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**April 2020** 

## PUBLIC SAFETY

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## INSIDE:

Mental health awareness grows

Law enforcement agencies welcome military veterans



# 2020

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#### **ON THE COVER**

MS4web helps stormwater teams comply with changing regulations while also allowing them to better manage available funding and increasing responsibilities. It allows for the documentation of compliance activities across every Minimum Control Measure, with the added bonus of having everything in one location. The backbone of the MS4web software is its support and the educational opportunities the company makes available to clients. Learn more on page 12.

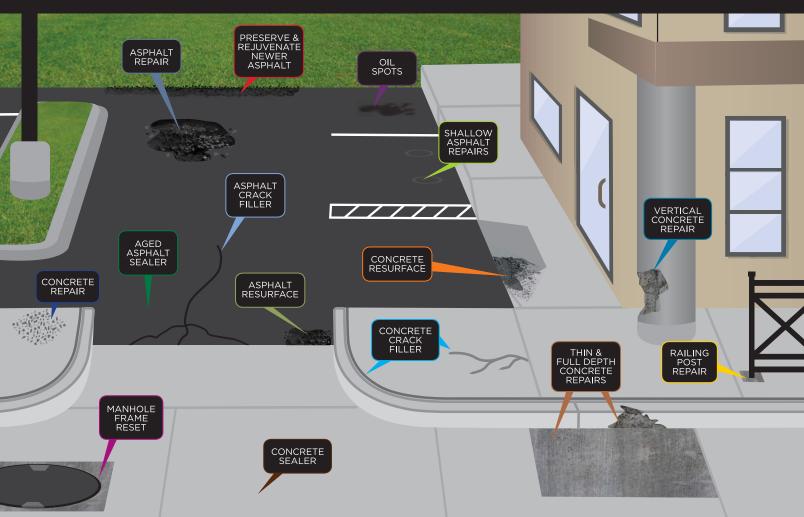


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#### **Meet The Feature Writer**

Maggie Kenworthy loves having the ability to tell stories for a living. She graduated from Ball State University in 2016 with a dual concentration degree in news journalism and photojournalism. From there, she landed her first career job as editor of an online breaking news publication. Now she spends her time writing for a variety of publications, getting to tell stories for multiple audiences and purposes. When she's

not writing, you can find her behind a camera taking photos. Kenworthy also enjoys reading and spending time with her husband and their two cats.



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times bordering on fearmongering. Poor Corona—the beer—has taken a hit, with a recent survey of American beer drinkers by 5W Public Relations finding 38% of those asked will not buy Corona beer and 16% are confused if Corona beer is related to the coronavirus. These figures do not stir confidence in regards to the public, who will be bearing the brunt of preventing the disease's spread by using common sense: wash your hands and stay home if you're not feeling well.

Further crushing hope in the public's preparedness for such a possible pandemic are the "cures and wards" people are sharing on social media, some of which are sadly not in jest. These have included garlic—surely, a virus is not too far removed from a vampire—vitamin C, sesame oil and drinking bleach... of course.

While I poke fun at the current discourse around the coronavirus, it and the strands of influenza making their rounds are both serious matters. Medical breakthroughs and the 102 years removing us from the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918 have created complacency in our modern minds. It is easy to not grasp the sheer scope of the 1918 pandemic, which saw an estimated 20 million to 50 million victims worldwide, including some 675,000 Americans. It is even easier to think such a widespread pandemic can't happen in the U.S. again. But to ignore that pandemic's lessons would be regrettable.

World War I aided that particular pandemic's spread, with its massive movement of people, dearth of medical knowledge on the disease and news blackouts. Today, we live in a world where people are traveling more than ever before, which has helped COVID-19 spread alongside the initial news blackouts in China. Today, we are also contending with social media, which is both beneficial and a hindrance at times as it doles out needed facts alongside misinformation.

For cities, health care professionals and first responders, it is a battle of getting the right information out to quell the spread of this or any disease. Many health departments are already ramping up awareness of basic protective measures from frequently washing

hands and avoiding touching one's face to when the time is right to seek medical care. Five cities — Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco and Seattle — have also begun testing patients with flu-like symptoms for coronavirus. More cities are expected to be added

This is inline with the message the National Institutes of Health wants everyone to take: don't panic, but do take the spread of the virus seriously.

While a different beast, the 1918 pandemic is never far from my mind when there is a widespread health scare like COVID-19 because it left a trauma within my family tree. At the age of 2, my maternal grandmother found herself orphaned in the span of four weeks. Both her parents were young and previously healthy, and then they were simply gone. It affected her greatly and it's a bit of family history that isn't forgotten. It's the reason I get a flu shot each year, because that was not an option they had.

We are far from 1918 proportions, and with good management, we will avoid such figures. Thankfully, most people infected by COVID-19 only experience mild illness and recover; however, those with compromised immunity are reliant on all of us to take measures against its spread.

So wash your hands! M



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## Stormwater inspections are only the tip of the iceberg with MS4web

By SARAH WRIGHT | The Municipal

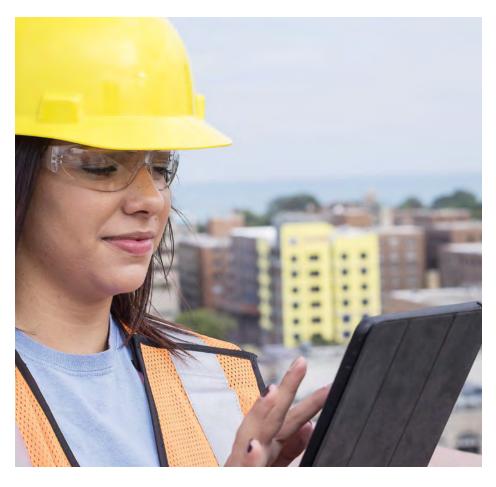
Stormwater management already requires several pokers in the metaphorical flame all while striving to comply with changing regulations, lack of funding and increasing responsibilities. Why not make the load simpler? The right software can reduce the number of hours spent meeting requirements while also easing headaches when it comes to relaying important data, such as in inspection reports. MS4web can fill this role, making stormwater inspections a breeze — but that is only the tip of the iceberg.

"What really sets MS4web apart as a platform is it allows for the documentation of compliance activities across every Minimum Control Measure," Ty Garmon, national sales manager, CBI Systems Ltd., said. "Everything is stored in one location for compliance purposes. Inspections are just the tip

of the iceberg and underneath it is all the other data."

MS4web puts cities in the driver's seat no matter what phase they are, though Phase II MS4s have been its core clients. Municipalities are drawn by its versatility and its time-saving elements, with one Phase II MS4 client out of Iowa remarking, "The ability to customize inspection forms and add any component from your own individual or general permit is truly remarkable. I've cut down my administration time for tracking components by many hours."

MS4web gives a city's stormwater team access to archived data, which can be exported as an Excel document. Various PDF reports are also available, whether a construction site summary report, outfall summary report, asset compliance report, contractor report, Best Management Practice activity summary report or inspection summary report. It also features a GIS map service and calendar, both of which help stormwater teams track inspections and



With stellar support available and great training opportunities, MS4web is not just a "shiny and cool" software app; it is something that is useful in the field and will save stormwater teams time and money. (Shutterstock.com)

all due dates throughout their stormwater management program.

"If you ever get audited, it's a great tool. You can just open the application, and click-apalooza your way through the data that shows the auditor you're on the ball," Garmon said, noting how MS4web's tracking of best practices will show the customer is doing all they can to comply. "The auditor will get a warm fuzzy feeling."

This software, paired with topnotch support and education, is on another level compared to similar products.

## The difference between good and bad software

"Nothing is worse than finding a shiny object and spending all that effort to get it and then that shiny object, or in this case a software application, is not as cool as it looked because it doesn't have any support," Garmon said. "We pride ourselves in taking it from something 'shiny and cool' to something that is useful in the field."

For one thing, everyone is given access to a free trial of MS4web, which is very flexible

to the needs of each customer. Unlike other software trials, MS4web's is customized to the client's account from day one complete with its city logo. Whether using the trial app or the paid version, there is also free chat help, no matter what the question may be.

"About 99.9% of the time it's just a training or workflow question," Garmon said of the chat feature's use. "Inside the app, we also have training videos clients can watch."

A full search is available with these videos so clients can find the ones relevant to their situation. Keyword searches not only pull up relevant videos but are also timestamped and transcribed where the words are spoken in the video. Additionally, there is an unlimited number of one-on-one training sessions and webinars, all geared to ensure MS4web rollouts are successful along with ongoing support year to year, through city personnel changes and continued use of the software.

#### **Promoting further education**

Education is key. For this reason, a partnership has been formed with StormwaterONE in Connecticut to provide clients with a private branded stormwater university online. Each customer gets their very own portal page that opens the way to several courses all aimed at improving stormwater management programs.

This program is open to any city employee—if there is at least one active MS4web license—who needs to further their education and working knowledge within the stormwater industry.

"We are providing to cities a free minimum of 20 course hours as a payback to them," Garmon noted. "Cities can have anyone complete these courses who needs to, and there are also free trainings and discounted classes."

MS4web then tracks all of the courses' transcripts to show that the agency is remaining in compliance with education requirements. In addition to tracking, users enjoy access to 50 state libraries of resources and live support, both of which are free, through the StormwaterONE program.

"MS4web is your friend to stay in compliance," Garmon said, adding for time-strapped departments, it has another benefit: "It maximizes the time you do have."

John Trujillo, stormwater coordinator for the city of Newark, Ohio, shared his own experience with the software in a testimonial, "MS4web is a product we've used for several years. We do our construction site inspections and annual report with MS4web. It has helped us through an audit with the EPA. MS4web drastically reduced the amount of time our audit took. I stand behind MS4web because it's a product that has helped us out tremendously."

Since 2001, MS4web has been used by municipalities across the country and in every Environmental Protection Agency region. Based in Beaumont, Texas, CBI Systems Ltd. is a subsidiary of Houston-based LJA Engineering. For more information, visit MS4web.com.



By RAY BALOGH | The Municipal

Real estate entrepreneur John Bourthoumieu recently migrated from northern Indiana to a waterside home on the Tennessee River about a dozen miles northwest of Florence, Ala.



He found out about the Natchez Trace Parkway from "the guy who sold me the house" and decided to ride the 103-mile stretch from Leiper's Fork, Tenn., to the exit less than 2 miles from his new abode.

He spelled out his first impression of the parkway letter by letter. "W-O-W," he said, feting the immaculate two-lane thoroughfare with the grass meticulously mowed from the edge of the road to the beautiful nonstop tree line bookending the section he has since traveled another 14 times.

Bourthoumieu is enamored as much of what the Natchez Trace Parkway does not contain as for what it offers. "There is no commercial traffic, no stop signs or stoplights, no billboards or houses and no potholes. It is just wilderness and beautiful forest about 40 to 200 feet from the road.

"There are lots of curves with rolling hills and valleys," he said. "It is just fun to drive. You feel like you want to put the car on cruise control and recline a little bit. It's as relaxing as can be." The National Park Service, which maintains the Natchez Trace, has established a speed limit of 50 mph for most of the 444-mile parkway, occasionally interspersed with a limit of 40 mph.

"Even the cops are nice," said Bourthoumieu, recalling an incident when he enjoyed the scenery perhaps a bit too much. "I was coming down a hill" when he glanced at his speedometer, which read 62 mph. He looked up just in time to see a trooper car approaching from the opposite direction.

**LEFT:** The Natchez Trace Parkway provides stunning scenery all along its serpentine length from Natchez, Miss., to Nashville, Tenn. (Courtesy of the National Park Service)

**LEFT:** The Natchez Trace Parkway begins at mile post zero in Natchez, Miss., and meanders 444 miles northeast to Nashville, Tenn. (Shutterstock.com)

**RIGHT:** The Pharr Mounds are the largest of the Indian burial mounds along the Natchez Trace Parkway. (Courtesy of the National Park Service)

"The officer turned on his lights, kept them on for about 10 seconds as he passed me and kept on going. That left a very favorable impression on me."

The original path was carved thousands of years ago by herds of sizable animals, such as bison and deer, that followed a geologic ridge line from the Mississippi River to the salt licks in central Tennessee.

Prehistoric American Indians and later the Choctaw, Chickasaw and Natchez tribes hunted the game, following them along the original trace. At the beginning of the 1800s, farmers, boatmen and frontiersmen from Pennsylvania, Ohio and Kentucky—collectively known as Kaintucks—used the corridor for settlement and commerce.

Meriwether Lewis and Andrew Jackson were among the historical notables who traveled the trace.

Native Americans who had settled along the trace helped improve it into a well-established path. President Thomas Jefferson wanted to use the trace as a thoroughfare and postal road to facilitate travel and communication and entered into treaties with the Choctaw and Chickasaw tribes to maintain peace along the trail. In 1801 the U.S. Army began trailblazing along the trace, which Jefferson dubbed "The Columbian Highway." Travelers, though, called it "The Devil's Backbone" for its rough conditions and their frequent encounters with violent highwaymen.

By 1809 the trail was fully navigable by wagon, with a full-length journey taking two or three weeks. Travel inns and trading posts, called "stands" in the day, sprang up in abundance along the trace.

Most of the foot traffic during the trail's heyday was in a northerly direction, for a very practical reason. Merchants floated their wares from the Midwest along the Mississippi River to Natchez, Miss., and New Orleans, La. The southbound current, however, was too strong for their return trip, so they sold their makeshift cargo vessels for scrap after unloading them and walked back along the Natchez Trace.

With the invention of the steamboat, which could move goods more quickly, cheaply and in greater quantity, and the development of Jackson's Military Road, which provided a more direct overland route from Nashville to New Orleans, the need for the trace plummeted and it fell into disuse, eventually becoming overgrown with foliage.

The stands closed and the road was used only locally by nearby inhabitants. Only one of the original stands remains today: Mount Locust near Natchez, Miss.

The old trace was placed under the care of the National Park Service in 1938 and the present parkway was completed in 2005. The road now stretches through three states, with 308 miles through Mississippi, 103 miles in Tennessee and 33 miles cutting the northwest corner of Alabama.

Amenities include 40 gas stations near the trace, or about one every 10 miles, and more than 40 bed and breakfasts, cottages, guest houses, retreats and hotels. More than a dozen campgrounds, three of them primitive camping areas, are available to travelers who would rather "rough it."





The Natchez Trace Parkway Visitor Center in Tupelo, Miss., features an orientation film, bookstore, interpretive exhibits and on-duty rangers who will answer questions. (Photo by Steve Hankel)



Children and adults can get an education during Pioneer Day at the Parkway Visitor Center in Tupelo, Miss. The reenactments are held the fourth Saturday of each month throughout the year. (Courtesy of www.scenictrace.com)

Travelers can also enjoy scenic lookouts, Civil War battlefield sites and monuments, historic ruins, cemeteries and Indian mounds along the way.

The Natchez Trace Parkway Visitor Center, 2680 Natchez Trace Parkway, Tupelo, Miss., offers a 12-minute orientation film, interpretive displays about the natural and cultural history of the trace and park rangers to answer questions.

The center is open daily from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. except on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day.

For more information, call (800) 305-7417 or (662) 680-4027 or visit www.npplan.com or www.nps.gov/natr. ■

## Wahpeton, N.D.



The city seal of Wahpeton, N.D., is rather busy. It has a lot to say.

The black and white circular seal, designed in 1979, features several images depicting the history of the city, population 7,766.

According to the city's website, www.wahpeton.com, Wahpeton's heritage is represented by the teepee, oxcart and steamboat. The city's unique location, at the head of the Red River, is described by the three rivers theme. Wahpeton's economy, agriculture, is detailed by the grain (wheat and corn) images.

Emphasis on higher education is represented by the seal's reference to North Dakota State College of Science. At the time it was called North Dakota State School of Science; hence the S symbols on Old Main.

"The horizon suggests the southern Red River Valley, the 'Gateway to Prairie Gold,' and the name Wahpeton, meaning 'leaf dwellers,' is articulated by the seal's inside trees and perimeter leaves."

Wahpeton, the county seat of Richland County, is located near the southeastern corner of North Dakota, on the Minnesota border and at the confluence of the Bois de Sioux and Otter Trail rivers, which form the Red River of the North.

Jonathan Carver, the area's first European explorer, arrived in 1767 under the authority of Major Robert Rogers, commander of Fort Michilimackinac in Mackinaw City, Mich. Carver was commissioned to find the Northwest Passage, an alleged waterway to the Orient. Carver, of course, found no such passage, but his exploration accounts attracted fur traders and other explorers to the territory.

A century later, Wisconsinite J. W. Blanding, a member of a post-Civil War governmental surveying party, was so enamored of the fertile river valley he moved his family to the area, enticing other Wisconsin settlers to join him.

Among that group was Morgan T. Rich, who was the first to farm the rich black bottomland in 1869. He was joined by several other settlers, and that year they founded the community of Richville.

A post office was established in 1871 and the town was redubbed Chahinkapa, a Sioux word meaning "the end of the woods." Two years later the name was changed to Wahpeton.

Construction of a nearby railroad line in 1872 burgeoned the town's population and the county's first retail store opened in Wahpeton in 1874. Two years later a bridge was built over the Bois de Sioux River to connect Wahpeton and its neighboring town, Breckenridge, Minn. The local electric company was organized in 1888.

The area today attracts outdoorsmen and hunters, and the local golf course is the nation's only course spanning two states. Wahpeton is also home to "The Wahpper," the world's largest catfish, a 40-foot sculpture located at Kidder Dam.



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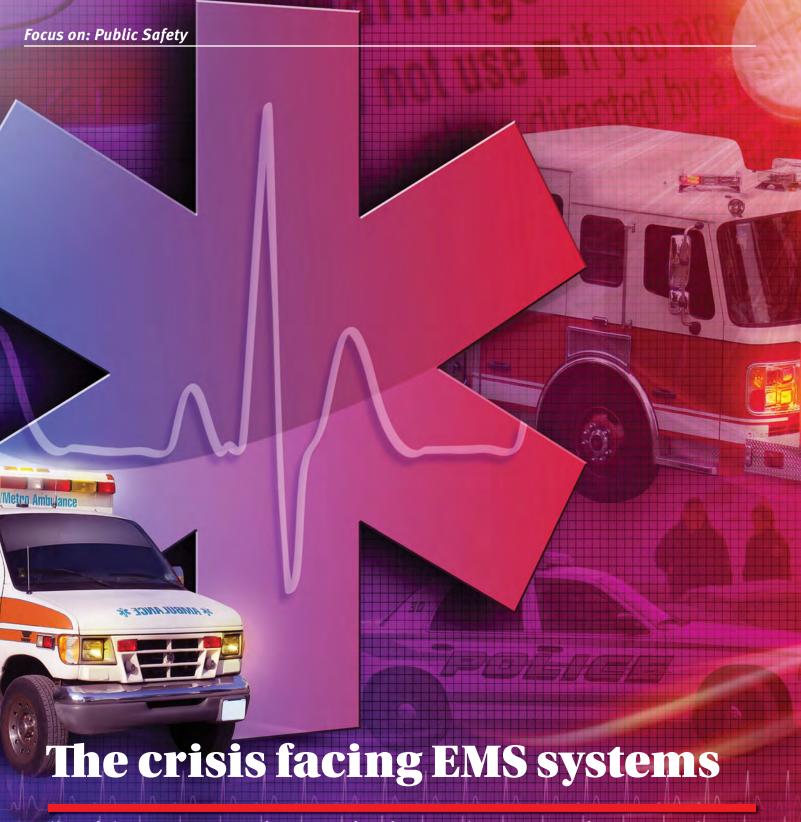
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"Legislators, community organizations and EMS agencies across the country are identifying that EMS is struggling and that there is a perceived EMS crisis, a crisis that may come to impact anyone who needs medical care, is involved in an accident or otherwise has need for an ambulance."

Learn moire about the EMS Crisis on page 70.

# PUBLIC SAFETY

## 19,875

The number of YouTube views the "Start the Conversation" documentary, created by the Georgia Public Safety Training Center Instructional Services Division, has received since its inception. It aims to raise mental health awareness for first responders.

Learn how organizations are starting the conversation about suicide prevention and mental health awareness on page 22.

## 7,000 bushels

Wayne County Regional Training Facility in Apple Creek, Ohio, has a 24-foot training silo that can hold roughly this amount of grain. This silo allows first responders to train in grain bin extractions while in a safe environment.



Read more on page 26.

## 40%

Newport News, Va.'s, police department is estimated to have this percentage of individuals with experience in the military or time spent in the Reserves.

Many departments are finding plenty of benefits when hiring veterans. Learn more on page 30.



Nearly 500 private surveillance cameras have been registered with Madison, Wis.'s, police department since it launched the voluntary registration program in 2018.

Source: https://madison.com/wsj/news/local/crime-and-courts/ madison-police-add-surveillance-cameras-partner-with-amazon-on-public/article\_879aca9f-8331-5bc9-8220-f535fbfb2677.html

## \$359,500

Ansonia Fire Department in Connecticut received a grant for this much from the Federal Emergency Management Agency; it will cover 95% of the cost to purchase new equipment, including 52 self-contained breathing apparatus with 20 additional face masks.

Source: https://www.nhregister.com/valley/article/Ansonia-Fire Department-grateful-for-FEMA-grant-15090752.php

## **50%**

Maine's Department of Public Safety found crime in the state is down by a rate of more than 50% over the last seven years and down by more than 9% over the last year alone.

Source: www.mainepublic.org/post/ crime-falls-maine-seventh-year-row



Central Ohio Technical College held a First Responder Mental Health Awareness Summit Nov. 13, 2019, at the Reese Center. "The concept came together amongst the faculty of the Institute for Public Service and Safety who, for some time, had been hearing more and more about the issue," Kevin Reardon, COTC Institute for Public Services and Safety director, explained. While there was a significant amount of information available on many different programs, much of this was not a well-known fact by members of the community and those who may benefit from the programs.

As the number of suicides of first responders continues to rise nationwide, the COTC wanted to do its part in awareness and prevention. "The summit was a way to bring together the impacted professions in public safety with those clinicians and other program staff who were already functioning in some capacity to work with this at-risk group of responders," Reardon expounded.

The summit was attended by 141 people. Attendees experienced two keynote speakers, a panel discussion and multiple breakout sessions. The first keynote speaker was Kenneth Yeager, director of the Ohio State University Stress Trauma and Resilience program, who spoke on "Building Resilience in the Face of Vicarious Trauma." Brian Barkett, founder and president of the Better Minds Group, spoke as the second keynote speaker on "From PTS to PTSD to PTSD Free."

Four different breakout sessions were offered to program participants. Lt. Marty Fellure of the Ohio State Highway Patrol and Steven Click, first responder liaison from Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services, spoke on "Peer-to-Peer Intervention." This session highlighted the Ohio A.S.S.I.S.T. program available to first responders. A.S.S.I.S.T. provides participants with techniques after being in a critical incident and hosts various events for responders and their families and training for agencies.

A second breakout session, titled "How Big is Your Bucket and What's in it?," was offered by Lisa K. Callander, city of Columbus Employee Assistance Program director, and Mick Yinger, executive director of The Bridge. This session was in two parts and focused on the "bucket" concept to help lead



First responders can include police officers, fire department personnel, EMS responders, dispatch center employees and more. When feeling overwhelmed or stressed and wishing to seek help, "Start the Conversation" reminds first responders that asking for help is not a sign of weakness. (Photo provided)



Peer support is one of the options mentioned available to first responders who are dealing with stress and trauma or contemplating suicide. Many cities and departments have employees trained in peer support to assist others. (Photo provided)

a balanced life. It examined first responder traits that can be helpful on duty but not off duty, as well as what contributes to burnout, cumulative stress and critical incident stress. Yinger provided information on how The Bridge, a nonprofit organization of first responders, offers a multifaceted approach that promotes personal growth and healthy relationships.

Kelly Campbell, executive director of The Woodlands Serving Central Ohio Inc., taught a third breakout session titled "The Body Keeps Score." During this session, she spoke on the causes and consequences of trauma and the path of recovery. Participants also gained a greater awareness of how their trauma response affects their daily functioning.

"Saving Those Who Save Others" was a fourth breakout session option offered at the summit by Jennifer Cramer, Firefighter Behavioral Healthy Alliance outreach



One participant in "Start the Conversation" who shared her own personal experiences dealing with stress and trauma in a dispatch center was Laloni Smith. As each participant shared their experiences, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline phone number, (800) 273-8255, scrolled across the top of the screen. (Photo provided)

team and instructor. This session taught participants how to observe signs and symptoms of emotional and physical stressors within both themselves and others. It then continued with how to develop the communication skills necessary to use under stress.

The entire summit lasted from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. that day. Reardon admitted it was a long day, but response from the participants was very positive. There are plans for another summit event in the future.

A video-based training program called "Start the Conversation" was developed in Georgia containing a documentary discussing PTSD, stress and line of duty deaths with real public safety personnel. Melissa White, Georgia Public Safety Training Center Instructional

Services Division supervisor, stated, "We developed a mental and emotional wellness course in 2017 and, during the process, realized that many first responders experience stress and often do not know where to turn. So, in 2018, my team decided to create the documentary 'Start the Conversation."

This documentary was released on YouTube Dec. 19, 2018, and the online courses were officially offered beginning Jan. 1, 2019. There is also a website dedicated to "Start the Conversation," which has each section of the full documentary available to watch. Since its inception, there have been over 19,875 YouTube views and 6,220 first responders have completed the online course.

"We are very passionate about raising awareness for mental health wellness and suicide awareness among public safety personnel. The traumas they respond to leave a lasting impression on them, and they need to know they are not alone and where to turn when they can no longer manage on their own," White encouraged. "For many years public safety has had difficulty addressing mental health and suicide. We are dedicated to changing that."

Since making the documentary and starting the course, White and others associated with the program have received emails, phone calls and texts asking about "Start the Conversation" or sharing personal stories about how watching the documentary has helped them or someone they know. Outside agencies have also sent in requests asking permission to use the video for personnel training outside of Georgia.

White continued, "We are currently filming and releasing a docuseries to continue the conversation and including the effects on the family of public safety." The first in the series is called "What You Don't Know" and was released Jan. 15. It already has 582 views.

The "Start the Conversation" documentary can be found at www. youtube.com/watch?v=tnI9KW87l5c. For all GPSTC videos, visit www.youtube.com/gpstcvideo. 

■



Ask the person directly if he or she is having suicidal thoughts/ideas, has a plan to do so, and has access to lethal means.

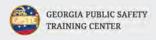
"Are you thinking about killing yourself?"

"Have you ever tried to hurt yourself before?"

"Do you think you might try to hurt yourself today?"

"Have you thought of ways that you might hurt yourself?"

Developers of the "Start the Conversation" documentary encourage those who believe someone they know may be contemplating suicide to ask four direct questions in order to aid in prevention and try to get that individual the assistance they need. (Information from the youtube video Start the Conversion)



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By AMANDA DEMSTER | The Municipal

The scenario is all too real. A 911 dispatcher receives a call that a farmer has fallen into his grain bin. Though the individual kernels are solid, together they create a condition similar to quicksand. Each movement causes the kernels to shift beneath him until he is in up to his chest with no way to pull himself out.

Rescuers arrive and climb to the entrance. Peering in, they know that if they step into the grain, they too could become trapped and their efforts could end in multiple fatalities, their own included. Fortunately, they have the right equipment, plus hours of training, and are able to save the farmer's life.

While they may not be as common as fires or vehicle accidents, silo, or grain bin, entrapments still occur each year, and the outcome can be tragic. Facilities like the Wayne County Regional Training Facility in Apple Creek, Ohio, are working to change the statistics.

Just like pulling a victim from a burning building, extracting somebody from hundreds of pounds of grain requires knowledge, skill and the ability to think quickly.

For the first time, the facility is offering hands-on grain bin extraction training thanks to two life-size grain bins that have been installed at their location.

"What we're being blessed with is the Taj Mahal of the entrapment course," Agricultural Program Director Brandon Nettleton said. "Our area farm bureaus here have chipped in; many local businesses have climbed on board with this beautiful structure."

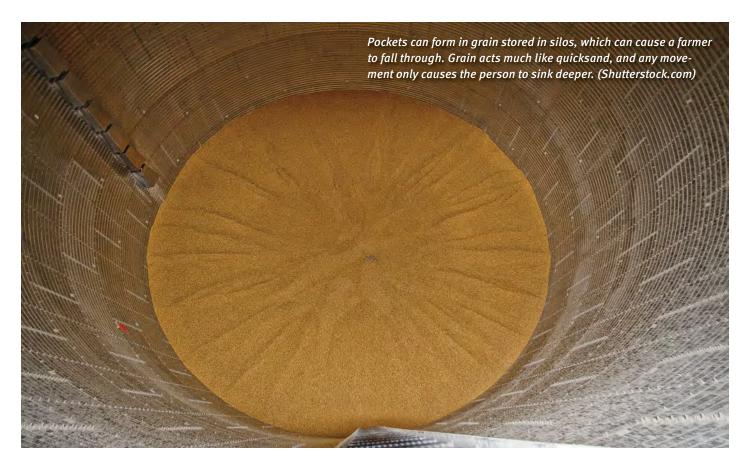
The largest of the training silos will be a 24-foot outdoor storage bin, complete with a full grain assembly. It will hold around 7,000 bushels of grain. The facility is building a second, 15-foot indoor silo, which will hold around 2,000 pounds of grain. Both will function much like actual grain bins, providing lifelike conditions for rescue training.

The facility will take every precaution during training scenarios. "Victims" will be harnessed in and then buried up to their waists or stomachs. This will give them the full experience of all of those pounds of grain pressing in on their bodies, Nettleton said.

Once the "victim" is in place, a live, simulated rescue scenario will unfold.

In agricultural areas, grain bin rescue training is a necessity. According to Nettleton, from time to time a farmer may enter a full grain bin for one reason or another. This may be something he or she has done a hundred times, but it may be that hundred and first trip that claims the person's life.

"A farmer might think he is walking across a solid playing field of grain, but there is a pocket and he falls through," Nettleton said. "That grain pushes in on them and it's something that can happen very quickly and can, unfortunately, be very deadly."



In these situations, panic can set in as the farmer struggles to get out. Unfortunately, the grain acts much like quicksand, and the movement only causes the person to sink deeper, up to the waist, chest or neck. In a worst-case scenario, the person will go under completely.

"A call like this is something a first responder has to methodically think out," Nettleton said. "This doesn't just happen on everyday farms. This happens on big grain handling facilities as well. So first responders have to think methodically through the process: 'What kind of grain am I working with?' 'Where is the farmer trapped?' 'How am I going to get to the farmer and not get trapped myself?"

Once responders have reached the farmer, the extraction process begins. This involves assembling a tube around the person. This relieves the pressure and prevents additional grain from flowing in. Next, workers begin removing grain from inside the tube. This can involve anything from buckets to augurs driven by sparkless drills. Harnesses and ropes may also be involved.

In 2014, Nettleton said there were 38 documented grain bin entrapments and 17 were fatal. In 2017, 23 entrapments were documented, with nine reported falls into or from grain storage structures. Two ended with asphyxiation and eight involved entanglement.

"So, it's not always just the grain itself, it's the equipment that coincides with it." Nettleton said.

Installing the silos has opened numerous doors for the facility to expand its agricultural rescue course offerings.

"Our program is up and coming," Nettleton said. "This prop has just been built in the last year. Up until this point, we have not trained in grain entrapment."

A commonly used method is mobile trailers, which travel from location to location throughout the country.



Wayne County Regional Training Facility in Apple Creek, Ohio, has added training silos to its offerings aimed at giving area first responders the training they need to safely perform grain bin extractions. (Photo provided)

"They're great, but the downfall to that is most of the time these departments have to train outside," Nettleton said.

Thus, they are at the mercy of the weather and the time of year. Some large grain facilities in western Ohio have been willing to host rescue training; however, this often needs to be planned around hectic business schedules, Nettleton said.

"Our biggest blessing is this is going to allow us to train 365 days night or day," Nettleton said. "They are lighted, so you'll always be able to train."

Wayne County Regional Training Facility is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. It reaches first responders in Ohio and six surrounding states. Besides grain bin rescues, other agriculture-related training scenarios include farming equipment and hazardous materials such as anhydrous ammonia and even manure.

"A lot of folks don't think of (manure) as a hazardous material," Nettleton said.

However, if a vehicle hauling manure is in a traffic accident, a hazardous situation could unfold.

"That can quickly turn on you because you have a mess on the roadway, and it can get in the creeks and streams and create a bigger eco hazard," Nettleton said.

This September, the training facility is scheduled to be on a county farm tour. Between 2,500 and 3,500 guests are invited to an open house, where they can view the grain rescue prop.



In addition to grain bin extraction training, Wayne County Regional Training Facility provides other agriculture-related training scenarios for first responders in Ohio and six of its surrounding states. (Photo provided)

The facility offers first responder training in a wide variety of areas, not just farm rescue.

"Our mission is to continue to educate not only first responders but also industry workers and general public," Nettleton said. "The mentality is, if it's one life saved, it's our time well spent and well invested."

To learn more, visit www.wcfra.com and www.grainbinsafetyweek.com.



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Pictured are police recruits from Newport News, Va., on a torch run benefiting Special Olympics. (Photo provided)

Most recruits have to have 60 semester units, but since 2015, those who are active duty military or who have served four years in the major branches of the military, excluding the National Guard, are not required to do so.

Donahue shared some before and after statistics since the program went into effect in 2016. "As a result, comparing two years before and after, our military hiring went up 25%. Three years after the program was (initiated), we hired over 100 military in our department."

Prior to this new program, he noted, "We lost a lot of good vets" - some whom may have had 40 credits but not 60 because of time spent in the service.

As for what prompted the concentrated effort, Donahue

replied, "Hard to say — I think it was just a real evolution to make (law enforcement) more attractive to veterans."

community."

It wasn't due to a lack of candidates, which is reportedly the case in some departments due to pay and benefits or public opinion, with Donahue noting, "We might have had 1,000 candidates apply for 25 positions so it's not because we didn't have a pool of candidates but rather that we were looking for quality candidates."

Veterans ease into the police academy more seamlessly because they understand military rules and regulations and they understand chain of command.

He added, "They're also incredibly driven, hardworking, considerate and they understand the social context of the work."

The San Jose Police Department is very community oriented, and it has found that the veterans, because of their world view and the

experience they bring, are a huge benefit. Donahue said the officers are given "a tremendous amount of freedom. We're very autonomous — we don't have to ask before investigating, for example."

The department allows officers to go out and take the criminal element off the street while at the same time having that community aspect.

"Most veterans really understand the benefits of that two-pronged approach — apprehending criminals and community orientation.

> They've seen the negative side of not having that elsewhere in the world."

Some other benefits for veterans beside waiving the educational requirements include giving them five extra points on the oral board test, which decides how officers are

ranked in the beginning of their police career and determines their badge number and seniority for the rest of their career.

"That five points could put them at the top of their class and give them seniority for bidding early for shifts and vacations," Donahue said.

Officers also get paid while attending the police academy, not all departments offer that. While San Jose Police Department doesn't offer a sign-on bonus for those moving from out of state, it does offer assistance in finding housing and getting settled.

"In addition, vets still get to work in a team environment in a paramilitary structure but with a tremendous amount of freedom. They have the camaraderie of other vets — even if they've served in different branches," he said. "Veterans attract other veterans."

#### Marketing and job fairs

San Jose recently partnered with the ROTC to advertise directly on their material in order to gain access across the country, with a memorandum of agreement being signed. The department also markets to colleges and universities in the area and speaks at universities as far away as Florida, Chicago and New York. It has worked with veteran reserve centers and held job fairs, including specific military job fairs on military bases.

"In 2018 we did 16 military job fairs in addition to all the other job fairs we do," he said.

#### Newport News, Va.

Newport News Chief of Police Steve Drew said, because of the city's unique location, "Every officer I talk to is somehow connected to the military — whether it be through a spouse or other family member."

Newport News is "surrounded by the military" with the Naval Shipyard and the Army's Fort Eustis being right in town. There is also nearby Norfolk Naval Station and Langley Air Force Base in Hampton.

"Newport News has always been a department that's heavily relied on those who served," he said, estimating the department is close to 40% in regards to those with military service, including time spent in the Reserves.

The department also has a lot of "home grown" officers who get out of the service and want to continue to serve in their community.

"They (veterans) come with life experience and self-discipline that comes from some of the situations they've been in. The level of self-confidence they have is the biggest difference I've seen, they don't get easily overwhelmed," he said.

Officers can learn from each other—the younger officers who come straight from college can learn from those who've served in the armed forces.

Drew said they no longer have an educational requirement for any officers; he did away with that when he took the position a year and a half ago. He said there is an educational requirement built in to be promoted to captain, lieutenant and assistant chief.

This July he will be removing the education requirement for sergeant; instead, years of on-the-job experience will be equal to the two years—or 60 credits—of education now required for that promotion. Drew said his department's most valuable asset is the



Sgt. X.O. Falio visits a Hispanic community in Newport News, Va. (Photo provided)



Newport News, Va., 911 dispatcher Evan Augustus reads at a local elementary school. (Photo provided)

people and the amount of training and experience they offer. He doesn't want to dismiss the value of education, but "I don't want the lack of education to be a deterrent."

Rather Drew wants to ensure he has the best leadership in the field and believes the experience and military background that the officers have is invaluable. He said the veterans tend to have natural leadership qualities, can work well with others and tend not to complain if there are shift or schedule changes.

"They understand the mission — we're here to serve the community," he said.

Even those who are civilians working for the military are a tremendous asset. He gave an example of a woman retired from the Navy who the department hired to help with the tons of requests for body camera footage, etc. She understood the law, had experience



Sgt. Wayne Spencer of Newport News, Va., is pictured at a Tip A Cop event to raise money. (Photo provided)

and she totally revamped the department's system.

"She's done a phenomenal job, and she's only been here six months," Drew said.

Newport News hires a lot of people retired from the military for part-time work in different aspects. "How they interact with people and get things done — they're very efficient. That's something you can't teach. They're very adaptable."

Drew gets calls all the time from other departments wondering how he fills vacancies so fast.

"We are very blessed — very fortunate," he said, adding Newport News doesn't really do anything to specifically market to veterans. "We're rich enough in close proximity."

One thing Newport News initiated last year was if an officer served in the military, they are allowed to wear their pin on their uniform. Drew said it initiates conversation out in the community and does help with recruiting.

The department has a really good relationship with Fort Eustis, and together they do a lot of events while also helping each other out in emergency situations.

"Building those relationships are so valuable—we have a great partnership," Drew said.

#### Is there a downside?

While veterans can be a perfect fit in law enforcement, they must seriously evaluate whether or not they truly want a job with the potential for retraumatization, a subject addressed in an article by Gary Peterson, which is available at www.military.com/veteran-jobs/search/law-enforcement-jobs/military-transition-to-police-force.html.

Still, several departments' testing processes will discover instances of post-traumatic stress disorder.

In San Jose's case, Donahue said it hasn't noticed any difference between military versus nonmilitary when it comes to any issues.

"We have a robust crisis management unit," Donahue said, adding this includes offering peer support, mental health counseling and other resources. He agreed if a candidate suffered from PTSD or other conditions that would affect their ability to serve, it would come out in the testing process and the candidate would be weeded out.

For Newport News, Drew agreed, "That's not been my experience" before adding it'd be more likely to be an issue for someone coming from an area where they've not been exposed to any violence versus a veteran.

However, the drawback that Newport News has experienced with hiring veterans is them moving on after a few years. Drew said they come to Newport News because they or a family member has been deployed there, but after a few years, they decide to move back to California or Ohio or wherever their family is.

Drew hasn't been losing officers to other departments, but when their time is up, they tend to move on. "I just lost a very good special victims detective; her husband was in the military, and when he got out, he wanted to move back to the West Coast."

He definitely is seeing more turnover with military hires versus civilian.

Drew said he doesn't think people come to a job or leave one because of a couple of thousand dollars. To retain officers, he believes in training, support and then letting them do their jobs without micromanaging. People want to have a voice and those who are quieter may need to be drawn out, according to Drew. Sharing the department's goals and treating everyone with respect is what attracts people.

When asked if that can be translated at a job fair, Drew said that it could by sending people who embody what they believe and stand for and who show the diversity on the force. Newport News wants to show potential recruits the benefits of working for its department, offer to show them around, spend the day and then follow up within 24-48 hours.

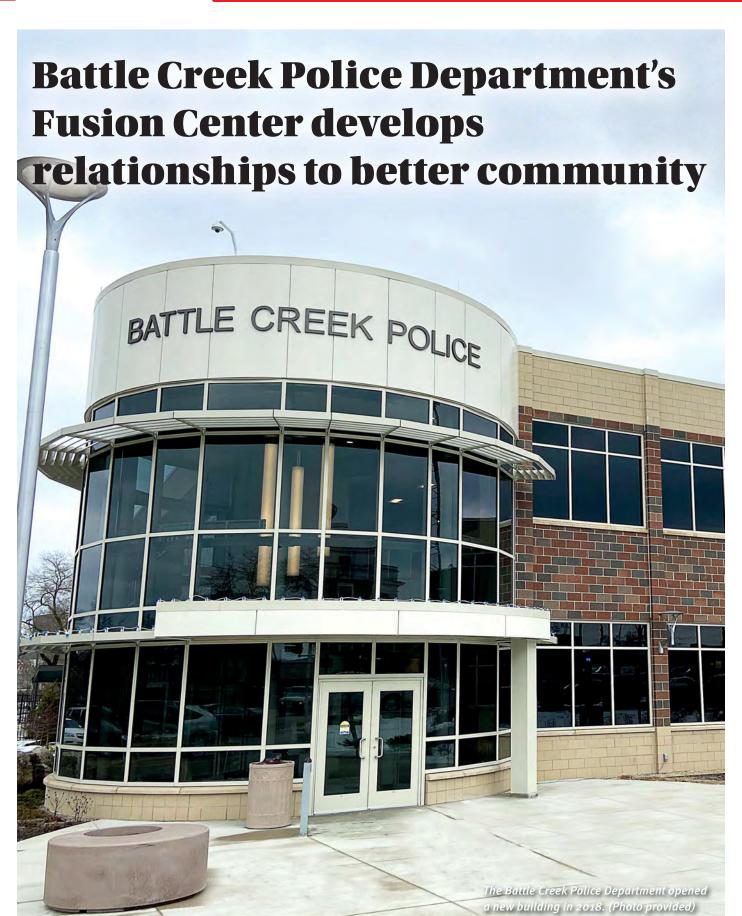
Drew came to Newport News after spending 25 years at the Richmond Police Department, and he said his recruiter used to call him once a week to check on him. "It was a no-brainer that I would go there. We built a relationship; I felt like I mattered to him. He still calls me once in a while."

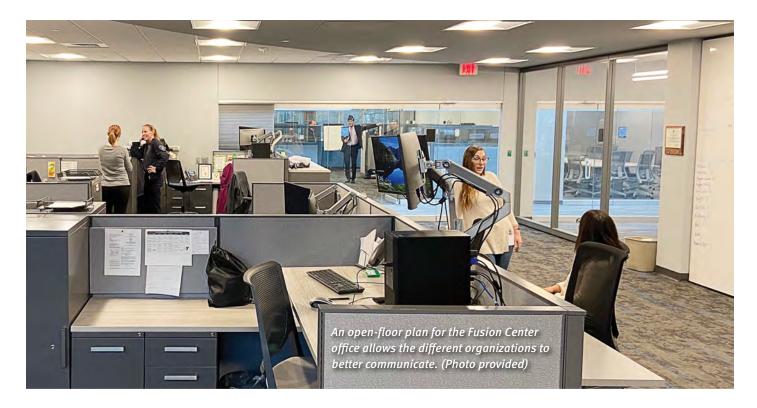
Drew is humbled to work for a fantastic organization and great men and women.

He also advised, "In an urban police department, it's critical to have diversity — male, female, black, Hispanic. The military does a phenomenal job of diversity because they bring people together from all over the country. The military is also great about moving females into leadership positions."

Donahue said he "absolutely thinks hiring vets is something to pursue. They are a huge benefit to law enforcement in enormous ways. We really embrace and value our military veterans."







By MAGGIE KENWORTHY | The Municipal

## In Battle Creek, Mich., the police department has created an "information clearinghouse" known as the Fusion Center.

"We analyze basically everything that's going on in the city daily," explained Sgt. Jeff Case, who is in charge of the Fusion Center. "The goal is to send that information out to the officers so that instead of just randomly doing what they do, we can focus on problem spots, issues and different things that go on within the city."

But, instead of having police department employees work on these tasks alone, the Fusion Center has partnered with a large variety of community resources. Working alongside Battle Creek Police Department staff include employees of Child Protective Services, juvenile probation, Michigan Department of Corrections probation and parole, Homeland Security investigations, federal probation, a mental health and substance abuse center called Summit Pointe, a domestic violence shelter called Safe Place, a substance abuse council and a victim advocate.

Many of these organizations have dedicated either full-time or part-time employees to work inside the Fusion Center daily.

"Some of these groups are operational resources, meaning we can grab them and go out and do things," explained Case. "Others are more information-sharing or just different groups within the community that we want to build relationships with — that if we have that relationship, it just makes our job easier at certain times or with certain cases."

This relationship-building process has helped the police department better provide services to the community.

"We realized that in law enforcement we are not experts in hardly anything besides maybe criminal justice," said Major of Investigations Steve Bush. "90% of the population we don't deal with that often, but there's 10% of the population that we deal with probably 90% of the time. And out of that 10% of the population, they use a lot of the resources in the city ... We started to identify those resources to bring into the Fusion Center so that we didn't have to be experts, we already had the experts with us."

Cases are either referred to the Fusion Center through 911 dispatch or the center's crime analysts who identify crime trends that should be focused on. In other instances, the community organizations that have partnered with the center may ask for help with some of their own responsibilities.

"So, instead of just going to heroin overdoses, we would have Summit Pointe ride with (officers) after somebody had overdosed," explained Case. "We would have them go and speak with those folks that were overdosing because many of them had overdosed not just once but numerous times. So, instead of continuing to go to overdose calls, was there a way for us to use some of the resources and relationships that we have to try to limit the amount of times we go to a certain spot?"

This approach allows the department to tackle the entirety of the issue, instead of merely the crime that's occurring. ▶

"It's kind of like an all-encompassing holistic view of it," explained Case. "Putting the right person in the right place to solve the problem and solve it quickly. That's really what we are trying to do."

To ensure that the center's resources are being taken advantage of, all Battle Creek police officers are introduced to the Fusion Center when they are hired.

"When we have new officers come in, they actually spend time in our Fusion Center so they get to know our partners and how everybody works. They also spend time with special units so they know what their resources are and they know who they can contact," said crime analyst Whitney Perigo. "We also place information on what we call our 24-hour board so all officers, during their briefings before shifts, will get information on what's going on that affects them directly."

Other nearby police departments are taking notice of the Fusion Center. According to Bush, neighboring jurisdiction Kalamazoo has started a similar crime reduction team.

"They've tried to establish partnerships that are very similar partnerships to what we have in their city," said Bush. "They've come three different times to our police department to see how we do things and I'm in regular communication with their command."

But the concept can also easily be spread to departments and municipalities outside of Michigan. Case encourages departments to start their relationship-building process by identifying their possible partners and having an open conversation.



The Fusion Center is housed within the Battle Creek Police Department. (Photo provided)

"Once we clear the air and know we want to go the same direction, then we start looking at things that we can do to do a better job to assist that partner, and then in return, they do the same thing for us," said Case. "From that point, we can kind of move forward and solve problems together."







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## First responders trained to manage natural gas emergencies

By BARB SIEMINSKI | The Municipal

Mark Garvin is one of those people who could easily be blown away by his job. Not necessarily because he likes it, but because he needs to follow the safety rules he is in charge of as manager of Gas Technical Training at National Grid where he oversees the company's first responder training program.

Garvin, who has been manager for four years and employed by National Grid for 12 years, said his team has received "a lot of feedback on how first responders approach a leak or fire call involving natural gas."

National Grid is not alone in such training initiatives, with other natural gas companies also seeking to train first responders on how to respond to gas leaks and gas line breaks while also protecting themselves and the public.

With 35 years under his belt within Massachusetts' fire service, including 15 years as chief of Longmeadow, Mass.'s, fire department, Eric Madison hasn't let the grass grow under his feet after he retired in 2015. Since

2016, he has worked at Columbia Gas of Massachusetts as its manager of public awareness and damage prevention. In this role, he serves as a public safety trainer, working with the company's public safety partners.

"For firefighters, Columbia Gas offers two different training programs," said Madison. "We travel to the individual fire departments and conduct a three-hour training session on responding to natural gas emergencies. Topics discussed include the gas distribution system, properties and characteristics of natural gas, including live demonstrations in a small explosion chamber, and response considerations. In addition to this program,



Narragansett Fire Chief/Emergency Management Agency Director Scott Partington (Photo provided)

we also teach advanced firefighter training four times each year."

Held at the Columbia Gas' training facility, this is a full day of training that includes recreated real-life gas emergencies. It is a great opportunity to train firefighters in such emergencies without actually endangering them, according to Madison.

"For police officers, we offer a two-hour training program that we deliver at their **LEFT:** In March 2015, first responders in New York City respond to an explosion thought to be caused by a natural gas leak. To give first responders the tools to respond to such situations, several utility companies are providing training. (a katz/Shutterstock.com)

station," said Madison. "Topics for the police training are directed at keeping the officers and the public safe, how to recognize a dangerous situation involving natural gas and the appropriate actions to take.

"All these programs have been embraced and praised by the fire and police departments in our area. The demand for training never stops, and I regularly get invited back into departments I have visited in the past."

As for the training initiative's start, Madison stated, "Columbia Gas has always recognized the importance of a good working relationship with the first responders in our communities. Through that relationship and continuous communication with our firefighters and police officers, it became very important that there was a need to deliver this type of training.

"I lead the firefighters' and police officers' training and often involve other company employees to assist, particularly when they have an expertise in a particular area of the industry or when their knowledge would be beneficial to the first responders. In addition, many field employees assist during the advanced firefighter training I spoke of earlier."

With his experience in the fire service, Madison stays in contact with many of his students and former colleagues. Because of that relationship, he frequently hears stories about how they used the information they learned from him.

"Natural gas safety requires a partnership between Columbia Gas, our customers and communities," said Madison. "Customers should always contact certified contractors or plumbers for maintenance or repair work on natural gas appliances and house lines.

"It's also essential that everyone remembers to always call Dig Safe at 811 or (888) 344-7233 at least 72 hours before beginning an excavation project to have all underground utilities located. It is a free service that ensures the safety of our community."

According to Fire Chief/Emergency Management Agency Director Scott Partington of the Narragansett, R.I., Fire/Rescue Department, a large-scale natural gas disruption had occurred in Rhode Island's Aquidneck Island area in January 2019 that affected multiple towns, 7,000 customers and displaced hundreds of people.

"We not only wanted to be better prepared for the smaller incidents but the larger-scale disruptions as well," said Partington. "National Grid offered an excellent — and free — online training curriculum that provided our personnel with the information they needed to safely identify and respond to incidents that may involve natural gas. Understanding the properties of natural gas along with the dos and don'ts when it comes to handling these emergencies, helps us respond more effectively.

"While we have not trained other departments, we have invited other fire, EMS and police departments to our exercises, tabletop exercises and fireground trainings. We conducted a large tabletop exercise with National Grid last October."

Partington has a training officer who coordinates all his training modules and instructors.



Narragansett, R.I.'s, fire department has invited other first responders to its tabletop exercises and fireground trainings. Pictured is one of its tabletop exercises. (Photo provided by Scott Partington)

"We do not have one specific instructor who teaches natural gas safety," said Partington. "All of our personnel have obtained the online natural gas safety training certification and earned a certificate that demonstrates their knowledge of natural gas pipeline safety."

Serving a dual role as chief and EMA director, Partington coordinates emergency preparedness, planning, response and recovery for all types of emergencies and disasters. In doing so, he often works directly with National Grid and other public utilities when it comes to preparing disaster and recovery operations. He has a close working relationship with National Grid's liaison person, who introduced him to their first responder online training curriculum.

"Our training officer is Lt. Kevin McEnery, who was associated directly with our most recent training, which involved a tabletop exercise with National Grid in October 2019," said Partington.

"All of our personnel have a better understanding and awareness of natural gas emergencies as a result of the training," added Partington. "Particularly, how the gas distribution system operates, the properties and characteristics of natural gas, handling carbon monoxide incidents, the management of gas incidents, potential hazards and a better appreciation for response tactics.

"Shortly after receiving the training, we responded to several smaller natural gas line disruptions, which occurred as a result from construction crews digging and working on road repairs. I believed our personnel who responded did so with much more confidence."

Partington offered a tip: "When it comes to dealing with gas line disruptions, usually the louder the roar coming from the ground the bigger your problem.

"In responding to a fire involving natural gas your best and safest course of action is to let it burn until the source can be safely shut off. No gas, no fire."

Benefits received thus far for the firefighters that Partington has trained include mitigating several gas line disruptions that have occurred in his community since the training.

"Our emergency operational response is more coordinated; we have revised and implemented new SOGs," concluded Partington. "We have a better understanding of what to expect from National Grid and what is required of our personnel to safely operate at the scene of these emergencies."



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#### **Behind the uniform:**

## Conyers, Ga., police officer Troy Quick makes a difference in young lives

By JULIE YOUNG | The Municipal

#### Officer Troy Quick is determined to touch young lives early and change the perception of how they view law enforcement.

"It can be hard for a kid growing up and thinking that the police are against them," he said. "I want them to know that I am a real person and I care about their future."

Quick is a member of the Conyers, Ga., Police Department who serves as a school resource officer in Rockdale County Public Schools, and last December, he became the only officer from Georgia to receive the third annual Attorney General's Award for Distinguished Service from William P. Barr. The nomination lauded Quick for making a lasting impact on the youth in his community by mentoring them, supporting them and helping out in a number of thankless ways. His dedication and service is truly remarkable, but so is the humility with which he carries out his role.

"The award is certainly an honor, but I'd be just as happy not to be recognized," he said. "It's the way I live my life. The more love you show, the more love you are given. The more respect you're given. You've got to show that love and respect."

Quick, 51, said growing up in Brooklyn, N.Y., he was a "knuck-lehead kid" who could have easily gone down the wrong path in life had it not been for an officer who gave him the benefit of the doubt and ultimately saved his life. He said a senseless decision nearly caused him to lose any chance at success, but the officer offered him a way out: He took him to a boxing gym and showed him a more healthy way to channel his anger and energy.

"I fell in love with that man and I fell in love with the profession," he said. "He really changed my life and I've never forgotten that."

With four years under his belt at the department and two as a school resource officer, Quick said he loves his job helping children see the person behind the uniform. He likes the fact his students see him as a family man, a person of faith and someone they can count on for help. With a primarily African-American student population, Quick knows it's up to him to erase the color lines, encourage respect and show kids how the law affects them.

"I have white officers come by the school, and I let the kids see how I interact with them. I let them see that these men and women are



Officer Troy Quick of the Conyers, Ga., Police Department (Photo provided)



Quick encourages students to train at American Top Team gym where they not only find camaraderie but also learn how to channel emotions in a positive manner. Its concept is to train so one doesn't have to fight. (Photo provided)



Officer Troy Quick gives a Rockdale County Public Schools student a hug on graduation day. Quick aims to touch youth's lives by supporting them while also changing the perception of how they view law enforcement. (Photo provided)



Quick works with female basketball star point guard. As a girl daddy, he likes to teach that girls can do anything a boy can do. (Photo provided)

my brothers and sisters and that I care about them. I let them see me as a dad, as a coach and I've even been known to work out with the kids. When the vest comes off, they see the man underneath and they love that," he said. "They know I'm not Robocop."

Although his office has become a popular hangout on campus, Quick says there are still those occasions when his job supersedes friendship. It breaks his heart when students make the wrong choices, but it's up to him to protect them, even if that means paying the price.

"It's really ironic," he said. "When the kids get in trouble, they immediately start apologizing. It happened just recently. They tell me that they are sorry it happened. They are sorry they let me down. And sometimes, they put the cuffs on their wrists themselves."

Not only does Quick mentor students, help them have a healthy respect for law enforcement and execute his duties when necessary, he also tries to discourage kids from joining gangs before they are recruited. Quick knows they are at a difficult time in their lives and in constant search for a family unit they may not have at home, but he assures them that gangs are not the answer. Having been involved in mixed martial arts for the past 15 years, he encourages them to come out to American Top Team gym where they can find camaraderie in a healthier environment.

"Our concept is that we train so that we don't have to fight," Quick said. "Every person on the face of this planet at some point in life is dealing with or has dealt with some form of anger or frustration. Often times we act on it in a negative way that can land us in a world of trouble when, in reality, all we wanted was for someone to listen or someplace to vent."

At the gym, students can channel that energy in an environment that embraces those emotions and liberates them. Quick said he has two former students — who are now in college — as well as eight current students who train with him and he encourages both boys and girls to take part.

"In the words of our late great Kobe Bryant, I'm a girl daddy and I've always taught my daughter that she can do anything a boy can do!"

Quick knows he can't fix all of the problems between law enforcement and the kids they are sworn to protect and serve, but he's doing his part, and at the end of the day, there is only thing he wants in return.

"I want them to know that I genuinely love them and care for them," he said. "That's what it's all about."  $\[Mathbb{M}\]$ 

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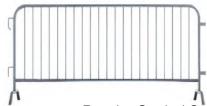


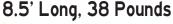
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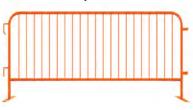
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## Repair or replace: When is the time right?

With each passing year, the cost of repairing and replacing emergency vehicles, such as fire apparatuses and police cars, grows. Today, a police vehicle will cost nearly six-figures, while the price of most new fire trucks is more than half a million dollars.

#### By ANDREW MENTOCK | The Municipal

What does this mean?

As prices continue to increase, it's important to know when it's time to purchase a new vehicle and when it's time to further invest in it by repairing the worn or damaged part.

However, no matter what option is pursued — repairing or replacing — regular maintenance is a must. This means a mechanic has to check every nook and cranny once a year while also checking for leaks and obvious wear and tear at least once a month.

"We have them serviced annually and NFPA, which is the fire association, says that you have to do a pump test and everything annually, so it has to be done every year," said Jeff Locke, the chief at Central Cass Fire Department located in southwest Michigan. "Usually, at that time, if there are any valves that are starting to leak a little bit, that's when you'll notice those."

But how much damage a department is willing to fix likely depends on how much longer it intends to keep a vehicle. The Central Cass Fire Department, which just replaced a fire apparatus after it'd been in service for 30 years, cannot afford to get rid of a vehicle more frequently than that.

"With our department, we just have them fixed because we can't afford to go out and buy a brand-new truck every five or 10 years," Locke said. "Every year the maintenance is done. All the engine oils are changed ... In between the time of that, a problem arises that we noticed, we just scheduled it and get it. It's not like a car where you can put it off another week or two. You have guys riding inside the vehicle and you can't take a chance on something failing."

With two fire apparatuses in the department, along with a handful of other emergency vehicles, in the meantime, it's important that the Central Cass Fire Department focuses on saving for the next fire truck it intends to buy 10 years down the road. That means a significant portion of the budget is being put toward an asset that the department won't even purchase for another decade.

On the other hand, some larger departments are in the position to afford a new truck more frequently, and this flexibility allows them to make the best financial decision at that time — even if the department needs to pay someone to help them make it.

For instance, the Freeport Fire Department in Freeport, Maine, hired an outside consultant for \$14,800 to help it evaluate its entire fleet of vehicles despite believing it was still five years away from purchasing a new one. Fire Chief Charles Jordan and members of the city council said this was vital to making the correct decision.

"I really think we need that extra piece of professional help," Jordan has told the Press Herald. "These people live, breathe, eat and sleep this, and I really think it's what we need."

The objective, of course, was that this high upfront cost would save the department in the long run, especially if the consultant, Emergency Vehicle Response, could advise them on how to combine the function of two vehicles into one. Other fleet consultants, such as J. Lyons Fire Consultant, can also perform the same type of assessment.

Buying a new fire apparatus or police vehicle is not like purchasing a new car. It's not as easy as showing up to a dealer, picking out your favorite make and color and driving off the lot. Each type of



Central Cass Fire Department in Michigan relies on regular maintenance and repairs to keep its fire apparatuses operational. It had just retired one after 30 years in service. (Photo provided)



Fleet consultants can provide guidance to fleets in regards to finding a replacement cycle that fits their needs. (Shutterstock.com)

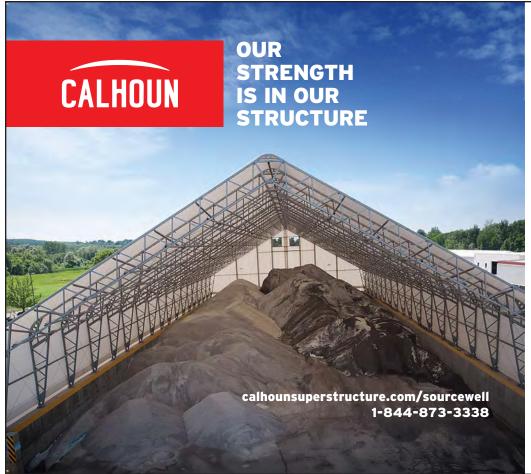
emergency vehicle generally comes with several custom features that meet the individual department's needs.

When the Central Cass Fire Department bought its most recent vehicle, it spent eight to 10 months deciding what features its new apparatus needed and, in the process, filled out an 80-page spec sheet.

"It was custom built with three companies," Locke said. "We told them what we wanted, and they came back (and) told us what they had to offer. Then we went from there and it's very time-consuming. We had an officers group of four people that participated in it and we had tons of hours in research, because when you do a custom truck, you have to write down to what brand of turn signal lenses you want and all that."







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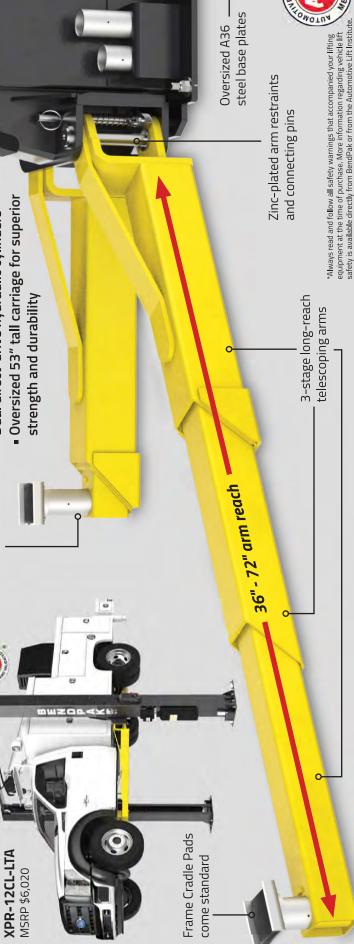
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By ANDREW MENTOCK | The Municipal

In cities across the United States, industries that were thriving decades ago are dying off and leaving large facilities unoccupied and unkempt. Eventually, developers or municipalities take it upon themselves to tear down old buildings and start anew.

But in some instances, buildings are torn down, but for various reasons, the brownfield is left undeveloped for years. Often this can be due to the fact that too much debris or pollutants are left behind. On other occasions, the developers just need extra incentive to build on a brownfield site, which was the case in Bellingham, Wash.

For decades a pulp and tissue mill utilized the waterfront property near Bellingham's downtown, but that industry has been gone for years, and in 2005, the city took possession of the land but was unsure of what to do with it. After years of market research, Bellingham decided to take up a monumental project to make the brownfield more attractive to potential developers by building an

\$11 million roadway, which is roughly five times the city's typical annual budget for road repairs.

"It's about half a mile of roadway in a brownfield redevelopment right adjacent to the downtown and along the shore of Bellingham Bay," Freeman Anthony, the project engineer with the city of Bellingham, said. "It was originally water 200 years ago. As Bellingham developed, they brought in a lot of fill and there was a railroad through it, and then at one point, it was 200-plus acres of basically marine industry but also closely related to the timber industry."

But in the process of developing the roadway, Anthony and the city of Bellingham also decided to pursue a Greenroads certification for the project, which should show to the public that the city is committed to utilizing a sustainable design for the project.

The certification process is managed by the Greenroads Foundation, which is a nonprofit located in the state of Washington; it aims to advance "sustainability education and initiatives for transportation infrastructure."

Anthony has been involved with the foundation for years and is a member of its board. He helped Greenroads develop its rating system, which is part of the reason why it was so important for Bellingham to adhere to a stringent code of sustainability when undertaking such an expensive project.

For a project to be Greenroads certified, it must check off a number of sustainability requirements, many of which Anthony said are already mandated by the state of Washington or the Environmental Protection Agency.

**LEFT:** Pictured are old timbers and railway ties discovered on the site, which once hosted a pulp and tissue mill and railroad. (Photo provided)

**RIGHT:** Workers place a big outfall pipe as part of Bellingham, Wash.'s, \$11 million roadway, designed to breathe life into a brownfield. (Photo provided)

"Washington State already has some pretty rigorous requirements for transportation projects," he said. "SEPA, the State Environmental Policy Act, is pretty rigorous. Some of the stuff you have to do here, such as constructing a stormwater management system, you wouldn't necessarily have to do those in Nebraska."

The way Greenroads works is there are a total of 61 possible credits that a project can obtain by meeting a variety of both mandatory and voluntary requirements, all of which are related to sustainability.

To earn a certification, a project must complete all of the mandatory requirements, while also earning enough points by completing voluntary requirements. The more points a project earns, the more prestigious the certificate. For instance, 40 or more points equates to a bronze, 60 or more points equates to a gold and 80 or more points equates to an Evergreen.

"One example is using crushed concrete as coarse aggregate," Anthony said. "Now, that's not a state requirement making you do that. But we do that as a city. We actually did that with our first Greenroads projects back in the day. And we included the opportunity to use recycled toilets and porcelain.

"So we've built that into our spec now and we've been doing it for almost eight years now."

This helps to protect the environment because recycling concrete releases a smaller amount of emissions in comparison to digging it up and creating new concrete. It's also cheaper.

Bellingham has set up the irrigation system around the roadway to make it easier for a developer to add a rainwater catch system.

To fund the project, Bellingham used a variety of sources, including financial contributions from the city, county and the federal government. Anthony also likes to apply for grants for Greenroads projects in order to save taxpayer money.





The brownfield side had some levels of subsurface contamination that needed addressed. (Photo provided)

Now that the roadway is complete, the developers are putting in residential buildings, which will help keep Bellingham residents in the city.

But Anthony and others still involved with the project are putting together the necessary information in order to actually receive the certification, because while the Greenroads foundation will never try to drastically change a city's plan, they are thorough in making sure all of their requirements are met.



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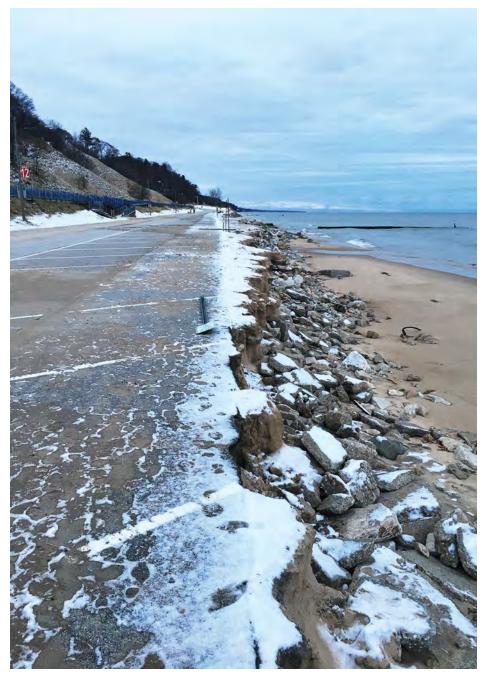
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## City administrations shore up against erosion



With water in the Great Lakes at or near record levels and rainfall in the Midwest well above normal this winter, it's not surprising that cities around the region are facing erosion issues on lake shores and riverbanks. By JANET PATTERSON | The Municipal

According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which began tracking lake levels in 1918, a record wet 2019 around the Great Lakes has contributed to the high water levels. Lake Michigan is 5 inches higher than the highest monthly average, which was recorded in 1987.

Contributing to those record levels, January precipitation averaged 1.03 inches above normal, ranking as the 17th wettest January on record (1895-2020) for the region.

High water levels translate to billions of gallons of water.

And that means erosion wherever there are high water levels.

Muskegon, Mich., Director of Public Works Leo Evans said his city began to experience small areas of erosion along the shores of Lake Michigan in the summer of 2018. But as early as the spring and early summer of 2019, it saw the problem become critical.

Instead of lake water simply overtopping roads along the shoreline, he said several sections of beach that were open to public recreational use started to "be reclaimed by the lake"

Evans said the rate of erosion has escalated rapidly in the last nine to 12 months, "matching the rise in the Lake Michigan-Huron basin over the same timeframe."

The rise in water levels of both Lake Michigan and the smaller adjoining Muskegon Lake washed out both a street and a lakeshore trail that followed the two shorelines while also damaging water pipes beneath the street.

**LEFT:** Erosion poses a threat to Muskegon's Beach Street, which leads to its popular Pere Marquette Park. At one point in 2019, the road had to be closed due to high waves. (Photo provided)



As of February, Evans said the city is "working on plans to repair the infrastructure that we've already had damaged and working to preserve everything else we have that's at risk." The bulk of the work has been installing riprap, which is rocky material placed in areas prone to wave action and shoreline erosion. The riprap will slow the erosion.

The city has also temporarily raised the grade of one road in order to keep it open. Additionally, Evans said, "We've taken steps to block off several sections of storm sewer that were back feeding into streets exacerbating the flooding."

While creeks may appear to be far less harmful than a great lake, towns like Atlantic, Iowa, have been fighting their own battles with erosion.

"Bull Creek most of the time looks like a peaceful stream running through town," said Bryant Rasmussen, Atlantic's parks and recreation director. "But any significant rainfall and all of a sudden it becomes a raging river."

That raging river has caused significant amounts of erosion to parkland and private property in the city of about 7,000 residents in southwestern Iowa.

"In some areas, we've lost about 5 feet along the creek's banks in the last year," he added.

Recent engineering studies suggested building culverts and planting bluegrass as solutions to the erosion issue, but Rasmussen is far more excited about a lower cost, more natural answer.

"Instead of a \$4 (million) to \$5 million project, we are going to return the area to its native state."

That native state includes planting native grasses, native plants like cattails and trees that will slow down the velocity of rising waters.

In addition to tackling the erosion, Rasmussen said part of controlling the problem is educating homeowners who have settled along the banks of Bull Creek. "Planting bluegrass and mowing it cannot control the amount of water that comes from the creek."

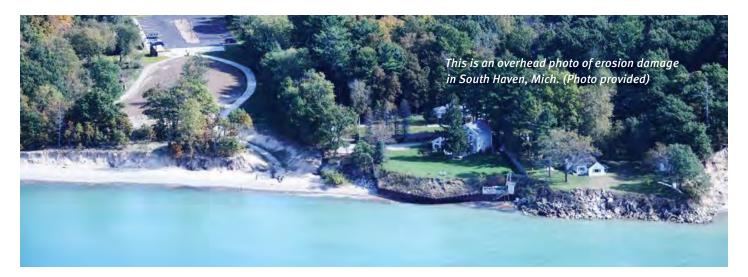


Bull Creek in Atlantic, Iowa, is normally a peaceful stream but with significant rainfall turns into a fast moving river. This has led to an erosion problem that the city is moving to address. (Photo provided)

Rasmussen is enthusiastic about returning the Bull Creek habitat to the plants that Lewis and Clark would have found when their Corps of Discovery passed through the area in the early 19th century.

He said the native plantings project will cost the city \$100,000 to \$150,000 and will be easier to maintain than the concrete culvert solution. The plantings will also help to return some of the native wildlife like owls, bluebirds, hawks, foxes and beavers to the creek's banks.

The half-mile stretch of creek that has been the cause of great concern runs through Atlantic school properties, making the project a learning experience for Atlantic's youth.



"We expect to put signage there explaining the native plants and their benefits. I even see an opportunity for an outdoor classroom there."

While lakes and creeks individually can wreak havoc with urban life, combine a lake and a river and the erosion issue multiplies.

South Haven, Mich., about 65 miles down the road from Muskegon, faces double trouble from Lake Michigan and the Black River that flows through the city.

In the last few years, residents of the lakeside city have seen their beaches and bluffs washing away as the lake waters rose. Some have even moved their homes back farther on their properties to hedge against erosion claiming the structure.

Kate Hosler, South Haven's assistant city manager and harbormaster, said this is not the first year there has been concern about erosion.

"Since many of our public spaces abut the waterfront, the city has looked into long-range planning efforts dealing with erosion." South Haven engaged Edgewater Resources, a firm that deals with waterfront engineering, in 2018 to assist in developing a master plan for the South Beach Bluff area of the lakefront, south of the area where the Black River flows into Lake Michigan.

The proposed plan will provide accessibility to the bluff at the street level and will implement erosion control measures for the bluff slope.

During a recent presentation to the South Haven City Council, Abonmarche, a Midwestern engineering consulting firm, outlined various measures that could help to mitigate riverbank and lakefront erosion

Among these are wave absorbers, which are structures cut into existing piers or jetties and filled with large multifaceted blocks of limestone known as armorstone. Hosler said, "(The) irregular shape and large weight of the armorstone absorbs and dispels wave energy that would otherwise be reflected and carried up the channel affecting boat slips, seawalls and other public infrastructure in the inner harbor area."

With the complex infrastructure of marinas and piers as well as the beaches in South Haven, controlling the waters involves more than just saving recreational areas.

"Public infrastructure, such as the wastewater treatment plant, water filtration plant and Bascule Bridge, are critical components to the city," Hosler added.



Pictured are wave absorbers being used by South Haven, Mich., to mitigate riverbank and lakefront erosion. (Photo provided)

In addition to the public infrastructure, cities like South Haven face concerns about private wells and septic systems that could be washed away.

In Muskegon's case, the public infrastructure affected by erosion is the water main that supplies not only Muskegon but nearby Fruitport Township and Norton Shores.

The cost of remediating lake and river erosion can take a bite out of a city's budget. Rich Warner, director of Muskegon County's emergency management department, said in an interview late last year, "A disaster will wipe out your budget, day one."

Evans said he estimates the cost of repairing the damage to the street, lakeshore trail and water main will be about \$300,000. "It will likely take the better part of six to 12 months to develop plans, obtain permits and identify funding for long-term repairs in those areas."

He said the city has commissioned an engineering study to identify options and costs for long-term fixes to the most critical areas of erosion. "But those repairs will take time and money to bring to fruition."

The cost of the South Haven project to manage both lake and river erosion, harbor wave propagation, stormwater and utility infrastructure work and flood control can run as high as \$13 million, according to the Abonmarche study.  $\[Mathbb{M}\]$ 

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A Moses Lake parks crew starts construction of a new picnic shelter, which was made possible through donated funds.



Dick Dean, former mayor of Moses Lake, stands in front of the new picnic shelter, which he had donated funding toward.

## Parks catalog captures community support

By BARB SIEMINSKI | The Municipal

(All photos provided by Spencer Griga)

The tried-and-true methods of fundraising — bake sales, car washes, magazine subscriptions, lemonade stands and candy — all have their place. But moving into the big leagues, such as coming up with successful fundraising ideas for city parks is a whole other ball game. It takes a type of grassroots fundraising on a much larger scale that is community-based with shared goals.

Spencer Grigg, director of the Moses Lake Parks & Recreation Department in Washington, shared some of his thoughts on park fundraising.

"I believe that city park fundraising is going on in just about every city in America," began Grigg. "We all take slightly different approaches, but in the end, there are usually gaps in what our budget appropriations will cover. As a result, we all try to stretch our options by seeking outside funding. In our immediate area, I believe that you will find fundraising going on in Ephrata, Quincy and Othello to name just a few."

Ten years ago, Grigg originated the first rendition of Moses Lake "Parks Gifts & Memorials Catalog," which has been updated multiple times since the beginning. The catalog was created and uploaded to the parks website as a.pdf file; however, the department also keeps a few copies in its office.

To maintain awareness of the catalog, Grigg said the department will sometimes promote it on an as-space-is-available basis in the seasonal activity guides.

The catalog offers color photos, the department's mission and the city's policy for accepting gifts and memorials. The catalog lists a variety of items needed for donors to choose from, along with a range of their approximate costs. When the public sees these items' photos and text information, they can immediately view what their gift will be like and easily pick an item in their spending range. When items are illustrated as such, it brings the donor much closer to a purchase of a gift or memorial. Another benefit for donors is that all donations and gifts are tax deductible.

"Most of our donations that are generated out of the gift catalog are smaller items like a park bench, a tree, a flagpole or maybe a drinking fountain," said Grigg. "Recently, a former parks and recreation advisory board member, who also served as mayor a few years ago, donated \$65,000 for a beautiful new picnic shelter and the completion of the redevelopment of a small local park. He saw the catalog and desired to do something on a larger scale. As a result, the community got a brand-new beautiful picnic shelter."



This donated playground was placed in Crossroads Park.

Asked if he had ever run into an issue with the first amendment in selecting signage for ball parks and other places, Grigg answered no.

"All our signs and banners are required to comply with city regulations," said Grigg. "And when we receive a gift donation, we are legally required to create a resolution from the city council accepting the donation/gift. Additionally, I always write a letter thanking the

individual or organization for his/her generosity."

One of Moses Lake's smaller parks is the dog park, and according to Grigg, his city was fortunate to have a friends of the dog park group, "which was instrumental in identifying local donations and support for that specific project and enhancements to the original project (i.e. the



Pictured is a donated wrestling statue made for Moses Lake's parks department.

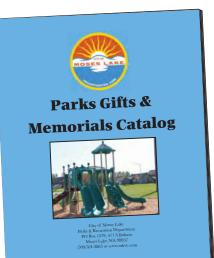
 $\log$  park). We operate the  $\log$  park as part of our parks maintenance operations."

As for obstacles, Grigg observed, "The biggest challenge we've encountered with donations and volunteers is finding more of each. It seems to come in cycles, so for a few years, we see lots of both (donations and volunteers) and then it kind of drops off and eventually there is a resurgence for interest in both."

It's a good idea to take stock on what is already strongly in place before seeking more funds. For example, if a park is already equipped with invasive plant removal; has bat houses installed; and offers well-maintained trails, paths and pollinator gardens, it is easier to follow these guidelines for financial and political support for park enhancements. Promote parks at public gatherings. Apply for grants. Encourage your friends of the parks groups to form partnerships and sponsorships with community organizations and businesses. These friends can also raise money by selling branded shirts, caps and other items during ball games and other public events.

Make a list of needs or wish list items to share with the friends of the parks groups and hold consistent meetings to discuss these needs. Provide a meeting place and staff time to reinforce community participation, funds and volunteers.

"Keep asking and don't only ask for the little stuff," said Grigg. "Traditionally, we as an industry seem to be inclined to ask for someone to donate the cost of basketballs when we should be asking for a gymnasium or at least the whole backboard, basket and the basketballs. Remember, the answer is always 'no' if you don't take the time to ask! (It may still be 'no' but at least now you know where things are at.)"



#### On the Web

View Moses Lake's "Parks Gifts & Memorials Catalog" at www.cityofml.com/DocumentCenter/View/251/Parks-Gifts-2020?bidId=.



## Economic development with a global flavor

By LAUREN CAGGIANO | The Municipal

#### The economy is becoming more global as we speak, and a seminar in Gilbert, Ariz., late last year only drives that point further home.

Gilbert's Office of Economic Development, the Gilbert Chamber of Commerce and Gilbert Sister Cities sponsored the Dec. 10 International Trade Seminar. The event was designed to find businesses looking to expand internationally and assist them with those efforts, especially those with their eyes on Northern Ireland as a site. About 20 people were in attendance, representing

industries like financial services, real estate, logistics/transportation and construction.

So why Northern Ireland and why now? Gilbert Economic Development Director Dan Henderson said the seminar represents a culmination of several parties' efforts over the years. Their relationship with Gilbert Sister Cities began in June 1995, with the intent to establish cultural and economic ties with other regions of the world. Gilbert's



Gilbert Economic Development Director Dan Henderson



Panelists from Northern Ireland spoke during the seminar, sharing with businesses information about international expansions while also offering assistance for those with their eyes on Northern Ireland as a site. Gilbert has been Sister Cities with Antrim-Newtownabbey, Northern Ireland, since November 1998. (Photo provided)

first Sister City relationship was born with Antrim-Newtownabbey, Northern Ireland, in November 1998, followed by Leschan, China, in June 2002.

"With each of these partnerships, new programs, mission opportunities, invention and delegation exchanges have always been sort of the forefront of what we've intended to do," he said. "And so about every other year, Newtownabbey has visited Gilbert with a delegation, with the intent to build cultural, civic government and economic development ties here. We have benefited tremendously from them coming over to Gilbert."

For example, Henderson said the November 2019 delegation was particularly a success. Through these efforts, Antrim-Newtownabbey brought about six companies from their region into Gilbert. It provided a chance to showcase their cultural, educational and economic development ties.

"Through that modest delegation, we were able to attract a little more than a million but a little less than 2 million in booked sales. And that really created — through the number of meetings that we were able to set up — a lot of interest in those groups and others to go on a delegation over to Northern Ireland."

Henderson added the results were so impressive that they wanted to make them known to business leaders and stakeholders in the greater Phoenix Metropolitan area. He noted there are a number of communities in the metropolitan area that also have Sister Cities in Ireland in general, not just Northern Ireland.

"And so the event came about with a number of partners, notably the Arizona Commerce Authority, the Greater Phoenix Economic Council and the Gilbert Sister Cities organization," he said. "We were able to leverage our partnerships in other communities here in the East Valley like Chandler, Ariz., and beyond."

Henderson said the response to the seminar was positive and his colleagues were pleased with the outcome. The end result was that it piqued interest in expanding ties in Northern Ireland. In his words, "The intent of the International Trade Center seminar was to inform first and foremost, but also secondarily to identify businesses that could benefit from developing their FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) strategies and create trade relationships between Gilbert and our Sister City."



About 20 people attended Gilbert, Ariz.'s, International Trade Seminar. They represented industries like financial services, real estate, logistics/transportation and construction. (Photo provided)

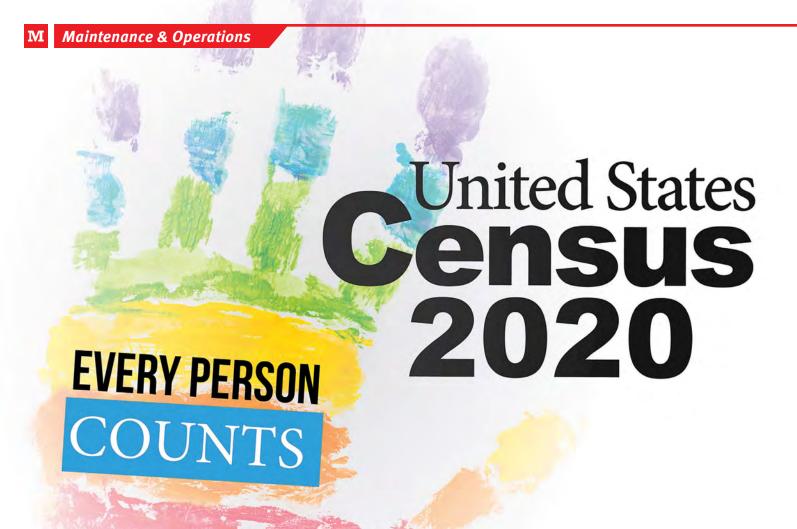
According to Henderson, this progress is not achieved in a vacuum, but through partnerships.

"When we focus our efforts on establishing relationships, we can have a meaningful impact in increasing FDI and enhance policies that promote, you know, bilateral trade and a pro-business environment that brings together innovative companies from around the world," he said.

International trade and FDI play an essential role in ensuring economic growth and prosperity, creating highly compensated jobs, spurring innovation and driving exports. That all comes to pass through connecting decision-makers with the right resources to translate their vision into reality.

"Sometimes that means creating a global perspective and helping businesses within your jurisdiction understand what international expansion looks like," he said. "Helping businesses with their needs is paramount, whether it's site selection, analysis, supply chain analysis, etc. We must know how to add value to those companies in our communities."

So what's next? As part of that relationship, Henderson said Gilbert will be holding a trade and investment mission to the United Kingdom in the spring that businesses can join. His understanding is that elected leadership and civic groups will focus on governmental and educational ties. The intent is to "open the door" to mutual economic development partnerships as well.



## Cities nationwide prepare for 2020 census

By AMANDA DEMSTER | The Municipal

The 2020 United States census has begun, and with billions of dollars of federal funding on the line, cities across the country are working hard to ensure a complete count.

For the first time, residents will have the chance to fill out the census online. This presents both opportunities and challenges, and the task of making sure everyone participates largely falls to local communities.

Cities throughout the U.S. have formed Complete Count Committees, which are as varied as the communities they represent.

The Opelika, Ala., Complete Count Committee is divided into three subcommittees: business, faith-based organizations and community-based organizations.

"It is anybody in the community who has enough outreach to be able to reach the hard-to-reach areas," Opelika Community Relations Coordinator Taylor McAllister said. "We have people of every ethnicity and faith and age group."

In Opelika, the faith-based committee has been the most influential, especially when it comes to identifying and reaching out to the city's low-income population.

In Alexandria, Va., the Complete Count Committee began with three subcommittees: marketing and communications, schools and partnerships. Later, it became more streamlined, reorganizing into a committee at-large and a steering committee.

"The committee at-large is the brainstorming committee and the steering committee finalizes their decisions and keeps things cohesive," Neighborhood Planning and Community Development demographer Sierra Latham said.

When it comes to publicizing the census, Alexandria faces a unique challenge, with roughly 29% of its residents being born outside the U.S. The top four languages spoken there are English, Spanish, Arabic and Amharic, the latter of which is a language spoken in Eritrea and Ethiopia, Latham said.

Because of this, one of the Alexandria committee's top priorities has been making sure census literature and publicity are available in all four of these languages.

Colorful, eye-catching brochures containing the census and city logos have circulated, and a save-the-date flier was sent out last year, letting residents know the census was coming up.

"Fortunately, we work with a professional translation service, which has been really helpful," Latham said.

Opelika has a large Guatemalan population, McAllister said, so reaching out to Spanish-speaking residents has been crucial.

"We're really reaching out to ESL teachers in the schools," McAllister said. "We've found out teachers and nurses are the most trusted people in the community."

A difficulty, McAllister said, has been assuring residents, particularly noncitizens, that the census poses no threat to them.

"Making sure they know this information doesn't go to the police, it doesn't go to the FBI, just making sure they know their information is secure and protected," she said.

In light of the controversial citizenship question, other locations nationwide are experiencing similar difficulties.

"We just want to make sure they know their information is safe and secure and won't be used against them and they need to report the truth," California Complete Count External Affairs and Media Relations Assistant Deputy Director Diana Crofts-Pelayo said.

The citizenship question will not be included on the 2020 census, but many fear it will still affect the count.



California has invested \$187 million toward reaching its hardest to count residents. (Shutterstock.com)



Alexandria, Va., has prioritized making census literature and publicity available in the four main languages spoken in the city — English, Spanish, Arabic and Amharic. (Shutterstock.com)

"Folks say the damage has already been done regardless of whether it's on the questionnaire," Latham said.

California faces another type of challenge in that its topography is so varied.

"We have snowy mountains all the way to deserts to very urban areas to farmland, and those strategies that one region takes are very different from another region," Crofts-Pelayo said. "Sometimes door-to-door marketing and canvassing doesn't work so well in the Sierras, where it's snowy and the houses are miles apart, but we

know that door knocking works really well in the urban areas."

With so many residents living in remote areas, the state has focused a significant amount of its census efforts on its hard-to-count population.

"California has invested \$187 million toward reaching out to the hardest to count residents," Crofts-Pelayo said. "This is a historic effort. It's never been done (online) and we've never invested this amount of money."



Accurate population figures are essential for cities, especially should they need FEMA funding. (Dee Dalasio/Shutterstock.com)

In Alexandria, schools and community organizations have been instrumental in getting the word out about the census.

"Community-based organizations are really the trusted voices in the community," Latham said.

Alexandria has worked to portray the census as friendly and nonthreatening, with the hope that more of its residents would respond.

"We shied away from words like 'required,' even though it is required and it's the law," Latham said. "But people tend to respond better to positive reinforcement and the idea that they're getting something out of something, as opposed to fearing a punitive measure."

Opelika has made a promotional video featuring local people simply saying, "I count."

"It's showing everyone counts, everyone matters and we're counting on them to be able to get this funding," McAllister said.

All of this is important because, if a community's population is undercounted, that community could miss out on important federal funding.

"In Alabama, as a whole, there's \$13 million of government funds that are on the line, so realizing that pothole, that health care center, that school lunch, that comes from federal funding," McAllister



Opelika, Ala., is striving to bring the census to hard-to-reach areas, with its Complete Count Committee's faith-based organizations proving to be influential with this task. (JNix/Shutterstock.com)

said. "So, we're showing people that this really does matter to their everyday lives."

As an example, in March 2019, tornadoes flattened parts of Alabama. Federal funding was a major help in getting those communities back on their feet.

"Something super important is that, for FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) funding, they look at statistics," McAllister said. "People need to understand that through the census, we have one time every 10 years to count everyone in our area, so that FEMA funding would be lower if not everybody is counted."

The same message echoes in every town and city across the U.S.

"It's how every single person in our community gets the representation and resources they deserve," Latham said.

Taking advantage of the new online format, cities across the country are setting aside Census Questionnaire Centers, where residents can go in person to fill out their online census forms.

Many of these are set up inside libraries, senior centers and community centers. In Alexandria, possible locations include apartment building lobbies, as renters tend to be undercounted. In Opelika, additional locations could include the municipal court and schools.

These locations provide kiosks, tablets or computers and secure wifi connections. Staff members have been trained to assist with the census questionnaire; however, they are not allowed to fill it out for anybody.

Crofts-Pelayo emphasized the importance of local entities remaining active in reaching out to residents about the census.

"We know that our local communities are going to know their neighborhoods and their populations the best," she said. "And that is why we have been invested in local communities to ensure they do specific messaging and specific designs or outreach activities that will actually serve and bring out and educate their local populations."





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For a complete list of all upcoming events, visit **themunicipal.com/events**.

To list your upcoming conference or seminar in The Municipal at no charge, call **(800) 733-4111**, **ext. 2307**, or email the information to **swright@the-papers.com**.

#### **APRIL**

#### **April 5-9 NASTT No-Dig Show**

Denver, Colo.

www.nodigshow.com

#### April 6-8 NAFA Institute & Expo

Indianapolis, Ind. www.nafa.org

#### April 8-10 New England Parking Council Annual Conference and Tradeshow

Seaport Hotel & WTC, Boston, Mass.

https://
newenglandparkingcouncil.
org/events

#### April 14-17 AASHTO 2020 GIS-T Symposium

Hyatt Regency Minneapolis, Minneapolis, Minneapolis, Minn.

https://gis-t.transportation.org/

#### April 19-21 Fire Department Training Network Live-Fire Training Camp

Indianapolis, Ind. www.fdtraining.com

#### April 19-22 North American Snow Conference

Cleveland, Ohio <a href="https://snow.apwa.net">https://snow.apwa.net</a>

#### April 20-25 FDIC International 2020

Indianapolis, Ind. www.fdic.com

#### April 22-24 The Parking and Transportation Association of Georgia Annual Conference & Trade Show

Courtyard by Marriott Rome Boardwalk, Rome, Ga.

www.

parkingassociationofgeorgia. com/conference

#### April 29-30 National Fire and Emergency Services Symposium and Dinner

Washington, D.C. www.cfsi.org/2020-dinner/

#### April 27-May 1 Midwest Leadership Institute

Naperrville, Ill.

https://

midwestleadershipinstitute.org

#### **April 29-May 1 Navigator 2020**

Orlando, Fla.

https://navigator. emergencydispatch.org

#### April 30-May 1 Association of Fire Districts of the State of New York Annual Meeting and Conference

Long Island Marriott, Uniondale, N.Y.

www.afdsny.org/annual\_
meeting\_and\_conference.php

#### April 30-May 2 VOCS Symposium in the Spring

Embassy Suites Downtown,

Minneapolis, Minn. www.iafc.org/events/vcos

#### MAY

#### May 3-5 NYCOM Annual Meeting

Sagamore Hotel, Bolton Landing, N.Y.

www.nycom.org/training/ annual-convention

#### May 4-7 WasteExpo

Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans, La. www.wasteexpo.com

#### MAY

#### May 5-7 CityVision Annual Conference

Wilmington Convention Center, Wilmington, N.C. www.nclm.org

#### May 11-14 Advanced Clean Transportation Expo

Long Beach Convention Center, Long Beach, Calif. www.actexpo.com

#### May 15-17 Lancaster County Firemen's Association

Pennsylvania Farm Show & Expo Center, Harrisburg, Pa. www.lcfa.com

#### May 16-19 Alabama League of Municipalities Annual Convention

Tuscaloosa, Ala. www.alalm.org/ AnnualConvention.aspx

#### May 18-21 Government Fleet Expo & Conference (GFX)

Anaheim Convention Center,
Anaheim, Calif.
https://www.
governmentfleetexpo.com/

#### May 27-29 Fifth Annual North American Active Assailant Conference

Woodside Bible Church, 6600 Rochester Road, Troy, Mich. www.facebook.com/North-American-Active-AssailantConfe rence-2110431222523951/

#### **May 31-June 3 EUFMC 2020**

Williamsburg Lodge and Conference Center, Williamsburg, Va. eufmc.com

#### May 31-June 3 IPMI Conference & Expo

San Antonio, Texas www.parking-mobility.org/ ipmi-meetings-events/ipmiconference-expo/

#### May 31-June 3 Community Transportation Association of America Expo

Louisville, Ky. https://ctaa.org/expo/

#### May 31-June 4 CTAA Expo 2020

Louisville, Ky.

https://ctaa.org/expo/

#### JUNE

#### June 1-4 CleanPower Expo

Denver, Colo.

www.cleanpowerexpo.org

#### June 3-7 International Hazardous Materials Response Teams Conference

Hilton Baltimore, Baltimore, Md. https://www.iafc.org/events/ hazmat-conf

#### June 10-13 NYSAFC 114th Annual Conference & Fire 2020 Expo

The Oncenter, Syracuse, N.Y. https://www.nysfirechiefs.com/ fire2020

#### June 12-15 U.S. Conference of Mayors 88th Annual Meeting

Austin, Texas

www.usmayors.org/meetings

#### June 14-17 Prima 2020

#### **Conference**

Nashville, Tenn.

https://conference.primacentral.
org/



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#### Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans Electrifies Fleet with Plug-In Hybrid Pickups from XL Fleet

In order to advance its fleet electrification and emissions reduction goals, the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans has deployed six new XL plug-in hybrid electric Ford F-150 pickup trucks to its fleet. The trucks were unveiled during a ceremony at the SWBNO

Central Yard Jan. 28, which featured New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell, as well as representatives from SWBNO and project partners, including New Orleans Regional Planning Commission, Southeast Louisiana Clean Fuel Partnership and XL Fleet.

The F-150 pickups have been equipped with the XLP plug-in hybrid electric drive system, which has been proven to substantially improve fuel economy while reducing greenhouse gas emissions – helping New Orleans reduce climate change impacts and improve air quality while saving taxpayer money from decreased fuel and vehicle maintenance costs.

The project was funded via the New Orleans RPC's Clean Fuel Transition Fund for Public Fleets, managed by the Southeast Louisiana Clean Fuel Partnership. The fund was developed to help public fleets incorporate cleaner fuels and technologies into their operations.

For information about XL's fleet electrification technology, visit www.xlfleet.com or contact info@xlfleet.com.

#### Winners announced for NAFA's 2020 Fleet Excellence Awards

**PRINCETON, N.J.** — NAFA Fleet Management Association, the vehicle fleet industry's largest membership association, announced the winners for NAFA's 2020 Fleet Excellence Awards, the top honors in the fleet and mobility industry. They will be presented Tuesday, April 7, at

Ind., during NAFA's annual conference, the Institute & Expo.

The 2020 FLEXY winners are:

Excellence in Corporate/Private Fleet or Mobility Management

• Jerry Holman, Stonebrooke Equipment Inc.

the Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis,

- Steve Larsen, Ruan Transportation
- Chris Schaefer, Ohio Farmers Insurance Group Excellence in Public Fleet or Mobility Management
- George Hrichak, City of Chesapeake, Chesapeake, Va.
- Brad Salazar, Denver Department of Transportation and Infrastructure, Fleet Management Division, Denver, Colo.
- Bradley J Smith, Poudre Fire Authority, Fort Collins, Colo.

The FLEXYs shine a spotlight on those who have impacted fleet management in both the corporate and public fleet segments during the previous year. The awards' nomination process was open to all fleet professionals throughout the U.S. and Canada, regardless of NAFA Fleet Management Association membership status.

Additionally, the winners are invited to present at an I&E session outlining their best practices in fleet, where they can share ideas with other fleet professionals. The session is, "Walk with the Winners – FLEXY Award Finalists Share Their Secrets," on April 7.

NAFA thanks the finalists of the 2020 Fleet Excellence Awards for contributing their submissions, further showcasing the highest levels of fleet expertise in the industry.

Excellence in Public Fleet or Mobility Management

- Alex Alfonso, Miami Dade County
- Calvin Chambliss, City of Richmond Fleet Mgt.
- Kevin Fareri, Texas DoT
- Matthew Hansen, Vector Fleet Mgt/City of Fayetteville
- Christopher Melton, County of Ventura
- Riley Moore, UCLA Transportation
- Timothy Thompson, United States Air Force
- Craig Willingham, Chesterfield County Excellence in Corporate/Private Fleet or Mobility Management
- ATCO Group/Jason Allan
- John Dmochowsky, Mondelez
- Dina Kushaliyeva, Direct Energy
- · Alex May, Rollins
- Robert Nitrauer, Mettler-Toledo
- Kris Peterinelli, Jubilant Radio Pharmacies
- Jim Petrillo, FujiFilm

To register for the 2020 I&E, visit www.nafainstitute.org.

#### Air-tow Trailers: Extra large enclosed trailers

The E-16 XL is the largest enclosed trailer in the Air-tow line of ground-level loading trailers and comes preloaded with many fea-

tures. Like all Air-tow Trailers, the E-16 XL will lower flat to the ground for safe loading and unloading. A 10,000-pound capacity gives this trailer enough power to easily load and transport any type of equipment. It has a 75-inch deck width and a length of 15 feet 9 inches. The front end of the enclosure



extends beyond the deck and creates a 15-inch shelf that adds an extra 36 cubic feet to work with.

The extra storage space is easily accessible from inside and through a passenger side compartment door. The aerodynamic design of the front-end not only adds space, but reduces air resistance and increases gas mileage. This new design gives the E-16 XL a total of 838 cubic feet of storage space. Other standard features that set the E-16 XL apart include a self-locking rollup door; two LED interior lights; and a 3/8-inch plywood interior lining. This trailer is also very customizable with options for E-tracks, X-tracks, nose cone and many more accessories.

For information, visit airtow.com or call (800) 479-7975.

#### Sourcewell awards contracts in paint category

**STAPLES, MINN.** — Two nationally known vendors have been added to Sourcewell's diverse line of contract options and solutions through the "Paint and Related Supplies" category.

Contract Administrator Zach Heidmann said no matter the type of industry or organization, all Sourcewell members can likely agree that paint is critical in creating experiences. This category allows schools, nonprofits and government offices easy access to the supplies and services they need through vendors they can trust.

Following a competitive solicitation process, Sourcewell awarded these cooperative purchasing contracts:

#### PPG Architectural Finishes, Inc. | 121219-PPG\*

Architectural, commercial, and heavy duty paint products; paint, supplies, and equipment; wallcovering; low/no VOC products; product recommendations and specifications; on-site training; color matching; color tools and sundry support; project/job walk reporting; maintenance binder program.

#### Sherwin-Williams Company | 121219-SHW

Interior, exterior, floor, and commercial high-performance coatings; equipment and supplies; wood, deck, and siding stains; sealers and clear topcoats; primers; concrete and masonry products; aerosols; faux finishing.

\*Re-awarded vendor with new contract number

These contracts are now available to all Sourcewell members throughout the U.S. and Canada. Purchasers from public entities save time and money by streamlining the procurement process with cooperative purchasing.

#### Newly signed MOU creates exclusive partnership on cooperative procurement

In anticipation of March's National Procurement Month, a memorandum of understanding was signed between National Cooperative Procurement Partners and NIGP: The Institute for Public Procurement to collaborate and advocate the value of cooperative procurement.

With over 3,000 member agencies representing 16,200 professionals across the U.S., Canada and other countries, NIGP is North America's largest procurement association. NCPP is the premier Association for cooperative procurement, representing many of the largest cooperative organizations across the U.S. and Canada, with an inclusive membership of cooperatives, suppliers with cooperative contracts and public procurement professionals. In recognition of the growing adoption and dependence of cooperative contracts by government teams, the two professional associations have an expressed commitment to embrace the value and advancement of public service and trust through cooperative procurement.

Through this 3-year agreement, NCPP serves as a "Strategic Advisor" to NIGP, providing assistance on the formation, creation and/or design of cooperative procurement content offered by NIGP. Tammy Rimes, MPA, executive director of NCPP, stated, "We are enthusiastic about this opportunity to advise and provide stellar educational content to support both NIGP and NCPP members. We have begun early collaboration efforts to develop a first-time offered Cooperative Procurement TRACK for the 2020 FORUM conference in Chicago. Through our ongoing discussions with NIGP, we soon will take the next steps to cohost a new white paper on best practices in cooperative contracting to serve as a key resource for public procurement professionals."

#### Fifth annual North American Active Assailant Conference highlights lessons learned by lead public safety agencies

The North American Active Assailant Conference is intended for law enforcement, fire department, emergency medical services, corporate security, hospital and emergency management personnel and will provide firsthand collaborative debriefs of incidents involving mass violence from representatives of the lead public safety agencies involved. Presentations will also include information on what administrative and operational changes have been made in the aftermath of those tragedies.

This event—hosted at Woodside Bible Church, 6600 Rochester Road, Troy, Mich.—is being submitted to the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Bureau of Fire Services for use of approved funds as well as the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services for 24 hours of approved Emergency Medical Services continuing education.

Attendance will be limited to 3,000 and all participants will need to pre-register. Given the sensitive nature of the information being shared, attendance will be restricted to the aforementioned personnel; on-site registration will not be permitted; and credentials issued at check-in must be displayed at all times.

Conference organizers are also thrilled to report continued collaboration with the National Tactical Officers Association and National Patrol Rifle Competition. Specifically, optional NAAAC and NTOA pre-conferences will be offered Wednesday, May 27; the general conference follows over the following two days May 28-29; and the 21st annual NPRC is Saturday, May 30. Attendees may opt to attend a pre-conference, the general conference and/or the NPRC, but the competition involves a separate registration process. Breakfast and lunch will be provided during all pre-conferences and the general conference.

For additional information, contact Farmington Hills Fire Department Emergency Medical Services coordinator Jim Etzin at jetzin@fhgov.com or (248) 871-2807.

#### NRPA releases resource for creating equity-based system master plans

**ASHBURN, VA.**— The National Recreation and Park Association has unveiled Creating Equity-Based System Master Plans as a new

online tool to help park and recreation agencies create an action-oriented plans that are grounded in equity. When park and recreation master plans are



grounded in community engagement, equity and inclusion, they drive greater improvements in community health and well-being and help communities better recover from environmental, social and economic challenges.

Park and recreation professionals use the tool to develop a comprehensive document — or add to an existing document — outlining future development by following the four steps in Creating Equity-Based System Master Plans: internal assessment; community engagement; resources and data collection; and implementation.

To learn more about Creating Equity-Based System Master Plans, visit www.nrpa.org/parkmasterplanning.

Funding for this work is provided by The JPB Foundation. ■

News releases regarding personnel changes, other non-product-related company changes, association news and awards are printed as space allows. Priority will be given to advertisers and affiliates. Releases not printed in the magazine can be found online at **www.themunicipal.com**. Call

(800) 733-4111, ext. 2307, or email swright@the-papers.com.

#### The crisis facing EMS systems



Carl Moen | Guest columnist Executive Director, Southern Alleghenies EMS Council

"What Happens when Rural EMS Agencies Need to Be Rescued," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Feb. 18, 2020 (Pennsylvania)

"Rotarians Hear EMS Woes," Kossuth County Advance, Feb. 20, 2020 (Iowa)

"Crisis for EMS in Southern Part of Perry County," Perry County Tribune, Feb. 5, 2020 (Ohio)

"State Legislators Discuss Rural Ambulance Crisis," Fox16.com, Feb. 19, 2020 (Arkansas)

HESE ARE THE FIRST FOUR LINKS THAT APPEAR ON A GOOGLE search for news articles related to "EMS Crisis." Nearly every day, somewhere in America there is another article or report on emergency medical services facing financial, personnel and staffing or decreasing volunteerism. Legislators, community organizations and EMS agencies across the country are identifying that EMS is struggling and that there is a perceived EMS crisis, a crisis that may come to impact anyone who needs medical care, is involved in an accident or otherwise has need for an ambulance.

Modern EMS developed about 50 years ago with the publication of the National Academies of Science report "Accidental Death and Disability: The Neglected Disease of Modern Society" in 1966. This report looked primarily at the number of injuries and deaths that were occurring on the nation's roadways from vehicle crashes and prompted the development of emergency care from the funeral home provided ambulance services that offered little more than a quick ride to the hospital. The 1970s television show "Emergency" introduced America to the capabilities of paramedics and was a social driver of EMS system development. As EMS has developed over the years, it has become a system that offers advanced level skills, equipment and procedures that otherwise might only be found in emergency departments or intensive care units.

However, as EMS passes it's 50th birthday, the EMS system is under pressure from a variety of sources and faces significant change in the coming years. EMS agencies face financial pressure from increasing costs coupled with flat or decreasing reimbursement; difficulties in recruiting and retaining personnel to staff their ambulances; and decreasing volunteerism in rural areas, all coupled with an aging population and increasing numbers of calls.

For the first few decades, EMS agencies were able to be profitable and support their operations primarily on their receipts from billings. As insurance reimbursement has failed to keep pace with inflation and costs, especially for Medicare and Medicaid, which for



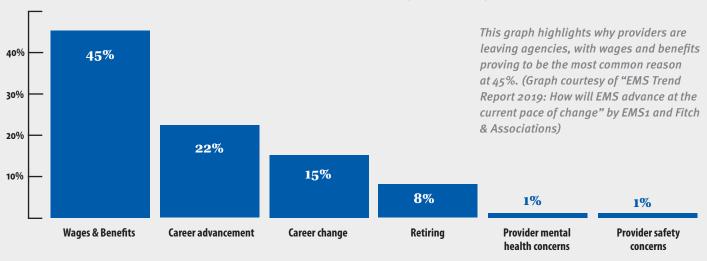
many agencies represents 70% or greater of their patient's insurance coverage, and increasing personal deductibles for private insurance, agencies are also being squeezed by increased costs for personnel, equipment and vehicles. EMS agencies may have a cost of \$650 per call yet are forced to accept payment from government-based insurers at pennies on the dollar, sometimes as little as \$150-200. With no ability to bill the patient for the outstanding balance, they lose money on most of their responses. If they are a 911 response agency, they have no choice but to respond and provide care regardless of the patient's ability to pay. Continuing financial losses can only be sustained for so long before something has to give.

As the care available to EMS patients has dramatically increased, so have the costs for equipment and vehicles. Ambulances can cost about \$250,000, excluding the heart monitor, stretcher, medications and other equipment that easily adds another \$100,000 or greater to the cost of providing care. In order to meet those costs, EMS more frequently turns to municipalities for help in meeting its costs. Municipalities may be able to provide support or assistance indirectly by providing fuel, repairs, workers compensation insurance or by providing tax funds to support and maintain their emergency response capabilities, although many are reticent to raise taxes, even to maintain an essential service.

EMS, like other public safety entities, also faces difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff. The providers that started in the early days are starting to age out of the field or leave due to injuries or mental health issues. Younger providers only remain in EMS for relatively short periods of time before they leave the field to pursue other public safety or health care positions.

In the EMS1.com and Fitch & Associates' 2019 EMS trends report, when a provider was asked whether they would recommend a career in EMS to their children, they replied, "Working in a 911 system will change you as a person. Once you do this job, it's hard to imagine doing anything else. The highs are incredible and rare. But the lows

#### What is the most common reason providers are leaving your agency?



are tough. There are so many jobs in the world that pay better, provide the same satisfaction, and don't affect your personal life like this job."

EMS workers face low pay, long hours and frequent exposure to critical events that negatively impact their family lives and mental health. A recent study from Washington University found that EMTs and paramedics are seven times more likely to have thought about suicide than the general public. Projects are underway to address the mental health impacts.

Many providers work at least two if not three or four EMS jobs to make ends meet. For the cost and time commitment of a paramedic training program, a provider can continue for a few months longer to receive a registered nurse or other health care provider license that pays better and has fewer hours, less risk and better working conditions.

In rural areas, where reliance on volunteer EMS agencies is high, the impact is becoming more pronounced. Rural areas are becoming older while younger people are moving to more suburban or urban areas for jobs and are not as apt to volunteer for their local community ambulance service or fire company. It is not unusual at a small rural agency to have a core of three to five people, many in their 60s or 70s, that comprise the active membership of the organization.

Volunteerism in all social areas is also decreasing due to multiincome families, family responsibilities and the decrease of shift work. When factories were operational and people worked shifts, there was always someone around to take a call. Now that most people in rural areas drive to work and are away during the day, agencies struggle to find responders for daylight emergencies. A recent incident near Erie, Pa., resulted in the dispatch of multiple agencies, none of which were available to respond before the patient was transported by private vehicle 50 minutes later. The cost of training, continuing education and the time commitment to both maintain certification and provide care are also barriers to rural EMS. In Pennsylvania, courses that used to cost \$75 are now \$750 to \$1,000 for EMTs due to changes in the funding models for community colleges. It requires a person with true dedication and resolve to overcome those barriers and agree to become a member of their local ambulance service.

We have hit a middle-aged slump and are struggling to find the combination of funding, training, recruitment and retention to allow EMS to continue in the coming decades. However, the EMS model needs to change to address the pressures the system faces. In five to 10 years, EMS will not look the same as it does today. It remains to be seen what the future holds. Agencies are already looking to become providers of community-based and preventive care medicine, that will provide additional career ladders, funding sources and opportunities to develop in areas that as of yet remain untouched.

EMS is a great career where you can immediately see the impact that you have on a person's life. It can be extremely rewarding. I have been there for the first breath of life and, unfortunately, also the last. It is truly the passion and dedication of those EMS providers who are out in the field every day that keeps the heartbeat of EMS going. They are the ones who will adapt and overcome, as EMS always does to move us forward into the future.

Carl Moen is the executive director of Southern Alleghenies EMS Council in Pennsylvania, a nonprofit organization that provides support and assistance to nearly 100 EMS agencies across a sixcounty area of south-central Pennsylvania. He has been involved in emergency medical services for 37 years and is a currently certified paramedic. He has a master's degree in public management (MPM) from Carnegie Mellon University.

To view the full "EMS Trend Report 2019: How will EMS advance at the current pace of change" report by EMS1 and Fitch & Associates, visit https://www.ems1.com/ems-trend-report/articles/2019-ems-trend-report-the-forces-shaping-the-future-of-ems-VojhR6acxEBtr9yB/

#### **M TOP 10**

#### Ten safest cities in America

Upon 2019's end, WalletHub released its annual list of the "Safest Cities in America." The website compared more than 180 cities across 41 key indicators of safety to create it. These indicators are across three key dimensions: 1) home and community safety, 2) natural disaster risk and 3) financial safety.

WalletHub used a wealth of data from several organizations, including the U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Parents of Megan's Law, The Pew Charitable Trusts, etc., to determine indicators from the number of assaults per capita, number of mass shootings and hate crimes per capita to unemployment rates, foreclosure rates and median credit scores.

Each metric was graded on a 100-point scale, with WalletHub then determining "each city's weighted average across all metrics to calculate its overall score and used the resulting scores to rank-order our sample." The sample size included the 150 most populated U.S. cities, plus at least two of the most populated cities in each state.

Those cracking the top 10 are the following cities: ™





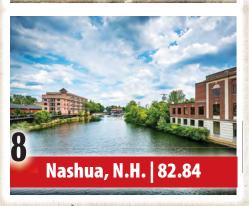


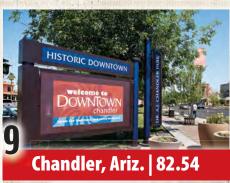


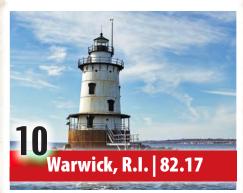




















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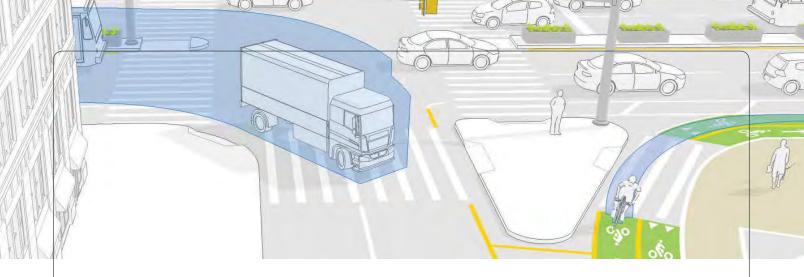
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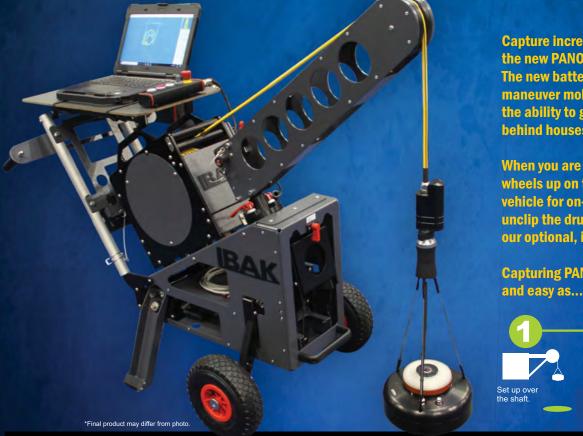
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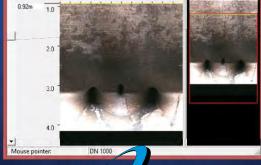


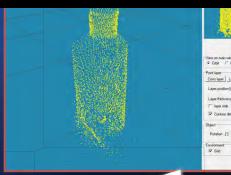
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