DuPage County Convalescent Center recently replaced polystyrene foam plates and cups in the cafeteria with reusable dishware. Redick praised the center for identifying a cost-reducing project that will have the added benefit of energy savings and source reduction.

Electronics are the fastest growing component of waste disposed in landfills. More than 2 million pounds of electronic waste has been diverted from landfills since 2008 as a result of the County's free Electronics Recycling Program.



DuPage County Board member Jeff Redick (District 2) of Elmhurst accepted the Governor's Sustainability Award on behalf of the county from Manohar Kulkarni, director of the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center on Oct. 27 in Champaign. Redick, who serves as the Environmental Committee chairman, said DuPage is the first county to receive the award.

The County has also partnered with the Illinois Environment Protection Agency to offer a Latex Paint Exchange Program. More than 6,200 residents have donated unused paint for re-blending and reuse. Paint that is not recyclable is hauled away for proper disposal. Several hundreds of gallons of paint have been reused through this initiative.

The County made several energy-efficiency improvements during 2010 including installing occupancy sensors, retrofitting light fixtures and optimizing HVAC systems. The projects resulted in an annual energy savings of 2.4 million kilowatts in addition to an annual reduction in natural gas consumption by 2,373 therms.

The Rx Drop Box Program allows residents to take their unwanted medicine to 13 DuPage police departments. More than 5 tons of unused and unwanted medications have been properly disposed of which in return keeps these hazardous waste items out of our waterways and soil.

Redick said DuPage County has more innovative sustainable programs on the horizon.

"While the award is a commendable recognition for our accomplishments to date, we will continue to strive to reduce our impact on the environment while providing the best government services," he said. "In this unstable economic climate where other governmental entities are cutting back on environmental staff and programs, we plan to continue our green efforts by working with staff, businesses and residents to implement more sustainable programs and setting an example of how we can reduce our environmental footprint in a fiscally responsible manner."

More details of the County's green initiatives can be found at [dupageco.org/recycling](http://dupageco.org/recycling).

## NACo offers counties new ways to save and purchase green products

The National Association of Counties (NACo) has launched an interactive web-based resource to help county governments across the country save money while purchasing more environmentally-friendly products.

The County Green Purchasing Toolkit was developed to share the experience of innovative counties with other local governments interested in saving money and protecting the environment. Through the toolkit, county leaders can learn from county successes in finding green products, setting goals, developing effective policies, and educating staff and community members about how to save money while purchasing green.

"NACo is pinpointing effective strategies to help counties save money and become more sustainable," said Cook County (Ill.) Commissioner Gregg Goslin, who chairs NACo's Green Government Initiative. "County innovators are redefining sustainability – taking it from a philanthropic venture to a sound investment strategy. We're looking forward to utilizing this toolkit to help counties protect resources and save taxpayer dollars."

NACo developed the toolkit in partnership with several leaders in green purchasing—including U.S. Communities Government Purchasing Alliance, the Responsible Purchasing Network, and Green Seal.

Green Seal, Inc. President and CEO Arthur Weissman, Ph.D. said, "Green Seal is pleased to help develop this valuable green purchasing toolkit in conjunction with NACo and the other partners. The tool will greatly assist the nation's 3,068 counties in finding more sustainable products and result overall in more healthful and sustainable communities."

To access the toolkit, visit [www.naco.org/greenpurchasing](http://www.naco.org/greenpurchasing). For more information contact Jared Lang at 202.942.4224.





### Kane County awarded grant to address lead poisoning

Kane County has been awarded a \$1.04 million grant from the U.S. Department Housing and Urban Development to address lead-based paint hazards in area homes, and to develop a county-wide Healthy Home Program. The county is one of only 39 jurisdictions nationwide to receive Federal funding. Local matching funds for the program, totaling \$260,000, will be provided by Kane County and the Cities of Aurora and Elgin.

"We will expect to be safe in our homes, and this funding will directly help Kane County families by providing their children a safe and healthy home environment, where they can flourish without worrying that their own homes are poisoning them" Kane County Board Chairman Karen McConnaughay said.

Illinois leads the nation in the number of lead poisoned children. Outside of Cook County, Kane County has the highest rate of childhood lead poisoning in the state. Nearly 1,500 children in Kane are documented to have elevated blood lead levels and need to have their homes evaluated for lead hazards and have the lead hazards reduced or eliminated.

Kane County's program will provide targeted lead poisoning prevention education for parents, landlords and homeowner's, and lead training for local contractors looking for work. Over the three-year period of the grant, the county expects to address dangerous lead hazards in approximately 60 high-risk housing units in Kane County.

The program will be administered by the Kane County Office of Community Reinvestment (OCR) in collaboration with the Kane County Health Department (KCHD). Additionally, the county's efforts will be coordinated and financed in partnership with the Cities of Aurora and Elgin.

Kane County was selected by HUD, in part, because of its successful track-record under the Illinois Department of Public Health's "Get the Lead Out" Program, which ran from January 2007 to September 2010.

### Southern Five RP&DC receives EDA grant

Southern Five Regional Planning and Development Commission, serving the counties of Union, Alexander, Johnson, Massac, and Pulaski, is receiving a \$196,884 investment award from the Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce. The funds will be used to establish an economic development planning framework and strategy that supports private capital investment and job creation in the region.

"This funding is particularly helpful as we continue to work toward economic revitalization within the region," said U.S. Congressman Jerry Costello (D-IL). "Working together, the public and private sectors have accomplished a great deal in our area and we must continue this partnership to promote future growth."

### Lake County Board awards nursing facility contract to Health Dimensions Group



David Stolman  
Lake County Chairman

The Lake County Board approved a contract with Health Dimensions Group (HDG) to take over the management and operations of Winchester House, Lake County's skilled nursing facility in Libertyville. Lake County will continue to maintain ownership and oversight of the facility.

In making its decision, county board members cited HDG's experience operating 22 skilled nursing facilities in four states, and specific experience acquiring and operating county nursing facilities, as well as HDG's performance outcomes and high satisfaction ratings from residents and families.

"This decision preserves the long-standing mission of Winchester House, which is to provide a safety-net for Lake County residents who need long-term nursing care," County Board Chairman David Stolman said. "HDG has a strong record of transitioning county owned facilities to privately managed facilities seamlessly, and retaining existing employees during that transition process."

The action was based on a recommendation from the Winchester House Advisory Board, which consists of individuals with healthcare and financial expertise, and two members of the county board. Their extensive analysis showed that the current financial model was not sustainable due to cuts in Medicare and Medicaid, and a higher wage/benefit structure than the private market, resulting in Winchester House losing its position in the marketplace. Therefore, the advisory board recommended transitioning to a county-owned, privately managed facility enabling Winchester House to operate more effectively in the marketplace, reduce costs, and preserve the mission.

It's estimated the change will save the County about \$1.5 million annually, even with the debt service of a new facility. Winchester House is funded by a property tax levy (approved by voters in 1982), reimbursements from Medicare and Medicaid, and private payments from residents. The current facility dates back to the 1940's and is in need of costly upgrades and repairs. The county board vote to approve the contract was 15 to eight.

## Saving tastes good.

These days, finding money to pack away for your future isn't easy. But it's not as hard when you know where to look. That's where Nationwide Retirement Solutions comes in. We've been helping public sector employees save smarter and better for over 30 years.

### Food for thought

Simply pack your lunch a couple of times a week, and invest that savings toward retirement.

Lunch money saved per pay period	\$20
Pay periods per year	x 26
Total lunch money saved per year	<b>\$520</b>

Savings over 30 years with inflation **\$29,164<sup>(A)</sup>**

Invested over 30 years **\$92,015<sup>(B)</sup>**

Call 1-877-677-3678 to put a Retirement Specialist from Nationwide on your side or visit [NRSFORU.com](http://NRSFORU.com) to learn more about how to invest for your future with deferred compensation.



Investing involves risk, including possible loss of principal.

(A) Amount per pay adjusted for inflation by 4% annually.  
(B) Assumes an average annual return of 8%. Also assumes savings are invested at the end of each month. Total balance of \$92,015 does not reflect deductions for federal or state taxes. Withdrawals are taxed as ordinary income.

This illustration is hypothetical and is not intended to serve as a projection of the investment results of any specific investment. Neither the accumulation or after-tax amount takes into consideration fees or expenses associated with any particular investment. Investment return is not guaranteed and will vary depending upon your investments and market experience.

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### McHenry County Division of Transportation recognized for salt storage

For the 9th consecutive year, the McHenry County Division of Transportation (MCDOT) received the Excellence in Storage Award recognizing environmental consciousness and effective management in the storage of winter salt. MCDOT is one of 159 other facilities from across the United States and Canada that received the award this past year. The Village of Algonquin and Lake in the Hills were also recipients of this year's award.

"We are honored to achieve the Excellence Award again this year. We are more than just a recipient. We are an ongoing model for proper storage that other agencies look to when designing their facilities and setting their procedures," state MCDOT Maintenance Supervisor mark Devries.

"With all the ongoing concerns for environmental protection and water quality issues, it is vital we continue to follow the best practices and serve as an example for others."

About 17 million tons of deicing salt are applied to roadways in the U.S. each year and another six million tons are spread in Canada. Having enough road salt on hand before storms hit requires advanced planning as well as safe and efficient storage. Among other best practices specified by the Salt Institute, Excellence in Storage winners must store salt on a pad, covering it with a roof or other approved materials. Winners must also display proper maintenance of facilities and good housekeeping practices.

In addition to salt storage, McHenry County also continues to be a leader in salt application. MCDOT shares its best management practices for salt application through the Division of Water Resources' Managing Snow and Ice Control Operations Workshop. Removal of snow and ice from McHenry County pavement is essential for public safety and the local economy. This workshop encourages sensible salting practice without compromising safety.

**About 17 million tons of deicing salt are applied to roadways in the U.S. each year. Having enough road salt on hand before storms hit requires planning as well as safe and efficient storage.**

### Madigan, Winnebago County authorities conduct two-day operation to protect domestic violence survivors

Attorney General Lisa Madigan announced results of a joint operation with Rockford and Winnebago County law enforcement as part of her "Serve to Protect" initiative to ensure protections for survivors of domestic violence. Over two days in October, investigators from Madigan's office and local and county law enforcement authorities cleared more than 50 orders of protection against domestic violence perpetrators in Winnebago County.



Sheriff Richard Meyers Winnebago County

In recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Madigan spoke in Rockford with authorities from the Winnebago County State's Attorney's and Sheriff's Offices and the Rockford Police Department about their collective efforts to reduce the number of unserved orders of protection in Winnebago County. These court orders are among the strongest protections afforded to domestic violence survivors, but if they go unserved on the offender, they offer no legal protection.

"Domestic violence is a devastating crime with serious consequences. I am committed to ensuring that every survivor who takes the courageous step of seeking help from the court receives full protection of the law," said Attorney General Madigan.

The Attorney General's "Serve to Protect" initiative aims to reduce the number of unserved orders throughout the state. There are currently more than 27,000 active orders of protection, but 4,500 – or 17 percent – of those orders are unserved. In other words, the orders have no legal standing.

In Winnebago County on Oct. 19-20, Attorney General investigators worked in conjunction with "Operation Clean Sweep" agencies to target 107 unserved orders of protection. Of those orders, investigators served 34 orders on offenders who had been avoiding service and cleared an additional 23 cases that did not need service due to offenders being served in open court or deaths of offenders. Investigations into the remaining unserved orders are ongoing. Investigators also made three arrests on outstanding warrants during the course of the initiative.

Orders of protection usually restrict the defendant's ability to contact or communicate with his domestic violence victim. After a court issues an order of protection, law enforcement officers must serve the order on the abuser. Once an order of protection has been served, law enforcement can arrest an abuser if he violates any of the order's terms. But if an order of protection is not served on the abuser, it does not take effect and, thus, leaves law enforcement unable to arrest an abuser when he violates the order.

"Protecting domestic violence victims is a priority. Collaborative measures produce results," said Winnebago County State's Attorney Joe Bruscato. "I applaud the results of this operation, and I also personally applaud Attorney General Madigan and her leadership."

"Operation Serve to Protect is part of an ongoing commitment by my office to protect domestic violence survivors throughout Winnebago County," said Winnebago County Sheriff Richard Meyers. "I am proud to stand with Attorney General Madigan to bring the issue of domestic violence and the prevention of these crimes in our county to the forefront."

Domestic violence is a serious but often concealed threat in communities in Illinois and across the country, Madigan said. Over their lifetimes, one in four women will be abused by their partner, and every day nationwide, four women die at the hands of their abusers.

"We're grateful for the assistance of the Attorney General and the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office in improving service of orders of protection," said Karen Gill, vice president of operations for Rockford's Remedies Renewing Lives. "Each order of protection served increases the likelihood of victims' safety."

### Champaign County Courthouse receives preservation award



The 17th annual Richard H. Driehaus Foundation Preservation Awards was presented on October 29, 2011 at the InterContinental Chicago. This year's nine award winners included reconstruction of the Champaign County Courthouse clock tower.

Constructed in 1901, the original clock tower of this courthouse was the victim of multiple lightning strikes, which over time caused it to be drastically truncated. In the 1970's, a citizen's group restored the clock and installed a new bell on the shortened tower, while also adding lightning rods. In 2000, the Citizen's Committee to Restore the Courthouse Clock and Bell Tower was formed with the goal of restoring the tower to its original 1901 height, while utilizing modern materials to bring the tower up to code. Local sculptors and craftsmen were hired to replicate missing decorative elements. The \$1.5 million needed to complete this project was raised completely by local donors. The jury was impressed with "the level of dedication of the community and the impact the project has had on Urbana's downtown."

Photo courtesy of the Citizens Committee to Restore the Courthouse Clock and Bell Tower.



### Biodiesel plant under construction in Jasper County

In mid October, the Jasper County Economic Development Coop meeting featured a tour of the twelve acre development site located within the Southtown Industrial Park in Newton, Illinois chosen by Blue Northern National Trail for the construction of a state of the art, scalable 30 million gallon per year biodiesel production facility.

BN National Trail is extending earlier work of its predecessor company (National Trail Biodiesel Group, LLC) by pursuing a more robust business model leading to the actual construction of a highly energy efficient, low carbon dioxide biodiesel refining and processing facility capable of utilizing different types of feed stock (e.g., as much as 180 million pounds of soybean, corn oil or other low saturated fat oils) as market conditions change over time. The biodiesel refining and processing technology is being undertaken by BN in partnership with Aker Solutions, a world leader in the development of biodiesel facilities.

The industrial park development site was made possible a few years earlier by a combination of local funds used in concert with an Economic Development Administration (EDA) public works grant that allowed local officials to convert the former strategically located cornfields into a fully developed "shovel-ready" industrial park located in the City of Newton's enterprise zone.



## Counties Work

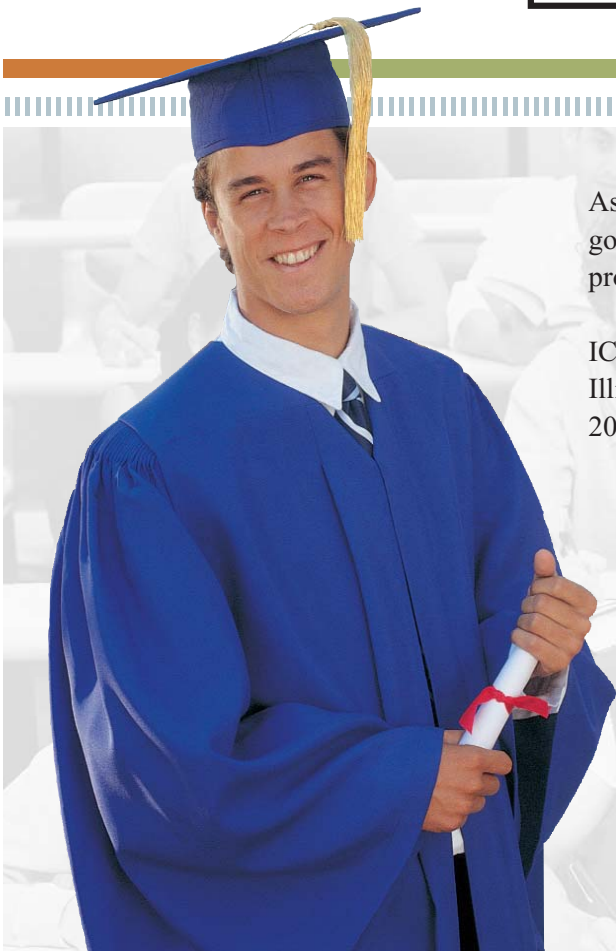
A game for students and teachers about county government

The National Association of Counties (NACo) in partnership with iCivics has created the first online interactive game specifically related to county government. While letting students run their own county, *Counties Work* educates and guides students, grades 6 through 12, about the important roles and functions county government perform. Not only will the students be able to play the game in and out of the classroom, teachers will have curriculum, quizzes and web quests to help them in their lesson planning.

#### What can I do as a county leader to get this educational tool into local schools?

Contact teachers, principals and school superintendents in your county to let them know the game and curriculum are available at [www.naco.org/countieswork](http://www.naco.org/countieswork)

For more information on the *Counties Work* project or the National Association of Counties, please contact Bill Cramer, Marketing Director, at 202.942.4264 or [bcramer@naco.org](mailto:bcramer@naco.org).



As a non-profit association that provides services to county government, the Illinois Counties Association (ICA) is committed to promoting and advancing education and the future of Illinois' youth.

ICA will be awarding academic scholarships throughout the State of Illinois to students wishing to pursue higher education during the 2012-2013 academic year. Watch our website for details.



## SCHOLARSHIP

Submission deadline: April 13, 2012

For more information visit

[www.illinoiscountiesassociation.org](http://www.illinoiscountiesassociation.org)



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**COUNTYREVIEW**

Official Publication of the Illinois Counties Association

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**Retirement plan contribution limits** *continued from page 1*

County leaders can support their workers by promoting their sponsorship of deferred compensation. Make sure your employees know that you understand the challenges they face, and how you're working to help them to find solutions through your plan.

Be a cheerleader — educate employees about why supplemental savings is so important. Enlist frontline advocates for your plan. Encourage them to talk it up among co-workers.

Let us help your county's workers feel prepared for retirement — because they've planned for it through the NACo Deferred Compensation Program. Contact Lisa Cole at NACo ([lcole@naco.org](mailto:lcole@naco.org) • 202-942-4270) or a Nationwide representative at 877-677-3678, option 2.

2012 Regular Deferrals	Age 50+ (inc. Regular Deferrals)	Special 457 Catch-up (inc. Regular Deferrals)	Reminders	
\$17,000	\$22,500	\$34,000	<i>Investing involves market risk, including possible loss of principal. You cannot use the Age 50 Catch-Up and Special 457 Catch-Up in the same year.</i>	
Maximum Amounts by Pay Frequency	Regular Deferrals	Age 50+ (inc. Regular Deferrals)	Special 457 Catch-up (inc. Regular Deferrals)	<i>This table assumes you're eligible for the maximum deferral limit of \$17,000 in 2012, maximum deferrals begin with your first pay of this year, and are at these amounts each pay period through the entire year. Amounts have been rounded down to the nearest dollar.</i>
Weekly (52 pays)	\$326.00	\$432.00	\$653.00	
Bi-weekly (26 pays)	\$653.00	\$865.00	\$1,307.00	
Monthly (12 pays)	\$1,416.00	\$1,874.00	\$2,833.00	
Semi-monthly (24 pays)	\$708.00	\$937.00	\$1,416.00	
Amount of Tax Credit	Joint	Head of Household	Single/Others	Reminder
50% of first \$2,000 deferred	\$0 – 34,500	\$0 – 25,875	\$0 – 17,250	<i>Plan representatives cannot give tax or legal advice. Check with your tax professional or legal advisor for answers to specific questions.</i>
20% of first \$2,000 deferred	\$34,501 – 37,500	\$25,876 – 28,125	\$17,251 – 18,750	
10% of first \$2,000 deferred	\$37,501 – 57,500	\$28,126 – 43,125	\$18,751 – 28,750	

Source: IR-2011-103: IRS Announces Pension Plan Limitations for 2012, Oct. 20, 2011

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NRM-8890AO-NX (11/2011)

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