

# THE MUNICIPAL

The Premier Magazine For America's Municipalities

September 2019

## Storm Management

### INSIDE:

T2 Systems

Managing evacuations

Prepare for emergencies



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### ON THE COVER

With the ever-expanding use of curbs for a variety of services like ride-sharing, the need for tools and policies to better manage and allocate curbside usage has only grown. T2 Analytics tools provide municipalities with the tools to collect and understand curbside usage data. Learn more on page 10.





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## Meet The Feature Writer

**Lauren Caggiano** is a Fort Wayne-based writer, editor and certified personal trainer. A 2007 graduate of the University of Dayton with an education in journalism and French, she returned to northeast Indiana to pursue a career.



In the past 12 years, she has worked in the fields of journalism, public relations, marketing and digital media. She currently writes for several local, regional and national publications. In her spare time, she enjoys travel, thrift shopping, fitness, volunteering and the pursuit of vegan cuisine. She's married to her husband, Chris, of nearly three years.



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# Weathering life's disasters



Sarah Wright | Editor

**W**E ALWAYS LIKE TO THINK disasters won't happen to us, but they can and do. Local to me—but still distant enough to dull concern—the weather has been a bit more exciting this spring. A confirmed tornado caused destruction in the southern portion of my home county—Kosciusko County, Ind.—in May, and then in June, there were two tornados in somewhat-nearby South Bend, Ind. Thankfully, to my knowledge, there were no injuries related to either of these weather events. It could have been a lot worse since one of the South Bend tornados hit a preschool—after hours.

The lack of injuries and deaths really has to do with how quickly information is distributed to the public nowadays. Our local meteorologists go a step above to keep residents weather aware, utilizing not just air

time but Facebook and Facebook Live. When these storms hit and the conditions are right for twisters, I tune in, and if they say to shelter, I'm going to the basement. But not everyone is as grateful.

I could not believe the number of complaints these weather updates received because people's favorite TV shows were being preempted for potentially lifesaving news. I suppose there always has to be a few people in every bunch, and they are likely the same people who refuse to evacuate when the order comes, whether out of fear of losing their homes—though I don't know how they intend to combat a hurricane, tornado or massive wildfire—having their possessions stolen or because their sense of nothing bad will happen to "me" is just super strong.

On the other hand, others find themselves caught in circumstances beyond their control or have the decision made for them when conditions deteriorate far quicker than expected. No matter why they remain, municipalities are working to ensure their citizens are resilient and able to wait until help can safely arrive if they do find themselves remaining in the danger zone, as it were.

Featured in this issue, Cupertino, Calif., has taken citizen's resiliency seriously,

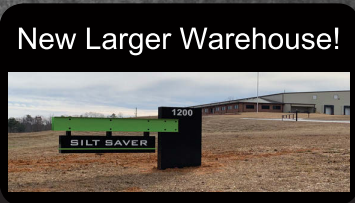
launching an emergency preparedness fair. This fair seeks to keep the community in the know when it comes to emergency operations while ensuring they know what supplies they might need in their homes. This is just one step this Californian city has taken.

Communication is another key component covered in Julie Young's article, "Get out: Managing evacuations in the event of an emergency." She relays the processes used by Santa Barbara County, Calif., and Bothell, Wash., to develop their plans and how both jurisdictions in the event of an emergency get the word out.

Additionally, we will be launching a two-part series with writer Denise Fedorow on managing donations and volunteers, spotlighting three cities between our September and October issues that experienced an outpouring of support in the face of disaster and how they managed the sudden influx. Finally in this storm management-themed issue, we will share how Texas has continued its recovery since Hurricane Harvey and the flood mitigation efforts Houston and Harris County are taking.

Until next month, stay safe everyone! **M**

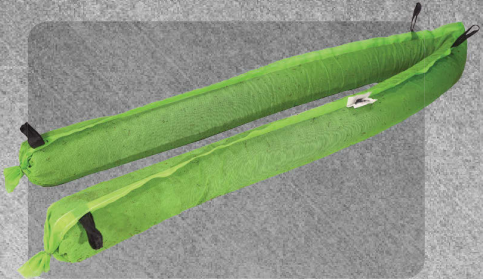




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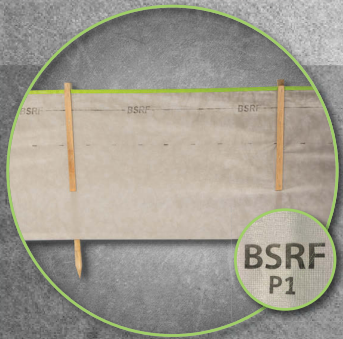
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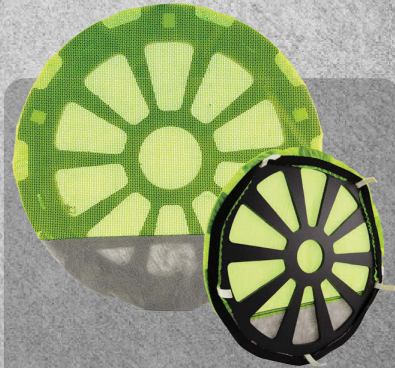
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# Leveraging your parking and curb assets

By MICHAEL DROW | Senior Vice President, Sales and Corporate Development, T2 Systems

**As recently as several years ago, managing the curb meant ensuring parking rules were followed, bus stops were clear for your mass transit system and delivery trucks were in the proper loading and unloading zone. A municipal agency only had to coordinate with the transit agency on bus schedules; decide on parking fees and times; and coordinate with the police or the parking enforcement to ensure the rules were followed.**

With the growth of ride-sharing services, bike-sharing, scooters, Amazon Prime delivery and food delivery services, among other things, the demand for the curb has exploded. In addition, many municipalities have been working to implement more sustainable alternative transportation options with the introduction of mass transit, bus lanes and bike lanes. This has created the need for tools and policies to better manage and allocate use of a valuable municipal asset — the curb.

Curbside management is the collection of operating concepts, techniques and practices that enable a municipality, university or any

other entity to effectively allocate the use of their curbs and other high demand areas to users. A typical curb management program will contain the following components:

- 1) Allocate use
- 2) Integrate fragmented data
- 3) Monitor use and enforce the curb
- 4) Report and analyze

This is where solution providers like T2 Systems excel and provide the tools and technology to allow a municipality to better manage and allocate the use of its valuable curb. T2 Systems has been delivering parking enforcement and management tools for over

25 years to over 1,500 North American clients. We are leveraging our expertise in monitoring and enforcement solutions to support municipalities as they implement their own curb management programs.

Through our T2 Flex solutions and monitoring technologies, municipalities are able to:

## **No. 1: Allocate use**

A curb management program first needs to allocate access to the various users. This is accomplished with the distribution of permits. A permit is not necessarily a physical credential; it is when a municipality grants access to a specific curb — or area — at a specific time of day for a specific use and collects a fee as appropriate. Sometimes this is done through a permit issuance process, such as selling a hangtag or virtual credential, or the allocation may be managed with an on-demand transaction capability, similar to a meter in an on-street operation or a parking reservation that a customer can purchase in advance of their needed use.



**LEFT:** Finding the right solutions can help municipalities effectively allocate the use of their curbs and other high demand areas to users, especially as demands grow. (Shutterstock.com)



The screenshot shows the T2Flex software interface. On the left, there's a sidebar with navigation options like 'Edit Customer', 'Set Allocation Group', 'Record NSF Check', etc. The main area displays customer information for 'Joe Smith', including his name, ID, and contact details. Below that, there are sections for 'Vehicles (1)' and 'Citations (1)'. The vehicle section shows a license plate 'CO-253NCK-MA' with an amount due of \$50.00. The citation section shows a citation for 'A70060038' issued on 4/24/2019 for 'Parked Over the Line' with an amount due of \$25.00.

**ABOVE:** A curb management program must allocate access to the various users, granting access to specific areas at a specific time of day for a specific use and collects a fee as appropriate — something T2 Flex accomplishes. (Photo provided)

The need to future-proof regulations is key, especially regarding how payments could be collected. For example, FedEx may have a permit to park in a loading zone, but it pays a fee for each curb interaction. This could be done in real time with a parking app, auto-billing through license plate recognition or directly from FedEx technology. Loading zones could be priced based on time of day or location.

As a municipality's curb program expands, it will migrate from static allocation methods to more dynamic ones, where a system is monitoring the current availability on the curb and demand for access from various users, and reallocates access to users to achieve the municipality's objectives. The rise of virtual credentials, license plate recognition systems, RFID capabilities and other means to identify users, along with electronic and mobile payments, will make it easier for a curb management program to allocate access to the curb on a variable basis.

### No. 2: Integrating fragmented data

A curb management program needs the ability to share data with its users to communicate status of activity — i.e., delivery truck location and status, Uber/Lyft driver activity, mobile payment activity, etc. — share information about changes to the curb — i.e. construction — and confirm access permissions. In addition to the users, there will be many third-party partners with data that is valuable to managing the curb program, such as weather, construction status, mass transit real-time status and traffic flow information. This type of information will allow a curb management program to optimize and adjust its allocation of access to the users based on changing conditions.

T2 has built its solution on the premise that sharing data between systems is critical to properly managing an operation. Our solutions and solution partners integrate hundreds of relevant data sources and partners.



**LEFT:** T2 Analytics enables municipalities to track and analyze their data, such as the number of citations issued, citations issued growth, total citation amount issued and more. (Photo provided)

### No. 3: Monitor use and enforce the curb

The well-known management axiom “what gets measured gets managed” holds true for curb management programs as well.

Once a curb management program has allocated access to various users, it needs to monitor activity to ensure the program is operating effectively and rules are enforced. T2 has multiple technology partners to monitor activity, including license plate recognition systems, AVI readers, barcode scanners, video analytic solutions and more. We have the ability to identify the appropriate technology to implement in order to monitor your operations. Our enforcement tools have been in use for over 25 years to issue citations, ensuring that users are not abusing the use of your asset. Our solutions include tools that allow a municipality to see where violations are actively occurring and decide if a physical or electronic citation or warning should be issued. We also have an in-house citations department to manage the collection of your citations.

### No. 4: Report and analyze the data

As parking and mobility professionals know, the amount of data available to manage an operation is growing in leaps and bounds. The biggest challenge is being able to collect the data, analyze the data and make decisions from it that improve operational performance. An effective curb management program requires the ability to collect data from many different sources, not all of which are in the control of the parking and mobility professional. Our T2 Analytics tools provide you with the capability to understand your data and answer the questions you have versus relying on a standard report.

In summary, when developing a curb management program to manage a street face, a hotel driveway, an airport garage or roadway, an event site or even a downtown parking facility, municipalities should implement tools to allocate access, monitor use, collect fees and enforce the program, then look at the data and results and adjust to achieve the curb management program's objectives.



# Cog Railway



By RAY BALOGH | The Municipal

**It is the rare and special dreamer who can scan the choppy waters of a mile-long strait in San Francisco and say, “We can build a bridge over that.”**

Or to peer at a mountain range and envision an asphalt ribbon taking millions of travelers over, through and around those formidable obstacles.

Sylvester Marsh was that kind of dreamer. In 1852, while scaling Mount Washington, the highest peak in the northeast United States, he committed himself to building a railway to ascend the 6,288-foot mountain.

His idea, like so many other inventive breakthroughs in engineering, was met with derision. But elbowing through the wall of ridicule and castigation, Marsh invested \$5,000 of his own money to build what P.T. Barnum would later dub “the second greatest show on earth.”

On June 25, 1858, Marsh, a retired businessman, obtained a charter for the path that replicated the mountain trail established by Ethan Allen Crawford, but the American Civil War intervened to scuttle any progress until May 1866, when Marsh developed a prototype locomotive with a short section of demonstration track to court investors.

The first paying customers boarded the original boiler train on Aug. 14, 1868, and more than 5 million passengers have followed their lead since then.

The 3-mile-long Mount Washington Cog Railway was the first of its kind built anywhere on the globe and ranks today as the second steepest railway in the world, with an average grade of more than 25% and maximum grade of 37.4%.

The cogs under the chassis of the trains — the present fleet consists of eight biodiesel and two steam engines — operate similar to bicycle sprockets and lock between the rungs of the “ladder” situated between the rails of the narrow gauge track to prevent slippage as the train propels forward. One 70-rider car is attached to each engine, and the passenger cars are often booked to capacity with reservations days ahead of departure.

At the summit, passengers can linger for an hour, visiting the Sherman Adams Visitor Center’s museum, post office and snack bar; and enjoying the breathtaking 360-degree vista of five surrounding states, Canada and the Atlantic Ocean.



*Trains reach the 6,288-foot summit of Mount Washington about an hour after they depart the base station 3 miles away. (Shutterstock.com)*



*The mechanical structure of the cog railway ensures the train does not slip backward during its ascent or lurch forward on the way back down the mountain. (Shutterstock.com)*



# Bretton Woods, N.H.



*The Mount Washington Cog Railway Base Station has accommodated the boarding and debarkation of more than 5 million riders since the first passengers ascended the mountain in 1868. (Shutterstock.com)*

The ascent and descent each take about an hour and are accompanied by narration about the history of the railway and features of the surrounding countryside.

The railway's current owners have made major enhancements to the enterprise in the past 20 years, including new switches, a passing loop and air ride coaches, according to Wayne Presby, president of the Mount Washington Railway Company. Projects in the near future include replacing all the steel rail; building an 18,000-square-foot maintenance facility; and restarting winter operations to transport hikers, snowshoers and skiers.

According to [www.thecog.com](http://www.thecog.com), riders are encouraged to arrive well ahead of departure time "for ticketing and restroom visits. There are no restrooms on the trains, but there are at the base station and the summit. We only hold reservations until 15 minutes before departure."

One-way tickets are not available for those who want to climb the mountain and ride back. "There is no guarantee a train will make it to the summit," says the website. "Inclement weather can happen at any time and occurs frequently. Always be prepared to hike back down just in case."

Tickets run \$72 to \$87 for adults, with different rates applying during the regular and peak seasons. Seniors receive a \$5 to \$6 discount, and children aged 4-12 can ride for \$41 to \$50. Trains depart hourly until as late as 4:30 p.m.

Peak periods include the Fourth of July and Labor Day holidays and late September through late October.

Smoking, alcohol, pets, strollers, car seats and coolers are prohibited on the trains. Service animals are allowed.

The railway is the signal attraction of Bretton Woods, an unincorporated area of indeterminate population within the town of Carroll, N.H. The area is surrounded by the White Mountain National Forest and is home to the iconic Mount Washington Hotel, the site of the 1944 United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference, which led to the establishment the following year of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

The area took its name from Bretton Hall, a country house granted to Sir Thomas Wentworth by King George III in 1772. The hall and 82



*The Mount Washington Hotel was the site of an international conference in 1944 that established the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. (Shutterstock.com)*

other buildings, accompanied by 24,640 acres of land, served as a plantation, which later became the town of Carroll.

The existing hotel and resort includes two golf courses, alpine and Nordic skiing, a 25,000-foot spa, sled and dog sled rides, tennis and horseback riding.

The Bretton Woods Mountain Resort ski area, located in nearby Bethlehem, is the largest in the state, boasting 101 trails. **M**

For more information, call (603) 278-5400 or visit [www.thecog.com](http://www.thecog.com) or [www.facebook.com/mountwashingtoncograilway](http://www.facebook.com/mountwashingtoncograilway).



# Renton, Wash.



A football, a fish and a jet plane in its city seal encapsulate the commercial history of Renton, Wash., an inner-ring suburb of Seattle.

The area was an important salmon fishing location for Native Americans long before Europeans settled the area. Coal mining and timber processing were prominent commercial assets during the settlement's beginning.

European settler Henry Tobin staked a claim on the Black River in 1853. His wife, Diana, and their baby, Charles, arrived from Maine in 1855. After Henry's death the following year, Diana and Charles moved to Seattle, where she met and married entrepreneur Erasmus Smithers, who owned a land claim south of the Tobins'.

Diana and Erasmus built and operated a thriving dairy farm. They platted the town of Renton on their excess acreage and started selling lots in 1875. They named the town, incorporated in 1901, after Captain William Renton, an early investor in the local coal mines.

Decade by decade, the city's fortunes rose and fell with the vicissitudes of the national economy.

1900s. The town, measuring 1 square mile with 1,176 residents, was sustained by coal mining and the Renton Clay Works, which produced 58 million paving bricks a year.

1910s. After a catastrophic 1911 flood, the town worked with King County to tame Cedar River, lower Lake Washington and eliminate the Black River.

1920s. Automobiles became commonplace and the first of many auto dealerships opened downtown. Asphalt replaced bricks on streets and roadways.

1930s. The population increased to 4,062, but the Great Depression pummeled the local economy, resulting in hobo camps along the railroad tracks. The repeal of Prohibition allowed saloons to reopen and Renton was promoted as a western frontier town.

1940s. During World War II, the Boeing Company came to town to produce B-29s, bringing \$4 million of federal money for housing and street improvements. The population quadrupled to 16,039.

1950s. Boeing switched production from war planes to the 707, making Renton the "birthplace of commercial jet aviation."

1960s. Renton opened a new library, city hall, civic center, historical society and its first shopping center.

1970s. Despite a severe recession, city leaders launched a new downtown improvement program.

1980s. Renton Community Center opened.

1990s. Renton progressed to a more balanced economy, embracing retail, manufacturing and distributing enterprises.

2000 to present. The city doubled from 50,052 to 104,100. The Seattle Seahawks NFL team located their training facility in Renton.

For more information, visit [www.rentonwa.gov](http://www.rentonwa.gov). 



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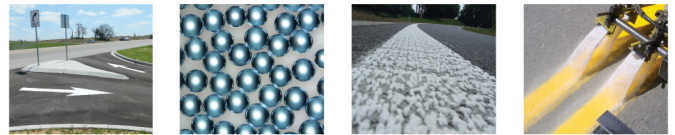
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Focus on:

# STORM MANAGEMENT

**\$125 billion**

Hurricane Harvey resulted in this amount of damage when it struck Houston and southeast Texas in August 2017



Read about Texas' recovery efforts and its flood mitigation planning on page 18.

**85 percent**



In the eastern U.S., extreme rainstorm events occurred 85 percent more often in 2017 than they did in 1950. In the western U.S., these storms are appearing 51 percent more often now than they once did.

[www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/08/190801120209.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/08/190801120209.htm)

**40 percent**

40%



60%

The percentage of Santa Barbara County, Calif., residents who speak Spanish. For this reason, the county created a translator to get emergency wireless alerts to more people.

More information is on page 22.

**3,000**

The estimate number of volunteers who came to the small community of Nappanee, Ind.'s, assistance when a EF3 tornado struck. A massive staging effort occurred at the local high school to put these volunteers to work.



The first part on the "Help" Series on the management of volunteers and donations is on page 26.

**Less than 10 percent**

In September, the National Weather Service will change its flash flood warnings to mention whether a threat is "considerable" or "catastrophic." Once this system is in place, flood warnings to cellphones nationwide will be cut back to only those in the considerable or catastrophic category in November. This will mean that less than 10 percent of the 12,000 flood warnings now issued every year will be sent to cellphones and local authorities.



Source: [www.washingtonpost.com/science/us-officials-to-make-disaster-warnings-faster-clearer-about-life-threatening-events/2019/07/12/dd750ae4-a258-11e9-bd56-eac6bbo2doid\\_story.html?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.a236f26acf4d](http://www.washingtonpost.com/science/us-officials-to-make-disaster-warnings-faster-clearer-about-life-threatening-events/2019/07/12/dd750ae4-a258-11e9-bd56-eac6bbo2doid_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.a236f26acf4d)

**\$615 million**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and New York state formed a project partnership agreement in February to secure funding for the construction of the Staten Island levee project. The project is estimated to cost \$615 million.



Source: [www.accuweather.com/en/weather-news/7-years-after-superstorm-sandy-615m-project-funded-to-guard-against-next-monster-storm/70008851](http://www.accuweather.com/en/weather-news/7-years-after-superstorm-sandy-615m-project-funded-to-guard-against-next-monster-storm/70008851)

**250 yards**

In July, three tornadoes struck the Mid- and Lower Cape of Massachusetts, one in Harwich, another in South Yarmouth and the final one in West Yarmouth. The Harwich twister left a swath of destruction as wide as 250 yards in places.



Source: [capecodchronicle.com/en/5431/chatham/4772/Storm-Prompts-Tense-Moments-And-A-Whirlwind-Cleanup-Effort-Storms.htm](http://capecodchronicle.com/en/5431/chatham/4772/Storm-Prompts-Tense-Moments-And-A-Whirlwind-Cleanup-Effort-Storms.htm)





In Texas, both Houston and Harris County have updated building regulations following Hurricane Harvey, which led to historic flooding. (Photo provided)

# Texas applies lessons from Harvey toward recovery and flood mitigation planning

By **BARB SIEMINSKI** | The Municipal

**In August 2017 a catastrophic Hurricane Harvey left his calling card with the good people of Houston and southeast Texas who hadn't invited him in the first place.**

The Category 4 high winds — 130 mph — and a slamming rainfall left a record \$125 billion in damage and at least 68 fatalities. Ultimately, it tied with Katrina as being the most expensive tropical cyclone recorded.

Susan Rogers, associate professor and director of the Community Design Resource Center within the Gerald D. Hines College of Architecture and Design at the University of Houston, is part of the study being done in this project, which will look into preparing for another such storm in the area. Her efforts have been shared by Rice University's Severe Storm Prediction, Education and Evacuation Disasters — or SSPEED — Center and other local institutions in an effort to mitigate future floods in the area.

"Our work is research funded through the Greater Flood Mitigation Consortium in the hopes that it will inform

the processes that are put in place by both the city and county and, in some areas, the state and federal agencies," said Rogers.

"We are currently working on resiliency plans for four neighborhoods that are part of a larger Greens Bayou Watershed Analysis and Resiliency Planning Study, which will be complete in September, and we hope that the plans will influence the city of Houston's current effort to develop a citywide resiliency plan," said Rogers, adding this was being led by Marissa Aho, the city's chief resiliency officer in the mayor's office.

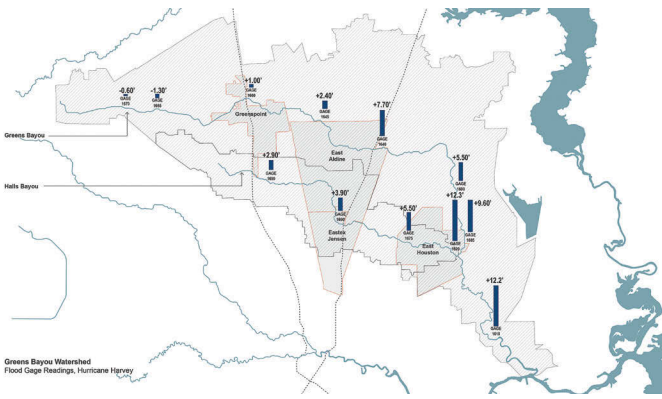
The Greens Bayou Watershed Resiliency Planning Study pinpoints four Houston neighborhoods, including East Aldine, East Houston, Eastex-Jensen and Greenspoint.

Funds for cleanup and rebuilding that are still being sought include Federal Emergency Management Agency,



*Susan Rogers, associate professor and director of the Community Design Resource Center at the University of Houston*





*This map of Greens Bayou Watershed highlights the flood gauge readings from Hurricane Harvey. (Photo provided)*

as well as state and local government monies and even private donations — all more than a year and a half after the disaster.

“I would note that the Flood Infrastructure Fund did pass the Texas Senate and was signed into law by the governor, with \$1.7 billion earmarked — smaller than the \$3 billion others were asking for,” said Rogers, referring to “Legislation with \$1.7 billion for flood control and mitigation projects goes to governor,” a Texas Tribute article published May 26, 2019.

“What that will mean long term is unclear. This is three separate bills, at least according to the Texas Tribute: SB 7 and HJR 4, which both passed and were signed. The third was not passed, according to the Texas Tribute, which says, “The Senate agreed Friday to House amendments to SB 8. Designed to be similar in format to the water development board’s state water plan, the state flood plan would give representatives from each of the state flood planning regions the ability to craft a plan and submit it to the board for consideration in a master plan.”

For most people on the ground, recovery dollars have been slow to arrive, according to Rogers, who added, “I think if you look at the actual dollars sent to recover from Harvey from the federal government, in terms of federal appropriations, it is much lower and much slower than those sent to the victims of Superstorm Sandy.”

The group has had two workshops, and Harris County representatives have been present at each, with the county, under Judge Lina Hidalgo, making many efforts to ensure money is planned for and spent wisely.

“But we have massive unmet and new needs in terms of flood infrastructure but also more simple needs, for example, for better floodplain maps,” Rogers pointed out. “Particularly with the release of Atlas 14 rainfall data, which has increased the 24-hour rainfall for a 100-year storm in most of Houston from 13 inches to 18 inches.

Both Houston and Harris County updated building regulations following Harvey. In July, the county adopted even more stringent building regulations, and Houston is negotiating a second round of tougher building regulations in floodplains. Houston introduced new floodplain development regulations that went into effect Sept. 1, 2018 — which increased the need to elevate structures in both the 100-year and 500-year floodplains. Roughly half of all homes flooded in Harris County, however, were outside of mapped flood risk areas,

so this is not simply a problem of building in the wrong place. The county had the misfortune of receiving 47 inches of rain in four days, and according to Rogers, normally only 19 inches is devastating. The county regulations adopted a couple of weeks ago, which went into effect immediately, are represented in the graphic below:

Regulation Category	Pre-2018 Standards	2018 Standards	Proposed Standards effective July 9, 2019
Property within the 100-Year Floodplain Finished Floor	18" above base flood elevation (BFE)	24" Above 500-yr storm elevation	No change
Property within the 500-Year Floodplain Finished Floor	N/A	At 500-yr storm elevation	No change
Min. Detention Required	0.55 per acre	0.55 per acre	0.65 per acre
Mitigation Required	1:1 in 100-yr floodplain	1:1 to 100-yr floodplain	1:1 to 500-yr floodplain or below 500-yr storm elevation
Storm Sewer Calculations	Based on TP40	Based on TP40	Based on Atlas 14; 10% increase 2-yr and 22% increase 100-yr

Harris County is working on a number of big projects; this includes the Modeling, Assessment and Awareness Project — or MAAP-next — that is currently working to remap the floodplains within Harris County using Atlas 14 rainfall data on a watershed-wide basis. In addition to floodplain remapping, the county is also creating urban flooding maps, probabilistic flood grids and a number of “nonregulatory” products that will be useful in communicating flood risk to the public.

“Greens Bayou is one of the Phase I watersheds currently under study and the whole project should be completed and ready to send to FEMA for review by the end of 2021,” said Rogers.

Harris County has an extremely robust emergency preparedness and response plan that utilizes local, regional and state partners, including a large proportion of the 17,000 county employees who are trained to respond in the case of a disaster, according to Danielle Lemelle, executive director of the Harris County Community Services Department.

“Multiple meetings occur throughout the year, including regular meetings of all 34 Harris County cities to coordinate and discuss preparedness, response and other related work,” said Lemelle, who noted the Harris County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management — or HCOHSEM — handles these meetings.

Rogers volunteered some additional information about Hurricane Harvey: It released the largest amount of rainfall ever recorded and resulted in one of the most damaging flood events in U.S. history. It dropped between 36 and 52 inches along the Texas coast over five days, exceeding all rainfall records with up to 20 inches in a day. Most bayous during Harvey were upward of 10 feet over bank and flooded an estimated 205,000 homes in Harris County alone.

The Greens Bayou Watershed Resiliency Planning Study aims to be a model for comprehensive flood management by incorporating state-of-the-art methodologies for flood hazard modeling, investigating green infrastructure mitigation options, evaluating flood impacts on infrastructure — in the form of roads and railroads — and by prioritizing equity, community engagement and collaboration. ▶



Given the above issues, said Rogers, Greens and Halls bayous are studied here in detail, including an analysis of the impacts of Hurricane Harvey, an evaluation of the floodplain; flood claims and land use; and an investigation of proposed flood mitigation projects as well as additional projects identified through the study. The goal is to generate resiliency strategies that work across scales, from the watershed to the neighborhood, to the home and family. The project is interdisciplinary and led by the SSPEED Center, University of Houston's Community Design Resource Center and the Kinder Institute for Urban Research.

Cory Stottlemeyer, the Office of Emergency Management's public information officer, shared the following:

"City of Houston departments are required to have an established and maintained viable continuity of operations capability that ensures performance and sustainment of essential functions during an emergency or disaster situation that disrupts normal operations."

A viable COOP plan identifies essential business functions, records and database support systems as well as lines of succession, delegations of authority, call lists and alternate worksite options to ensure the continuity of important city operations. The Office of Emergency Management, by nature, is well-versed in emergency and continuity planning processes.

"Additionally, the department frequently participates in drills and exercises to ensure operational readiness," said Stottlemeyer. "Systems and equipment, which support the department's essential functions, are regularly tested and maintained at readiness levels.

"OEM works to help residents prepare but also serves as the coordinator of the city's disaster response. Working with the resources of the city, OEM ensures city departments collaborate to manage the emergency and, through a variety of plans and agreements, brings in outside help to restore basic services, helping Houston get back to business."

According to Stottlemeyer, these bullet points are carried through to help restore basic services:

- During an actual or approaching tropical system, the city's emergency operations center, located at the Houston Emergency Center, will be activated in accordance with the emergency management plan. City departments, emergency relief organizations, utility companies and other essential organizations, as required by the situation, may staff the EOC.



Residents pile ruined furniture outside of their homes after Hurricane Harvey hit in August 2017. (Photo provided)

- Activation and mobilization of the city's emergency services and support functions will occur prior to a storm effect. The emergency management coordinator will initiate and monitor the increased readiness actions of the city and coordinate with the Texas Division of Emergency Management by way of the Department of Public Safety, disaster district committee chairperson and through state conference calls.
- Based upon recommendations from the EMC, the mayor may declare a local state of disaster prior to the storm making impact to facilitate the city's response efforts. Prompt and effective emergency response may require mutual aid from other political subdivisions in addition to state and federal assistance.
- If the magnitude of the damage is sufficient and a presidential declaration is issued, federal disaster assistance programs will be implemented to help meet the needs of the citizens affected.

And finally, in the almost two years since Harvey, Houston has passed regulations requiring new construction to be elevated 2 feet above the 500-year flood plain. Houston has also made efforts to increase the amount of emergency response equipment and assets available to respond in emergencies. This hurricane season, it will have a new water strike team, consisting of 80 members — 20 per shift. They are responsible for swift water rescue, advanced boat ops, Wave-Runner ops and high-water vehicle operation.

The city's long-term recovery efforts are focused on working with the federal, state and local agencies with resiliency in mind to advance housing repair and reconstruction programs as well as infrastructure improvements for flood risk mitigation. **M**

## On the Web

For more information, see these two documents that were completed by the Greater Houston Flood Mitigation Consortium: "Drainage and Detention Regulations," [www.houstonconsortium.com/graphics/190410\\_Detention\\_and\\_Drainage\\_Regulation.pdf](http://www.houstonconsortium.com/graphics/190410_Detention_and_Drainage_Regulation.pdf), and "Development Regulations," [www.houstonconsortium.com/graphics/190410\\_Development\\_Regulations.pdf](http://www.houstonconsortium.com/graphics/190410_Development_Regulations.pdf).





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# Get out:

## *Managing evacuations in the event of an emergency*

By JULIE YOUNG | The Municipal

**When disaster strikes, or is on the way, communities have a small window of opportunity to notify the public of impending peril and encourage them to “get out of Dodge” before it’s too late. In order to provide critical information to residents in a timely fashion and coordinate evacuation efforts, emergency management personnel must put together a plan that meets the needs of their residents and is based on the best practices available to them.**

### **Know your residents**

Robert Lewin is the former emergency management director for Santa Barbara County, Calif., who now helps communities create their emergency management plans through his private practice. He said the most important

things for municipalities to consider when developing their programs are the types of events that are most likely to occur, which residents will be most adversely affected by those events and a willingness to revise the system as new information comes to light.

**ABOVE:** When fires forced Bothell, Wash., residents to evacuate, it was important to officials that they be given clear directives of what was going to happen and how the city would coordinate the effort. (Photo provided)

When the Thomas Fire broke out in late 2017 and burned for three weeks, Lewin said residents throughout the county were given the order to evacuate immediately. The message was intended for the area north of the city of Carpinteria, but the wrong box was checked and it took nearly 30 minutes for the message to be clarified.

“One of the problems is that the emergency wireless alert (EMA) is limited to 90 characters, and for a while, our messages only went





*Flooding can leave citizens who chose to remain rather than evacuate during a disaster situation stranded.  
(Photo provided)*

out in English; however, 40 percent of our community members speak Spanish so we had to create a translator that would help us get the word out in Spanish as well.”

In order to improve communication with the population, the county created [readysbc.org](http://readysbc.org) to help residents prepare for and react to adverse conditions and to receive information as it becomes available. The site also helps citizens understand the terminology used in the event of an emergency and respond appropriately.

“I have coordinated evacuations in seven counties within California and one of the biggest frustration is that there is not a standardized way to execute one,” Lewin said. “In Santa Barbara County, we have adopted a ‘Ready, Set, Go’ model that is used in other areas of the country to help residents prepare up to the moment of evacuation.”

The “Ready” phase can occur from 48-72 hours prior to a storm during weather advisory announcement. It encourages folks to make their plans, gather what they need and prepare their home in the event of an evacuation. During the “Set” phase — 24-48 hours prior to the storm — the Santa Barbara Sheriff’s Office announces that there is a possibility for evacuation and that residents should arrange their transportation, confirm their plans, pack what they need and be ready to leave at a moment’s notice. Officials should also ensure that additional precautions are taken for those who may have access or

functional needs or those with large animals who may need to find temporary shelter for them during the storm.

During the “Go” phase — 24 hours prior to a storm — an evacuation order has been announced and the authorities expect residents

to leave. Those who refuse to comply with the order may not be forcibly removed from their home, but they should not expect rescue or lifesaving assistance once the storm hits. If a flooding or debris flow

occurs, residents may be stranded for several days; however, if they had left when authorities told them to, they would have been notified when it was safe to return to their residences.

“Folks can sign up for these alerts at [readysbc.org](http://readysbc.org) or by texting their zip code to 888-777,” Lewin said.

### **Expect the unexpected**

Jennifer Warmke, emergency preparedness director for the city of Bothell, Wash., said she incorporates the lessons of the past and works with the leaders of the present to mitigate any future problems.

“We take a comprehensive approach and involve everyone we need to in order to put our plan together,” she said. “It’s not something that can happen in a bubble.”

When fires broke out in 2015 and forced her community to evacuate, it was important to give residents a clear directive of what was going to happen and how the city would coordinate the effort. ▶

***“Above all, officials must have a plan for recovery.”***



Naturally, citizens don't want to relocate to a super dome or other large, impersonal facility, but sometimes, it is unavoidable and they want to know what to expect when they arrive. Will there be cots? Blankets? Adequate toilet facilities? How many other communities may decide to use the same location? Is it big enough to handle the influx of people or should additional locations be scouted? The more city officials work with community leaders in other areas and tap into available resources, the more likely they are to stay ahead of disaster.

"It is already a stressful situation, but when you can take some of the stress out, it makes everything a little easier," she said. "But no matter how much we do, there is always going to be a huge population out there that won't leave, and unfortunately, we are not going to be able to help everyone immediately. The best thing we can do is to encourage them to have their disaster kit ready, have a plan and leave while they still can."

Above all, officials must have a plan for recovery. In order to get people to leave their home when an evacuation order is issued, community leaders cannot leave them stranded for long. Residents want to know when they can return and get on with the business of surviving.

"The sooner you can get them back to normal, or as normal as possible, the better off you will be," Warmke said. "Parents have to work, and in order for them to do that, kids have to go to school. You have to think about what services you are going to bring up sooner rather than later so that the community can get back on track." **M**



*There will also be those who refuse evacuation. It is important to stress the need for a disaster kit with individuals choosing to stay since conditions may prevent first responders from reaching them. (Photo provided)*



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## Part I:

# Handling resources during recovery

By DENISE FEDOROW | The Municipal

**When disaster hits a community and an SOS call goes out, generally the problem is not a lack of response but rather an overwhelming response of volunteers and donations. For mayors and other city officials trying to put their communities back together again, it can create a different set of problems.**

According to Brett Kriger, deputy director of disaster recovery for the Louisiana Municipal Association, “Donations are one of the biggest problems when a major disaster gets attention all over the country with all the individuals and corporations who want to help. It was a major concern during Hurricane Andrew.”

Kriger said the resources that pour into a disaster area come in three forms: people, money and “stuff” from fellow Americans who knowing that people lost belongings want to send replacements.

“Hopefully, from the time the truckload leaves, you know what’s on it, have a place to park it, security for it and can get it unloaded and sorted,” Kriger said.

In Louisiana it starts at the state’s border with a check-in at the weigh station where the truck will stay if officials don’t know what’s in it. On the other hand, at the municipal level, residents need stuff but things work out best when officials make known what is needed.

When goods are received as donations, Kriger said, “You’ve basically become a Walmart so how are you going to set up this retail operation? Are you going to limit hours? Who is going to provide security?”

Sometimes the items received are valuable, and during Hurricane Andrew, a truckload of canned shrimp disappeared. He said mayors need to determine where goods that can’t be used will go and ensure that everything is recorded so people and organizations can be thanked.

In one situation, a corporation wanted to send three truckloads of goods, and Kriger told it the ongoing recovery efforts really needed money. The officials at the corporation sent money but explained it was important for its employees to be able to go to the store, select something and load it into trucks for photos. Kriger understood and recovery officials also took photos when the goods were received.

“It created tremendous goodwill for everyone — anything you can do to create goodwill during a disaster is a good thing,” he said.

He advised that mayors be aware of nearby charitable organizations and the resources they may be able to provide. He said there should be memorandums of understanding ahead of time with such organizations. City officials need to be prepared to be self-sufficient for 72 hours before the Federal Emergency Management Agency and other aid organizations arrive. Residents will need to be fed and have



a place to stay, which can be difficult because victims need those hotel rooms.

He said more important than having a plan is knowing what the plan is, practicing the plan and tracking everything in order to be reimbursed by FEMA.

Over the course of this two-part series, three cities that know the benefits of planning and utilizing resources will be highlighted. Through their efforts, Nappanee, Ind.; Dardanelle, Ark.; and Denham Springs, La., managed to weather the disasters that struck them and come out stronger on the other side. The Municipal will be starting the series with Nappanee.

### **A community pulls together**

At about 10:13 p.m. Oct. 18, 2007, the northern Indiana city of Nappanee was hit by an EF3 tornado with winds estimated up to 165 mph.

Former Mayor Larry Thompson recalled storm watch volunteers were in place “as they had been many times, and when the actual event was a few miles away, we engaged the tornado warning system — the first time in 11 years we engaged it for an actual event.”

Between the city’s warning system and local meteorologists warnings, despite the devastation, there were no fatalities and only minor injuries. Several years prior to that event, city officials had developed an emergency management plan and part of the plan was tornado preparation, with Thompson commenting, “Everybody followed the plan.”

Leaders of every department in the city were all in the command center, which was at the time the 911 dispatch center, so the city had total control of communications.

“Surrounding cities were not affected so we were able to pretty quickly engage our mutual aid agreements,” he said, adding that they had about 25 ambulances at Nappanee’s service but only transported one person to the hospital.

“We had to go check and double check, and at daylight, we checked again to make sure we didn’t miss anyone in homes and businesses,” Thompson said.

The emergency services staged at the middle school and spread out to seven areas to do that checking. The next morning was a Friday and officials discovered the tornado was 20 miles long, and aside from three sections of the city that were hit, a lot of farms and Amish properties were affected. Thompson shared the governor called and said he wanted to come but his daughter was getting married, and Thompson told him he didn’t need politics, he needed help. That help arrived via an army of state highway manpower and equipment parked at his family’s funeral home business.

“We had so many people calling wanting to help so we made Sunday volunteer day,” he said.

Nappanee is a pretty church-based community, but several pastors told him they were canceling services and instead encouraging their congregations to volunteer. Traffic was backed up for over 10 miles that day from people showing up. Thompson said they used the high school parking lot, where school superintendents, pastors and city employees organized the volunteers. They utilized every school bus, and each filled bus was escorted by a police car, fire truck or ambulance to designated areas.



*This aerial photo shows the lines of school buses at Northwood High School in Nappanee, filling up with volunteers to go out and pick up debris after an EF3 tornado struck the city and its surrounding countryside. Each school bus was escorted by an emergency vehicle. An estimated 3,000 people arrived from surrounding communities to help recovery efforts. (Photo provided by Nappanee Fire Department)*



*These trailers from a Nappanee, Ind., recreational vehicle company were picked up and thrown all over after a tornado hit the city’s east side in October 2007. Trailers were even strewn across the nearby railroad tracks. The tornado hit the south side of town, the east side business district and a subdivision east of town, in addition to many homes and farms in the countryside. (Photo provided by Nappanee Fire Department)*

One company donated thousands of garbage bags and another a semi load of water bottles. They estimated about 3,000 volunteers showed up. Additionally, other volunteers came with chain saws and log splitters, but city officials didn’t want to assume responsibility for them so they filtered out on their own. ►





*This is just one of the many homes damaged by the EF3 tornado that struck Nappanee after 10 p.m. on a Thursday night in October 2007. (Photo provided by Nappanee Fire Department)*

“At the end of the day Sunday, a lot of debris was picked up and a lot of wood cut. We had victims and volunteers going through cornfields because that corn needed to be combined,” he said, noting the local landfill waived fees to accept storm debris.

The key to getting that kind of help, according to Thompson, is that city officials can’t plan it for two weeks later.

“You’ve got to get ahead of the game when they’re passionate about helping and accommodate the helpers.” He added, “When you roll up to a homeowner’s place and see them crying and trying to clean up themselves — you want to help.” If efforts had been slower, officials probably wouldn’t have received the massive turnout that they had.

Nappanee was denied aid from FEMA twice. It was told it “didn’t meet the threshold” since a school, hospital or government center wasn’t hit and a large percentage of the property owners had insurance. Still, he said former clerk-treasurer Kim Ingle “was a genius behind this — every type of equipment was documented. Her record keeping was second to none.”

The former mayor said officials wanted to offer the same type of assistance to their Amish neighbors who at first declined because they had a disaster relief fund, but it had been seriously depleted so they finally came to terms and accepted two donations from the city.

Nappanee set up a committee named the Northern Indiana Tornado Recovery Operation — or NITRO — to handle donations and claims.

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“Once the word went out that no FEMA funds were coming, donations started coming in,” Thompson said.

The committee ran the funds through a special account set up at the Elkhart County Community Foundation, which acted as its bank. The former library director, Linda Yoder, was named chairperson, and the committee consisted of a social worker, the clerk-treasurer, pastors and three people hired to do case reports. The committee decided who got what and how much recipients received based on insurance and immediate losses. So if a car was totaled, its owner probably got funds for a new car; if someone lost all their belongings, they got money for clothes. Donated items went through the charitable organizations Family Christian Development Center and Open Door.


NITRO was not in the city’s original emergency management plan, but officials soon realized they had to have a process and it was set up within five days and was active for nearly a year. The city did get some disaster relief from the state, which helped cover the city’s uninsured losses. The street department garage was wiped out, along with all the tools.

Thompson said the last official act of NITRO was to disburse left over funds, and it did so by adding tornado warning systems in the rural areas — even one 20 miles away in the town of Bourbon where the tornado first touched down. The rest was split between the Red Cross and the Salvation Army, both of which had been helpful during the disaster.

Thompson said, “The best thing I did was bring the best people to the table.”

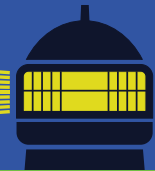
Current Mayor Phil Jenkins was on the board of public works and safety at the time. He hopes he never has to deal with such an emergency but said he’d likely do something similar to a NITRO committee if the need arose. When asked how often officials review their emergency management plan, he admitted, “Probably not as often as we should,” though he added, “We do discuss it in our weekly public safety meetings.”

Nappanee is going through a comprehensive review of the plan right now to ensure it has “the most accurate up-to-date information at our fingertips,” according to Jenkins.

“In the event of an emergency, I think this area of northern Indiana — between the mayors and departments — rallies behind each other. I’m confident we’d have the support and we would provide the support,” Jenkins said. “This Hoosier willingness to help each other out is our best asset in times of disaster — as well as our Elkhart County Emergency Management team and director Jennifer Tobey.” 

## Help Part II

Join us next month for Part II of this series where Denise Fedorow spotlights the experiences of Dardanelle, Ark., and Denham Springs, La., during their times of crisis. We will also share how all three featured communities started the emotional healing following their respective disasters.



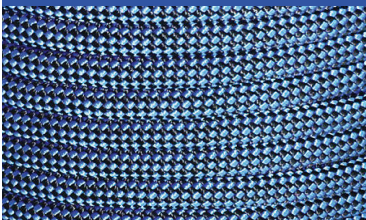
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# Emergency preparedness fair keeps Cupertino community up to date on emergency operations

By NICHOLETTE CARLSON | The Municipal

**Prepare Cupertino was a free community preparedness fair held Saturday, June 22, in Cupertino, Calif. Clare Francavilla, emergency services coordinator, explained, “This fair was a way to inform Cupertino’s community members about the importance of getting prepared for an emergency and the simple steps to get started.”**

## Preparation for preparedness fair

In the past, the city had done similar fairs, but one had not been held in a few years. This year marked the second annual preparedness fair. The first was held June 23, 2018.

“When I came on board with the city in November 2017, the first action item I had for myself was to have a preparedness fair,

hopefully annually. So far we’re two for two,” Francavilla commented.

Planning and preparation for the fair begins three to four months prior to the event date. The fair was set to take place the fourth Saturday in June so it could be combined with the nationwide field day for ham radio, a day when the city’s amateur radio emergency

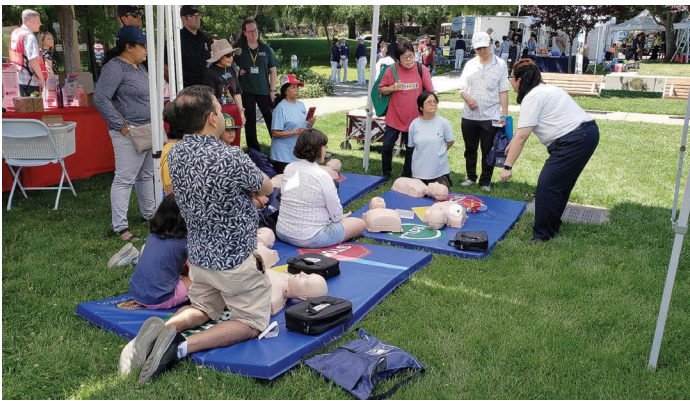
**ABOVE:** In Cupertino, emergency preparedness classes began in 2004 or 2005, and the city tries to make them available on a monthly basis. Workshops can also be requested for neighborhood events such as block parties. The Red Cross provides a number of services from shelter, food and water in a disaster. (Photo provided)

services team is set up to talk to radios across the country.

“The fair is to be a very focused event, in which all vendors would talk to our community members about personal preparedness or their organization’s response and recovery efforts,” she described.

Contact with vendors begins months in advance so Francavilla can ensure the event





*One of the most helpful portions of the preparedness fair and classes is for residents to learn hands-only CPR training, which can be critical in the minutes after an event or natural disaster occurs. (Photo provided)*

has information booths, hands-only CPR training and instruction on how to use a fire extinguisher. Vendors with response vehicles — such as a fire truck, ambulance, the Red Cross and the Valley Water’s H2O on Wheels — are also contacted for the Touch a Truck portion of the fair.

Approximately two months in advance, Francavilla sends out formal invitations so vendors know the fair’s exact date, time and location. Two weeks prior to the event, reminders are sent out. At the beginning of the week of the preparedness fair, a “see you Saturday” reminder follows.

All of the city’s preparation and planning paid off for this year’s fair. “The fair included information booths manned by our disaster response partners, such as fire and sheriff, American Red Cross, Tzu Chi, H.O.P.E. with their response comfort dog teams and many more,” Francavilla outlined. “Our community members got free hands-only CPR training. There were emergency response vehicles in attendance so adults and children alike could learn more about these vehicles and what they do. And each family received a free backpack and giveaways to start their own emergency kit for signing up for AlertSCC, our mass emergency notification system.”

Prior to the fair, Francavilla must also ensure that the items for these backpacks are purchased and put together. Items in the backpacks include safety goggles, gloves, a whistle, flashlight, glow stick, moist wipes, face mask, rain poncho and a deck of cards.

Thanks to this year’s fair, Cupertino now has approximately 550 community members who are more prepared for an emergency.

### **Classes and workshops**

Between four and six times a year, the city provides three-hour personal emergency preparedness workshops for those in the community. Typically each workshop has between 10 and 30 attendees. These workshops cover topics like when and how to turn off the gas; how to use a fire extinguisher; what to do when phones don’t work; how to manage when power is out; earthquake emergency supplies; what to do about pandemic flu; medical aid for the first five minutes after an event; and community emergency response information.



*Local emergency response vehicles are brought to the preparedness fair so local residents can learn about the services that each of these organizations offer and what both the vehicle and the organization do in case of an emergency situation. (Photo provided)*



*One of the unique programs that comes out to the Cupertino preparedness fair to help an information booth is H.O.P.E., doing so with its response comfort dog teams. These dog teams are able to bring both emotional support and comfort to those who have experienced a crisis in a variety of different situations. (Photo provided)*

Basic training is also offered for those participating in community gatherings such as block parties. “These workshops are a discussion of how to prepare yourself and your home for emergencies in the community,” Francavilla stated. In Cupertino, these classes began in 2004 or 2005. The city tries to have a class available for residents once a month or as requested by neighborhoods, clubs and businesses.

Personal emergency preparedness classes are not exclusive to Cupertino. These classes are part of a nationwide preparedness initiative, which most cities or counties offer in their jurisdiction. The Certified Emergency Response Team 18-hour certified training class is a Federal Emergency Management Agency sponsored program and includes a section on personal emergency preparedness.

“Twice a year Cupertino, with the support and instruction of Santa Clara County Fire Department, trained up to 30 community members to be a part of our robust Community Emergency Response Team,” she explained. “This program is sponsored by the Federal ▶



Emergency Management Agency. This 18-hour course offers training in disaster preparation response and recovery skills.”

The skills in the CERT training include disaster medicine, earthquake preparedness, damage assessment, search and rescue, fire suppression, neighborhood preparedness, terrorism, hazmat and disaster psychology.

### Emergency operation plan

“The city of Cupertino has just adopted the newest update of our emergency operation plan,” Francavilla revealed. “This plan outlines how the city will respond to an emergency. Along with this plan, the city is preparing to develop annexes, which contain the detailed actions and policies needed for a proper response and a continuity of operations plans that will support staff and departments on how the city’s critical operations will continue during and after an emergency.

“During response and recovery phases, our emergency operations center could be activated and will support the city’s mission of life safety; protecting property and environment; and restoring essential infrastructure to our city,” she continued. “We have just completed training all essential EOC staff to properly operate those sections. That training has better prepared our EOC staff to respond to an emergency event and lead our city and community members through their recovery.”

These staff members also attend regular position and EOC training that is offered throughout the year.



*The Touch a Truck portion of the preparedness fair is a great way to get kids informed and involved. When community members sign up for the local mass emergency notification system, AlertSCC, at the fair, they are given a free*

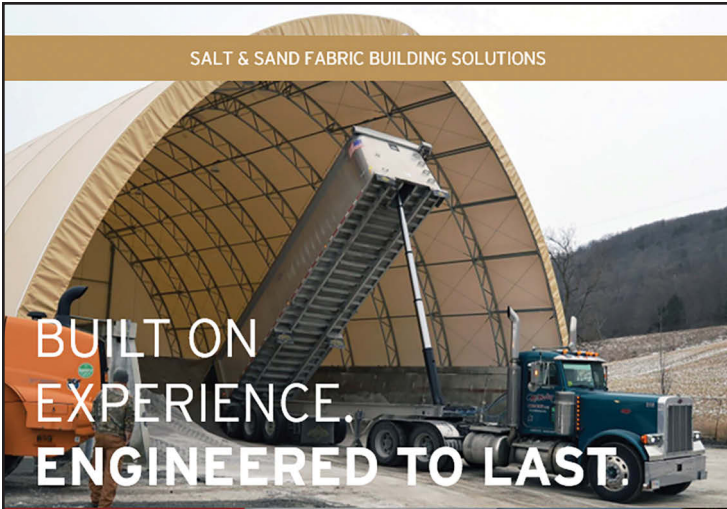
*backpack filled with emergency supplies to get their own preparedness kit started. (Photo provided)*

Francavilla concluded, “At the fair and after each P.E.P. class or CERT Academy that we provide for our community members, we get feedback at the time of the event. Our community members are very happy that they walk away from these events knowing more than they did on how to prepare themselves and their families. They feel more comfortable and we are more comfortable.” M

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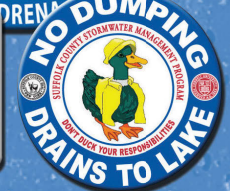
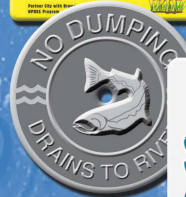
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# Farmington, N.M., ‘jolts’ its untapped natural resources



By CATEY TRAYLOR and SARAH WRIGHT | The Municipal

**It’s not often a town of 45,000 gets a social media shout out from Hollywood stars like Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson and Jack Black. It’s also not often a town of 45,000 people is involved in the filming of a major blockbuster, but that’s the reality residents of Farmington, N.M., are facing.**

“You feel the spirit down here. It’s a very spiritual place,” Johnson said in an Instagram video posted to his account April 25. “The mana is real down here. And these drives have just been spectacular.”

Black, also in Farmington filming “Jumanji” alongside The Rock, joined in the praise of the community via a live-stream video he posted on social media, shouting out a local bar and grill: “If you’re ever in Farmington, N.M., be sure to hit Three Rivers. It’s a rad bar and grill.”

The recent attention from stars is a welcomed addition to the already bustling tourist economy of Farmington, which has also been the site of other film and TV productions over the years. Such productions, along with numerous other visitors,

are drawn to Farmington’s unique terrain and recreational opportunities. It sits in the northwest corner of New Mexico and is the commercial hub of the “Four Corners” region. The city is approximately 400 miles from Phoenix, Denver and Salt Lake City, with Albuquerque and Santa Fe less than 200 miles to the southeast.

It is this unique position and natural beauty that the city is currently investing in, according to both Tonya Stinson, executive director of Farmington Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Warren Unsicker, the city’s director of economic development. In doing so, the city and the FCVB, along with other local, regional and state partners, are aiming to attract the outdoor recreation industry to town.



*Volunteers staffed the Farmington, N.M., booth at the Outdoor Retailer Summer Market in Denver, Colo. The city made a splash with outdoor recreation businesses during the event. (Photo provided)*



**LEFT:** Two mountain bikers enjoy an exciting ride on the Lake Farmington Trailhead. (Photo provided)

**RIGHT:** The Animas River, pictured in Berg Park, is one natural element that attracts visitors to Farmington. The city has a river walk along it. (Photo provided)

“City officials have done a great deal to bolster the outdoor recreation industry (within the city),” Unsicker said, noting the city has launched the Outdoor Recreation Industry Initiative, which he oversees as its director — Farmington is the first city to have such a director. “The Outdoor Recreation Industry Initiative has two different parts. Part one is building more outdoor recreational infrastructure (building more trails, new parks, new outdoor amenities, etc.). Part two is attracting and growing outdoor recreation businesses, specifically those manufacturing the products or offering trips or guided tours.”

The outdoor recreation industry fits right in with Farmington’s brand: “Where outdoor lovers and active families thrive.” It’s a brand the nonprofit FCVB is aligning with, too, with its use of the slogan: “Jolt Your Journey,” which Stinson noted encourages visitors and residents alike to jolt their own outdoor adventures and embrace all the city and region has to offer.

“We have the Animas River going right through the city, there are over 50 city-maintained parks, lakes and really unique land forms,” Stinson said, noting there are opportunities for all sorts of adventures from biking and fun in the water to UTVs, which are really popular in the area. “We want young outdoorsy entrepreneurs to come and set up their tech here, develop it here.”

One step toward realizing the goal of drawing outdoor companies to Farmington was a city booth at the Outdoor Retailer Summer Market in Denver, Colo. The booth itself was staffed by volunteers who represented not only the city and the FCVB but other regional partners.

“Seventeen (volunteers) showed up to support us at the booth,” Unsicker said, adding, “It made a big splash with companies.”

Stinson noted it was a great opportunity for the city to really show “this is what we offer and this is what we have to offer the (outdoor recreation) industry.”



*Golf is a favorite pastime in Farmington, N.M., and with Colorado nearby, people can drive to ski before returning to get in another round on the green at the right time of year. Pictured is Farmington’s Pinon Hills Golf Course. (Photo provided)*



*The beach at Lake Farmington is set up for fun. (Photo provided)*

“There is a regional buy in,” Unsicker said of the ORII, noting local San Juan College has launched a certified business incubator through its Enterprise Center to accelerate O.R. businesses. “They’ve all seen the benefits and the need for diversification of the economy.”

Over the years, Farmington has had a rich history with the natural gas and energy industry, according to Unsicker and Stinson.

“We are grateful to them,” Stinson said, noting that industry is still very much supported by the Four Corners region while it also diversifies with the outdoor recreation industry. “The outdoors was just sitting there. We are careful with it and want to do it right; it’s such a great opportunity.” She added it also benefits the natural gas and energy industry as well. “(Their employees) want to get out and play, too.”

Unsicker noted, “Our outdoor recreation opportunities have been undercapitalized — it is a low-hanging fruit we’d be remiss not to take on for our economy. We are desperately trying to diversify, and (O.R.) is the most logical step in our current position.” Unlike other potential industries, it doesn’t require too many pieces — like street or wastewater infrastructure — to be checked off Farmington’s list since its natural surroundings already provide what outdoor enthusiasts crave.

The city is revamping its downtown with a streetscape project, which will begin in 2020 and make the environment more walkable and friendly. To further bolster the tourism industry and outdoor recreation industry, among other numerous economic benefits, efforts are well underway to return commercial air service to the Four Corners Regional Airport in Farmington; in fact, the New Mexico Airport Managers Association named the airport the “most improved” ▶




in July. The Four Corners Regional Airport has used a \$3.45 million Federal Aviation Administration grant to expand runways to handle larger planes and jets and make other improvements.

Getting Farmington's mission on the right track has been a community effort, with Stinson noting, "There is a great group of organizations working consistently to make this effort go forward. It's very important to the community profile. There are a lot of exciting things happening here. We want people to see them." She added, "When our community sees challenges, we face them head on and come out stronger on the other side."

"We've taken a holistic approach that is a multifaceted, multi-organization effort. It makes a huge difference," Unsicker said. However, he added it is important to have support from the top, too. "The mayor and council have really been behind the initiative from the start. It is a passion of the mayor's — it's his baby. It's a huge opportunity for

us. The state has also recently bought in; it's economic development department recently added an outdoor recreation director."

Mayor Nate Duckett expressed the city and community's commitment to the outdoor recreation industry, "The Outdoor Recreation Industry Initiative in Farmington is proof of our community's financial interest in supporting outdoor recreation companies. The city of Farmington took bold steps passing one-quarter percent gross receipts tax increase in 2018 to provide funding for community-wide improvements to enhance our quality of life, economic diversification, investment in outdoor recreation amenities and provide incentives to O.R. companies looking to relocate or expand into the vibrant O.R. environment here in the Four Corners region. Within a 75-mile radius around Farmington, one can truly fulfill every outdoor adventure possible proving there is no better place to manufacture, test and sell outdoor recreation products." 



Residents take part in Yoga with the Mayor at the Farmington Museum's Gateway Park. (Photo provided)

## On the Web

As part of its efforts to tap into the outdoor recreation industry and tourism, Farmington Convention and Visitors Bureau has crafted a new video aimed at getting people to jolt their journeys in Farmington and Four Corners region: <https://bit.ly/2MGQWjM>



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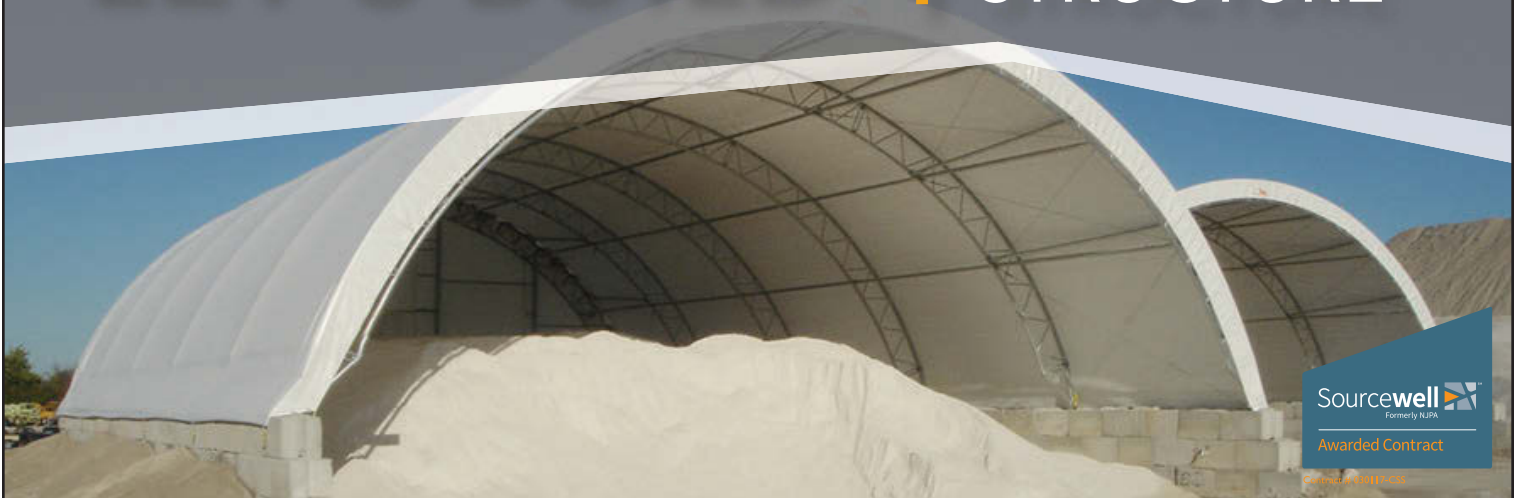
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# Have treats, will travel

By **BARB SIEMINSKI** | The Municipal

**Ronald Glenn, public information officer of the Greensboro, N.C., Police Department, always experiences a thrill of happiness when he sees the reactions of the public when a comrade — Police Officer Porter — enters a room and happily interacts with the citizens.**

Officer Porter is an honest-to-goodness uniformed police officer who is allowed to go almost anywhere he wants on the planet. The friendly, chocolate-colored 15-month-old Australian labradoodle K-9 officer came to the Greensboro Police Department in November 2018, according to Officer Rosann Talbert, PO III, outreach officer and therapy dog handler assigned to the office of community engagement.

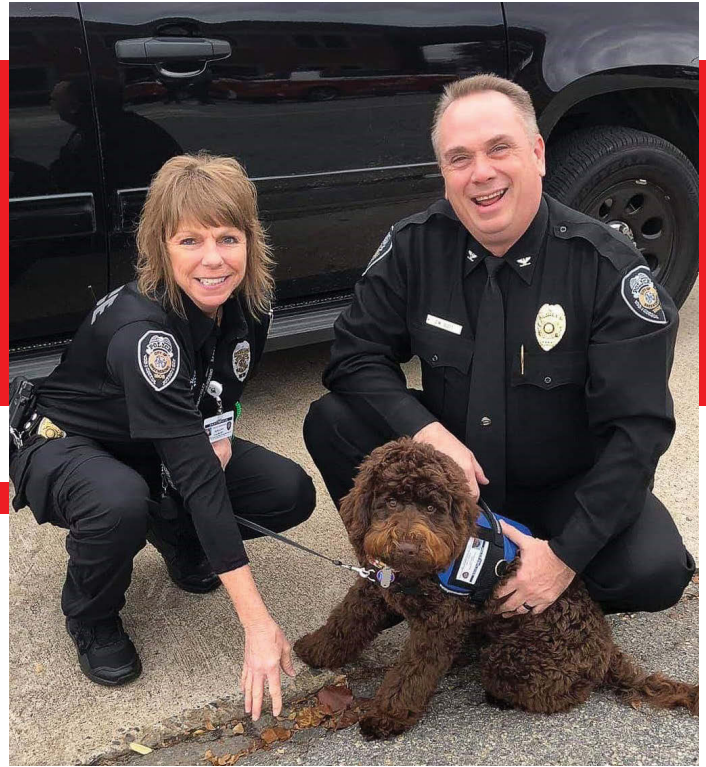
“Porter is with me every day because he is officially part of my job as an outreach officer,” said Talbert, who began her police career in 1994 as an emergency 911 operator and dispatcher and as a sworn officer in 1999.

“Our purpose is directed at elementary school students. I have volunteer officers who assist me in the fifth grade classrooms who teach the ‘Students Overcoming Situations’ curriculum. Porter is the mascot for this program and is our gateway between the students and the officers. The kids are more relaxed and willing to interact with the officers who are in full uniform.”

Porter receives constant requests to visit various places such as special education centers, city recreation facilities, funerals and public schools in addition to being the mascot for SOS, according to Talbert. Over the past nine months, he has been everywhere from daycare centers to retirement homes and was even in the Christmas parade.

“He has also joined Chief Wayne Scott as he threw the first pitch at one of our recent Greensboro Grasshoppers games,” said Talbert. “As you can see, this requires a lot of work for a 15-month old Australian labradoodle. Porter has joined me for personal eye exams and the like but isn’t quite ready to take on the trauma victims or medical facilities; he is doing quite well providing big smiles and a sense of well-being to our many citizens, departments and employees of the city of Greensboro and the Greensboro Police Department.”

Because Porter doesn’t shed, the type of hair he has does not cause allergic reactions in people with allergies. This makes him



*Officer Rosann Talbert and Police Chief Wayne Scott pose with Porter. (Photo provided)*



*Officer Rosann Talbert and Porter interact with school children as part of the department's community engagement efforts. (Photo provided)*

ideal for engaging with the public and lets him be the face of the police department.

“Technically an animal cannot be sworn in as there is no way to have it recite the necessary oath, but Porter is an official K-9 officer,” said Glenn. “There was not a ceremony, but we did issue Porter his own department-issued ID.”

Porter came to the GPD from Ausm Labradoodles in Sanford, N.C., said Glenn, where he had some basic obedience training.





*Campers from Camp High Five enjoy Porter's company. (Photo provided)*

"He was allowed to start visiting schools and community events as soon as he was a part of the department," said Glenn. "His therapy training is ongoing as he had to wait until he was 1-year-old to begin the advanced training and get advanced certification. He is in that process now."

Given the bad publicity some police departments have had in the past few years, using Officer Porter as an approachable PR personality allows for positive interaction with the community.

"Anywhere you take him, he is a conversation starter and of course people love to pet him," said Glenn. "Most police K-9s are work dogs and are not allowed to be touched by the general public, but Porter gives them a way to interact with a police K-9 and learn about our department. The great thing about Porter is that he generates smiles wherever he goes. Even within our police department, the officers love to see Porter, and it is a great way to build relationships with our community."

Talbert is the only officer who works with Porter. As with most police K-9s, the dog, as well as the handler, is trained to perform specific tasks. If the handler is not familiar with the dog and the training, they will not be able to work with the K-9. Currently, the department has 15 working police K-9s who

vary from patrol dogs to bloodhounds, but as of now, it has no other therapy dogs besides Porter who wears a vest with his ID attached to the top of it. Porter lives with Talbert at her residence and she is responsible for him 24/7.

"We have been together since November 2018 with the exception of an hour or two while I'm at church or shopping," said Talbert. "Porter stays home in his kennel, or if I'm lucky, he spends some quality time with my mom. Porter has a professional trainer who has driven to Greensboro from the Lake Norman area to join Porter, and during a typical work day, visiting elementary schools and other various facilities so that she understands Porter's role in the community, and Porter and I use this information to continue daily training."

"Porter has a good vocabulary — I'd say at least 35-40 words," said Talbert. "He is familiar with words like 'treat,' 'good boy,' 'good job,' 'go to your room,' 'touch,' 'pick up,' 'put it in my hand,' 'bring it,' 'bath,' 'run,' 'potty,' 'catch' and a few others. He's a pretty smart guy."

Porter has not been used in the medical field but has been involved with various programs for children who suffer from physical disabilities. They walk him, feed him treats and rub his head and back.



*Officer Rosann Talbert and Porter meet two young fans. (Photo provided)*

"In the future, Porter will also work with trauma victims, although police officials say their newest recruit is in such demand that he is stretched thin already," noted Talbert, adding that he needs some additional training for that role.

Other cities across the nation are already using empathetic therapy dogs in their police departments, including Pinole, Calif., and Independence, Mo. Some are going for poodles, retrievers, mixed breeds or Saint Bernards. Remember, too, when figuring in the cost of the dog, to include such essentials as top-quality food, veterinary care, home and department accommodations like dog crates, beds, toys and other items. Plan on spending anywhere from \$3,000 to \$4,000 for the dog upfront, plus annual animal maintenance fees of \$2,000 to \$4,000.

"Adding a therapy dog to your police departments is a major step toward building a relationship with the citizens," said Talbert. "I like to take Porter for walks downtown and watch the reactions of these citizens who we encounter. People immediately stop for a few minutes to interact with Porter — this happy, fluffy K-9 — and are surprised that he is a police K-9. They pat him on the back or shake his paw."

"Finally, as a police officer, you are gratified to see the barrier begin to fall and be replaced with smiles and a new appreciation for the police therapy dog." **M**





# Among 120 submissions, Manhattan, Kan., finds its flag

By KATHLEEN MORAN | The Municipal

Affectionately dubbed the “Little Apple” over the years by its residents, the city of Manhattan, Kan., may not be on everyone’s radar. Vivienne Uccello, the city’s public information officer, explained that it is often confused with the well-known Manhattan, as in one of the boroughs of New York City. Hence, residents will refer to their city as the “Little Apple” as a play on New York City, the “Big Apple.”

Nevertheless, Manhattan, Kan., has gained a lot of attention recently due to a contest in search of a new city flag. The process has been over a year in the making, having started as a topic of interest in July 2018 after a Manhattan city commissioner listened to a “TED Talk” with Logan McDougall covering flag design. In his discussion, McDougall referenced the North American Vexillological Association’s five basic principles of flag design. According to vexillologists, or flag experts,



*Manhattan, Kan., received 120 flag submissions during the month of March. Entries came from children, graphic designers, a local architecture firm and more. Entries were also not confined to the Kansas area, with some coming from as far away as Italy and Switzerland. (Photo provided)*



**LEFT:** “Little Apple on the Prairie” was voted as Manhattan, Kan.’s, new city flag. Submitted by Kimberly Medvid of Pennsylvania, the flag was expected to be adopted during the city commission’s August meeting. (Photo provided)

**RIGHT:** Pictured is an aerial shot of Manhattan, Kan. The city of more than 52,000 is often mistaken for New York City’s Manhattan borough, hence how the Kansas city acquired its nickname, the “Little Apple.” (Photo provided)



the keys to good flag design, as taken directly from <https://nava.org/good-flag-bad-flag/>, are as follows:

- 1. Keep it simple.** The flag should be so simple that a child can draw it from memory.
- 2. Use meaningful symbolism.** The flag’s images, colors or patterns should relate to what it symbolizes.
- 3. Use two or three basic colors.** Limit the number of colors on the flag to three, which contrast well and come from the standard color set.
- 4. No lettering or seals.** Never use writing of any kind or an organization’s seal.
- 5. Be distinctive or be relative.** Avoid duplicating other flags, but use similarities to show connections.

“In order to run a flag contest, the city of Manhattan needed to rally the public to assess their interest,” stated Uccello. Utilizing polls on Twitter and Facebook, the public was asked a couple of important questions. They were first asked: “Are you aware the city has a flag?” This was followed by a second question: “Do we need a new flag?” The overwhelmingly positive response — 85% — alerted staff that it was the appropriate time to move forward and actually conduct the contest.

Uccello further explained, “Before entries could be submitted, the city’s staff had to work out the logistics to ensure that it could legally use the artwork design of the winner without violating intellectual property rights.”

Once this matter had been handled, the contest was opened to the public. Contestants were provided access to the “TED Talk,” the five principles of flag design and the required dimensions for the flag. These were the basic requirements for entry into the contest. Participants were limited to three submissions and each one had to be accompanied by an explanation of the design.

The city’s staff received 120 submissions in total during the month of March, with some participants submitting more than one entry. The youngest contestant was eight years old while professional designers and a local architecture firm participated, too. The city’s staff was surprised to receive international entries from Italy and Switzerland, which reinforced the notion of a global community, as well as out-of-state submissions. Recurring themes among entries were obvious, including the theme of rivers, stars and rolling hills since — in contrast to Kansas’ generally flat topography — Manhattan boasts the Flint Hills.

Members of the local Arts and Humanities Advisory Board, a group of volunteers of different ages and from different professional backgrounds, were tasked with selecting the finalists using a scoring system



*The Wareham Building is a landmark of downtown Manhattan, Kan. Its construction as a hotel began in 1925 before opening for business in 1927. Its ground-floor restaurant, Harry’s Restaurant, has been listed “Best in the Midwest” by Midwest Living, and its chef Cadell Bynum has earned three-time listing among “Best Chefs of America.” (Photo provided)*

based on the five principles of flag design. They individually reviewed the submissions, selecting their top three picks. Each member then presented the reasoning behind his or her choices. At that point, the group voted on the selections at hand, selecting 10 contenders.

The resulting 10 finalists were presented to the city staff, who then narrowed the number down to seven. Next, a graphic designer for the city met with staff and went to work polishing the rough designs, putting them into digital formats that would later be presented to the public.

In the first two weeks of July, the public — including children — was asked to cast a single vote via Survey Monkey or paper ballot located at city hall. Finalists were allowed to vote for their own design. The city received 3,021 votes in all, with the winner, Kimberly Medvid, receiving 29 percent of the votes for her design, “Little Apple on the Prairie.”

Interestingly, Medvid lives in Pennsylvania and has never actually visited Manhattan; however, she does know someone who hails from the area. Having learned of the contest, Medvid researched all ▶



there is to know of the city and its surrounding area before entering the contest. City staff switched out the original color scheme of predominantly red and green, substituting it for green, white and blue before presenting it to the public for a vote. For a flag that would be featured year-round, they did not want it to suggest an overt Christmas theme.

The new color scheme was strategically chosen for its symbolism. The city is situated at the convergence of the Big Blue and Kansas rivers, as represented in the color blue, while the color green signifies opportunity and growth. White was chosen for the city's unlimited future potential.

Consideration for adoption of the winning flag design was expected to be an item on the agenda for the city commission's meeting Aug. 20. A ceremony at city hall to raise the adopted flag will follow, likely taking place in September. While Medvid will be unable to attend, she will receive her very own flag and certificate of appreciation. The new flag design will also be displayed around the city, including at the local cemetery, parks and fire stations.

Now that the yearlong process has come to a close, Uccello offers some advice to other cities considering a similar undertaking. She recommends not rushing the process. There will be pitfalls and unexpected situations that arise. In fact, the process was delayed when efforts had to be diverted to controlling flooding in the area, which took precedence.



While Kansas is often depicted as being flat, Manhattan, Kan., is located in the Flint Hills area — a feature that was highlighted in many flag submissions. (Photo provided)

Equally relevant, Uccello was shocked by the strong reactions, both positive and negative, from the public. She stated, "Be sensitive to how people will react and be intentional and upfront in terms of the principles, concepts and the kinds of designs desired." Most importantly, have fun with it.

Above all else, Uccello is so appreciative of the many artists and members of the advisory board who dedicated their time, talents and efforts to the creation of a new city flag image. Every individual played an invaluable part in such an important city matter. **M**



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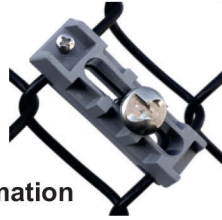
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# Northampton explores CCA opportunities

By ANDREW MENTOCK | The Municipal

For the past few years, Northampton, Mass., has explored community choice aggregation with the desire to use any energy savings from such an approach to fund clean energy projects. This will allow the town of about 30,000 people to band together with other similarly sized cities and negotiate deals for power from alternative suppliers.

**LEFT:** Through community choice aggregation, Northampton can negotiate deals for power from alternative suppliers. Pictured is its city hall. (Photo by Janice Waltzer via Flickr, [creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/))





“When we decided that we wanted to set up a CCA, we looked around at existing CCAs and decided that we could do better than most of them that either just focus on very small electric bill savings or buying renewable energy credits but not necessarily creating new renewable energy projects where there were none before,” Wayne Feiden, the Northampton director planning and sustainability, said.

When studying CCAs, Feiden said they have been broken down into two different categories: CCA 1.0 and CCA 2.0.

Communities that fall under CCA 1.0 are using the green energy funding option just to save their residents money.

“They’re just getting slightly better prices,” Feiden said. “In some cases they’re buying renewable energy credits to make the energy feel a little bit green, but it’s a really simple process.”

Communities that fall under CCA 2.0 are looking for even more.

“Then a few communities — Cambridge, Mass., Cincinnati and a lot of places in California — are going to the next step of really trying to buy longer term power, trying to focus on additionality: additional renewable sources,” Feiden said. “We’ve been calling that CCA 2.0.”

Northampton has primarily focused on studying communities that fall under the CCA 2.0 category.

Feiden said because Northampton is a smaller community, it does not have the funds to just jump into a project that it is going to need to change soon after. Officials wanted to understand what they were getting into and what all of their different options were first.

“We decided that we wanted to understand the opportunities and leapfrog our efforts to the projects where we can have the greatest impact on greenhouse gas reductions, additionality of renewables and supporting our local economy,” he said.

In order to do this, Northampton applied for and received a \$75,000 grant from the Urban Sustainability Directors Network’s Innovation Fund. The grant allowed it to hire a consultant to help study and understand the state of cutting-edge communities and learn what does and does not work for them.

Ultimately, the goal is to try and understand what the best aspects are from these different communities that Northampton can take and use for itself.



*Northampton, Mass., did its research as it started to pursue community choice aggregation. A city of about 30,000, it hopes to partner with other communities with fewer than 50,000 to achieve the most energy savings. (Jared Benedict via Wikimedia Commons, [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/deed.en](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/deed.en))*

“We are halfway through that study and will be done at the end of the calendar year,” Feiden said. “At that point, we plan to move forward through the regulatory and implementation project, probably with other local communities, on a more robust CCA — what we are calling CCA 3.0.”

This process has been going on for about a year and began shortly after Northampton received the grant.

The city council has already approved using a CCA, but because there is so little county-level support in Massachusetts and Northampton is such a small community, the council members’ hope is to partner with other cities in order to increase savings and create a greener process.

It was also important that Northampton carefully weighed how long it wanted to sign a contract for with certain green energy companies. The longer the contract, the more Northampton would likely be able to save, but that also means it is locked in for a significant period of time if things go wrong.

“So what’s the sweet spot?” Feiden said. “How much of a risk are we willing to take? Some of that’s gonna be cultural. Some communities are much more entrepreneurial than others. I’m not sure what we’re going to do, but at least we want to understand what

the trade-offs are for each approach that we do.”

To ultimately decide what level of risk Northampton will take, Feiden will have conversations with the city and other communities. The city’s main goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Another part of the Northampton processes is to make the information that it has collected available to other cities, big and small, so they too can weigh the option of what type of CCA is right for them.

“If what we really care about is greenhouse gas emissions, what little Northampton does (to address emissions) has no real effect anywhere,” Feiden said. “So we only have an effect if we do things along with other communities around here. We know that over half the population of the country lives in communities below 50,000.

“So a lot of things we’re talking about are things that are pretty easy for bigger cities to do cause they have staff to dedicate to it. But the reality is there are more people living in cities the size of Northampton than there are living in cities the size of Boston. New York or San Francisco. And so if we’re really going to move the dial, we’d have to get cities our size involved.” M





# Dodge City transforms waste into renewable energy

By LAUREN CAGGIANO | The Municipal

## Dodge City, Kan., may be small, but it has a mighty renewable energy program that rivals those in larger cities.

This former frontier town's population sits at 27,700, with most of its economic base rooted in the two beef processing facilities located there. Agriculture and tourism are also major industries. The city is taking advantage of the former, with its recently completed Warrior Project Biogas Facility, which produces energy capable of fueling vehicles domestically and abroad.

In 1984, Dodge City's South Wastewater Treatment Plant was completed and it expanded in 2004. The wastewater

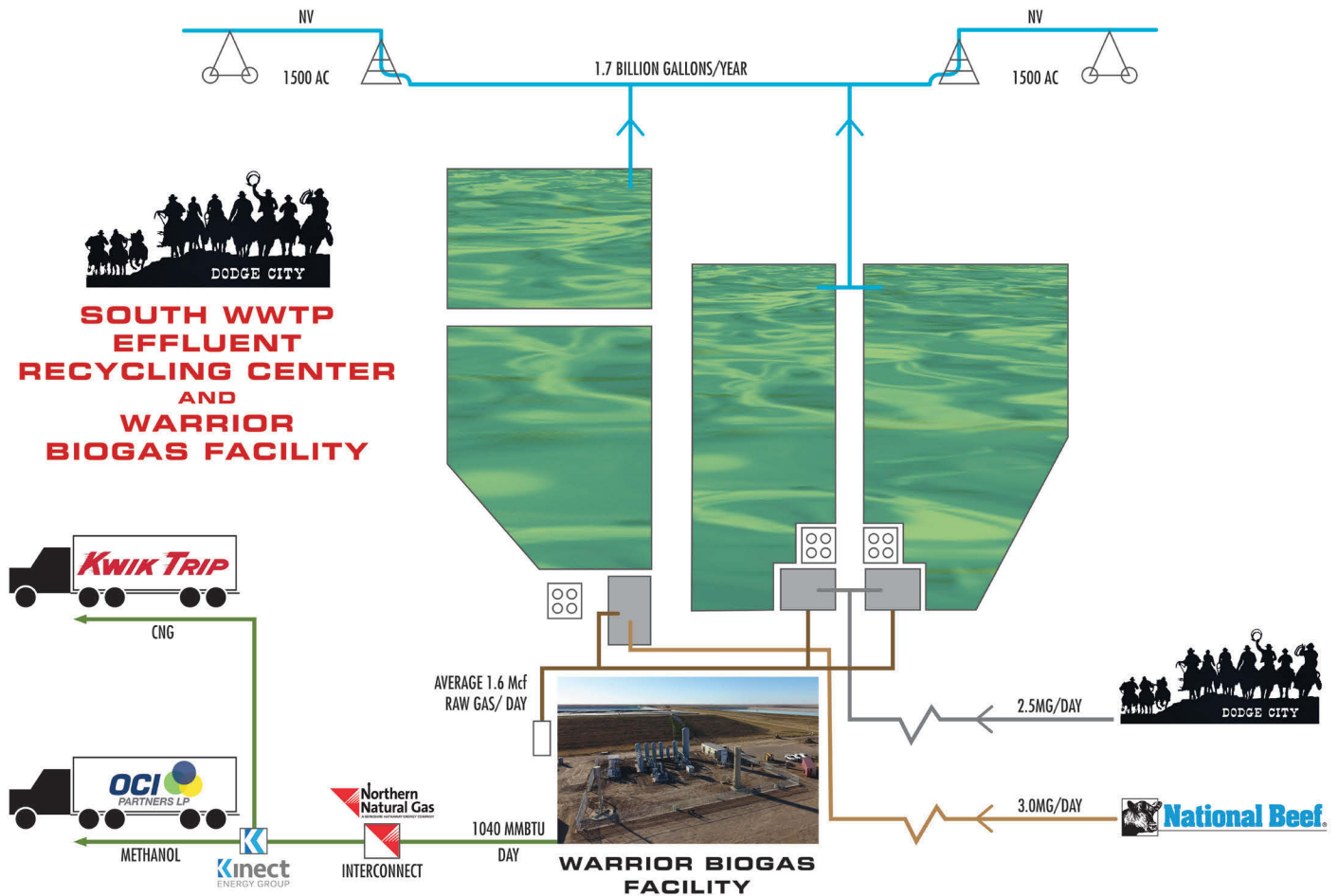
treatment plant is a non-discharging facility that treats 5.7 million gallons of wastewater a day sourced from the nearby National Beef packing facility and municipal waste. An anaerobic digestion process produces raw biogas, which represents an opportunity for the municipality. The move to harness the combination of wastewater biogas and nearby energy infrastructure highlights the potential for utilities to offset rising operating costs.

Director of Engineering Ray Slattery spearheaded this project at the city level. He said the project may help the city's bottom line.

"Since it is a renewable resource, (biogas) has a slightly higher value than traditional fossil fuels," he said. "We are able to use this added value as another income source for the city."

Slattery's experience is not unique. According to the American Biogas Council, biogas systems leverage anaerobic digestion to recycle organic waste, turning it into energy. After simple processing, biogas can be turned into a wide variety





**TOP LEFT:** Dodge City's Warrior Project Biogas Facility uses an anaerobic digestion process to produce raw biogas. Proceeds from the sale of this biogas will retire the debt from the facility's construction before ultimately being used for other city needs. (Photo provided)

**ABOVE:** This graph highlights how Dodge City's biogas process works. (Photo provided)

of useful soil products, similar or identical to peat moss, pellets and finished compost.

This renewable natural gas can substitute for fossil fuel natural gas for any need, including heating, cooking and driving. Biogas can also be used as fuel to make clean electricity. All of these options provide the opportunity to turn organic waste into a valuable renewable energy resource in a sustainable manner.

While Dodge City's renewable energy program is on a smaller scale than some cities, the potential for growth of the U.S. biogas industry as a whole is significant. It's

estimated that biogas systems could produce enough energy to power 7.5 million American homes and reduce emissions equivalent to removing up to 15.4 million passenger vehicles from the road, per data cited by the American Biogas Council.

To understand the size and scope of the Warrior Project Biogas Facility's impact, consider data Slattery cited.

"The biogas facility produces on the average about 1,000 MMBTU of gas a day, with a heat value of 1,000 BTU or better. The product we are sending to the pipeline is 97%-99% pure methane."

Revenue will be used to retire the debt of the biogas project and the construction of the city's North Wastewater Reclamation Facility. After that, he said the additional revenue will be used for deferred maintenance of infrastructure, other capital improvements projects and quality of life projects for citizens.

Operationally, he said they have tweaked a few things to streamline the process.

"We were able to shut down the operation of our two existing flares since the bio-gas

is now cleaned and injected into a natural gas pipeline," he explained. "We have had a change in operation of the wastewater plant. We used to keep gas under the covers of the anaerobic lagoons pulled off so the covers were always flat on the water. Now we realize it is okay to let the covers 'balloon' a little bit and store the gas up so it can be processed and sold."

Speaking of selling, Slattery said the community has been energized by the potential behind the project. In his words, "Once they know about the project, they are amazed that we are able to produce a renewable fuel from our wastewater plant that goes to fuel vehicles not only in the upper Midwest, but also in Europe."

Slattery said all of this would not be possible without the help of solid partners, such as the wastewater treatment facility operator, engineering consultant, equipment provider contractor, marketer, etc.

His advice for other municipalities looking to pursue a similar project? "Do your homework. Have a good team put together from the start." **M**





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*Ipsun Power brought snacks and lemonade for participants in addition to sharing information about going solar. (Photo provided)*



# Tour de Solar, combining bicycles and solar energy to connect neighbors

By ANDREW MENTOCK | The Municipal

**In May, Fairfax, Va., hosted its first Tour de Solar in May as a part of its National Bike Month celebration. The event highlighted a series of homes throughout the city that are utilizing solar energy. All residents were invited to attend, and just like the Tour de France, participants transported themselves to each location on a bicycle.**

With a population of roughly 24,000 people, Fairfax has been working to make solar energy as accessible as possible to its residents through northern Virginia's local energy alliance program, Solarize NOVA. The program allows area residents to purchase solar energy at an affordable rate.

“It was a community bike tour of properties with solar energy installations that gave residents the opportunity to explore the city's trails and bike-friendly streets, learn about the Solarize NOVA program that's going on, see solar installations in person and learn about the logistics and benefits of going solar from solar experts and neighbors,” said Stephanie Kupka, the Fairfax sustainability coordinator.





*Participants in Fairfax, Va.'s, Tour de Solar bicycle ride started off at city hall. The event tied into National Bike Month. (Photo provided)*

In total, the tour took roughly a month or two to plan, but because the tour utilized bike-friendly trails and streets, no permits were required. The 7-mile tour lasted a little over an hour, with five to 10 stops along the way. It was a relaxed no-drop ride, meaning no participant could be left behind for going too slow.

Beforehand, participants were warned that they would be riding on mixed surfaces that included local streets, stone-dust trails and, at a few points, sidewalks. Helmets were required and everyone who participated had to bring a signed waiver, which they could download and print online.

Like many good municipality hosted and sponsored events, the inspiration for Tour de Solar was taken from a neighboring community.

"We actually borrowed the idea from Charlottesville, Va.," Kupka said. "They've done a few Tour de Solar events there, and we had heard about their success and we wanted to replicate it here. And, as we were in the larger context of bike month, we wanted to find some opportunities to do more community rides. We've always celebrated Bike to Work Day and Bike to School Day, and this seemed like a great opportunity to both celebrate biking and give people an opportunity to get out on a community ride.

"We also have quite a few solar installations in the cities."



*Fairfax residents who have solar panels shared their experiences with their neighbors who were participating in the ride. (Photo provided)*

Online, Fairfax participants were also given a map of the Tour de Solar route.

During the tour, residents were also able to ask questions about solar energy from a local expert, learn more about Solarize NOVA, which the city was participating in for the fourth year in a row, and hear from Fairfax residents who decided to have solar energy installed in their homes.

"Since we first started participating in this program, we've seen a significant increase in solar installations in the city," Kupka said. "We currently have over 40 properties with solar installations and we expect that number to continually rise as the price of solar drops."

The program also simplifies the solar installation process for residents.

"What's great about the program is it makes going solar really easy, so that way it takes the guesswork out of it," Kupka said. "People can sign up for a free solar estimate to figure out if solar is right for their property and then figure out how much money they'd save through going solar."

In addition to encouraging residents to invest in solar energy, Fairfax has also strived to improve its bike trails and routes. According to Chloe Ritter, the city's multimodal transportation planner, there are just a few routes that Fairfax is looking to connect to make it even more commutable for bicyclists.

Fairfax is also close to George Mason University, so events like National Bike Month are used to encourage all students and professionals to explore a more sustainable transportation option. But there's more benefits to Bike Month than just transportation.

"I think the biggest benefit is getting neighbors to talk about the community programs that they're excited about, whether it's solar or some other program," Ritter said. "They want to share their experiences. We're getting neighbors to know each other and getting neighbors to know their neighborhood on two wheels." M





# 'Softer' approach to reduce chloride in natural water resources

*An outdoor rendering shows Morris, Minn.'s, new water treatment facility, which will soften the water for residents. A plan ordinance will then require residents to remove their in-house water softeners or switch to on-demand, high-efficiency water softeners. (Photo provided)*

By CATEY TRAYLOR | The Municipal

**Minnesota is notorious for having “hard water,” meaning water with high levels of calcium and magnesium. Water sources with these minerals present can lead to what most people think of when they hear the term: spotty residue on dishes, dry skin after showers and a buildup of film on faucets and hoses.**

The solution? Typically, water softeners.

Water softeners work by trading minerals like calcium and magnesium for something else, in most cases sodium chloride. The brine produced gets sent to wastewater facilities to be disposed of. While this practice softens the water for homeowners, it presents a whole slew of issues for the environment.

Chloride is a permanent pollutant and toxic to fish and aquatic life. Road salt washing into lakes and rivers is the major culprit, especially in larger cities, but in small cities and rural areas with fewer roads, the majority of chloride coming into wastewater plants is from water softeners, and most plants aren't designed to remove chloride.

As Minnesotans combat chloride pollution in a majority of their natural water resources, the city of Morris is working toward a solution from which homeowners and the environment alike can benefit.

The town is in the final stages of completing an \$18-million water treatment plant that uses lime to treat water for residents and eliminate the need for in-home water softeners.

“The new treatment plant will soften the water for residents,” said Kris Swanson, principal engineer at Bolton and Menk, the company contracted in to complete the project. “Right now, most residents use ion exchange softeners in their basement. The city will use a process that adds lime and soda ash to the water, which settles out and

removes the hardness with it. Then, residents won't have to use as much salt in their softeners.”

The city of Morris received \$12 million in state aid to help pay for the plant, and city residents will pay higher water rates to help cover the city's share.

Swanson explained that the new treatment facility will lower the city's water hardness from about 800 mg/liter to 100 mg/liter or less, eliminating the need for homeowners to have water softeners, saving them money in the long run on salt refills and maintenance.

“Home softeners exchange sodium chloride for calcium,” he said. “The new system won't be an exchange, it'll totally remove the calcium as lime sludge. We raise the PH level and then readjust it for drinking water.

While the plant is hard at work, Swanson said residents need to follow through on their end, too.

“What's very important now is that residents need to adjust or remove their home water softeners,” Swanson said.

He further explained public education is key to making sure the treatment plant is able to function successfully. Teaching residents the science behind a water softener and allowing them to understand why theirs won't be needed anymore is huge.





*The overall goal for Morris' new water treatment facility is to reduce the amount of chloride entering natural water resources. (Photo provided)*

“The goal of this project, while it has all these benefits for residents, is we want to get all the chloride out of the water,” he said. “Much less salt will be discharged to the river, which will help the environment. Without that next step of ditching the softeners by the residents, this project is not a success.”

City officials plan to adopt an ordinance requiring residents to switch to on-demand, high-efficiency water softeners if they continue to use one.

The plant is currently in its final stages of testing before being rolled out for public distribution, and at press time, Swanson estimated the plant would be fully functioning and in use citywide this summer.

“We’ve been working on start up and started sending water to the distribution center. It’s been implemented citywide,” Swanson said. “The city is going to do some flushing and clean pipes out to remove sediment that’s going to shake loose.”

Without the cooperation of a number of parties, Swanson said, this project would not have been possible.

“This was a joint effort between the city of Morris, the state of Minnesota and the department of health working together to obtain some significant grants for the project,” he said. “This is a good model of a city being responsible and the state aiding them and taking that seriously. This is huge for Morris.” 



*Unlike an in-home water softener, Morris' new system won't exchange sodium chloride for calcium; instead, it will remove calcium as lime sludge. (Photo provided)*



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## SEPTEMBER

### Sept. 8-11 APWA PWX

Washington State Convention Center, Seattle, Wash.  
[apwa.net](http://apwa.net)

### Sept. 8-11 Missouri Municipal League Annual Conference

St. Charles Convention Center, St. Charles, Mo.  
[mocities.site-ym.com](http://mocities.site-ym.com)

### Sept. 11-13 Utah League of Cities and Towns Annual Convention

Salt Lake City, Utah  
[ulct.org](http://ulct.org)

### Sept. 12-13 Florida Association of Governmental Fleet Administrators' Fall Event

Trade Winds Island Grand Resort, St. Pete Beach, Fla.  
[flagfa.org/future\\_dates.php](http://flagfa.org/future_dates.php)

### Sept. 17-19 Oklahoma Municipal League Annual Conference and Exposition

Tulsa, Okla.  
[omlconference.org](http://omlconference.org)

### Sept. 18-20 2019 Midwest Green Transportation Forum & Expo

Marriott Columbus University Area, Columbus, Ohio  
[cleanfuelsohio.org](http://cleanfuelsohio.org)

### Sept. 19-21 North Dakota League of Cities Annual Conference

Bismarck Event Center, Bismarck, N.D.  
[ndlc.org/223/Annual-Conference](http://ndlc.org/223/Annual-Conference)

### Sept. 19-21 Illinois Municipal League Annual Conference

Hilton Chicago, Chicago, Ill.  
[iml.org/conference](http://iml.org/conference)

### Sept. 21-15 WEFTEC 2019

McCormick Place, Chicago, Ill.  
[weftec.org](http://weftec.org)

### Sept. 22-25 ARTBA 2019 National Convention

Hyatt Regency Savannah, Savannah, Ga.  
[artbanationalconvention.org](http://artbanationalconvention.org)

### Sept. 23-26 NCSFA 2019 State Fleet Managers Workshop

Austin, Texas  
[ncsfa.net](http://ncsfa.net)

### Sept. 23-25 2019 F.I.E.R.O. Fire Station Design Symposium

Raleigh, N.C.  
[fieroonline.org](http://fieroonline.org)

### Sept. 23-27 OAEVT's 27th Annual Emergency and Municipal Apparatus Maintenance Symposium

Ohio Fire Academy, Reynoldsburg, Ohio  
[oaevt.org](http://oaevt.org)

### Sept. 24-26 NRPA 2019 Annual Conference

Baltimore, Md.  
[nrpa.org/conference/](http://nrpa.org/conference/)

### Sept. 24-26 Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities Annual Conference

Sunset Station, Henderson, Nev.  
[nvleague.com](http://nvleague.com)

### Sept. 25-27 Iowa League of Cities Annual Conference and Exhibit

Dubuque, Iowa  
[iowaleague.org](http://iowaleague.org)

### Sept. 25-27 Michigan Municipal League Convention

Detroit, Mich.  
[blogs.mml.org](http://blogs.mml.org)

### Sept. 26-28 League of Oregon Cities 94th Annual Conference

Bend, Ore.  
[orcities.org](http://orcities.org)

## OCTOBER

### Oct. 2-3 Vermont League of Cities & Towns Town Fair 2019

Killington Grand Hotel, Killington, Vt.  
[vlct.org](http://vlct.org)

### Oct. 2-3 Maine Municipal Association Convention

Cross Insurance Center, Bangor, Maine  
[memun.org](http://memun.org)

### Oct. 2-4 Montana League of Cities and Towns Annual Conference

Billings Hotel and Convention Center, Billings, Mont.  
[mtleague.org](http://mtleague.org)

### Oct. 3 Southeastern Wisconsin Sixth Annual Outdoor Public Works/Parks/Building and Grounds 2019 Expo

Konkel Park, Greenfield, WI  
[greenfieldwi.us](http://greenfieldwi.us)

### Oct. 3-6 Pennsylvania Municipal League 2019 Annual League Summit

Gettysburg Hotel and Majestic Theater, Gettysburg, Pa.  
[pml.org](http://pml.org)

### Oct. 6-8 Virginia Municipal League Annual Conference

Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center, Roanoke, Va.  
[vml.org](http://vml.org)

## OCTOBER

### Oct. 6-9 2019 Southeast Governmental Fleet Management Association

Sheraton Myrtle Beach Convention Center, Myrtle Beach, S.C.  
[sgfma.org](http://sgfma.org)

### Oct. 9-11 Texas Municipal League Annual Conference and Exhibition

San Antonio, Texas  
[tml.org/ed\\_calendar](http://tml.org/ed_calendar)

### Oct. 12-14 The League of Kansas Municipalities Annual League Conference

Overland Park, Kan.  
[lkm.org/page/AnnualConference](http://lkm.org/page/AnnualConference)

### Oct. 13-16 APTA's 2019 TRANSform Conference

New York, N.Y.  
[apta.com](http://apta.com)

### Oct. 13-16 IEDC 2019 Annual Conference

Indianapolis, Ind.  
[iedcevents.org/Indy/index.html](http://iedcevents.org/Indy/index.html)

### Oct. 16-18 League of California Cities Annual Conference and Expo

Long Beach Convention Center, Long Beach, Calif.  
[cacities.org/Education-Events/Annual-Conference](http://cacities.org/Education-Events/Annual-Conference)

### Oct. 20-23 ICMA Annual Conference

Music City Center, Nashville, Tenn.  
[conference.icma.org](http://conference.icma.org)

### Oct. 21-24 WasteCon 2019

Phoenix, Ariz.  
[swana.org](http://swana.org)



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Parks & Environmental Services

Deadline Friday, Aug. 30\*  
\*denotes early deadline

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NOVEMBER 2019

Technology

Deadline Monday, Sept. 30

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DECEMBER 2019

2019 Review/2020 Outlook

Deadline Monday, Nov. 25

INSIDE:  
 Storm Management  
 Flood Prevention  
 Flood Mitigation  
 Flood Recovery

INSIDE:  
 Waste & Recycling  
 Solid Waste  
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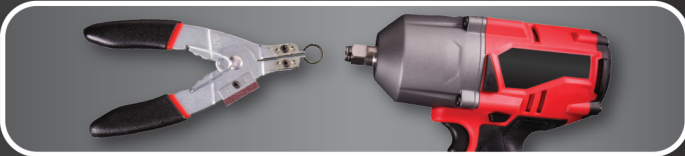
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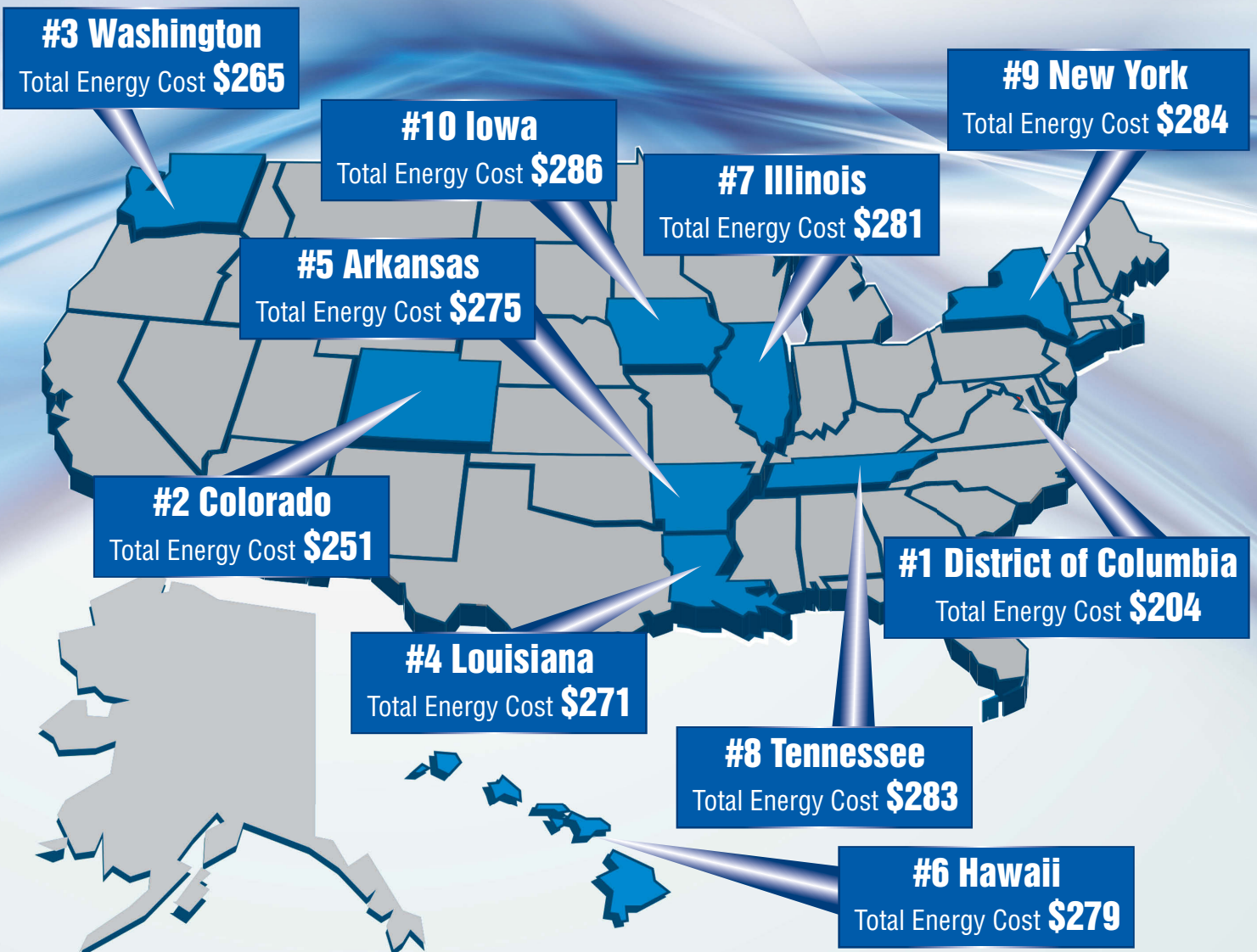
# The 10 states with the lowest energy costs

Energy is a massive part of our daily lives, without it modern life crumbles. According to WalletHub, “In the U.S., energy costs eat between 5 and 22 percent of families’ total after-tax income, with the poorest Americans, or 25 million households, paying the highest of the range.”

In July, the website released its study comparing the total monthly energy bills in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. It states, “Our analysis uses a special formula that accounts for the following residential energy types: electricity, natural gas, motor fuel and home heating oil.”

Its formula was: (Average Monthly Consumption of Electricity \* Average Retail Price of Electricity) + (Average Monthly Consumption of Natural Gas \* Average Residential Price of Natural Gas) + (Average Monthly Consumption of Home Heating Oil \* Average Residential Price of Home Heating Oil) + (Average Motor-Fuel Price \* Miles Traveled / Average Motor-Fuel Consumption / Number of Drivers in the State) = Average Monthly Energy Bill in the State.

Below are the states, including the District of Columbia, which had the lowest energy costs:







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### NAFA CEO moving on after 14 years

**PRINCETON, N.J.** — Phillip E. Russo, CAE, CEO of NAFA Fleet Management Association has left the association after more than 14 years at the helm.

“I have loved my time with NAFA,” Russo said. “I’ve made many great friends and have so many great memories.”

Russo, who has been with NAFA since 2005 as its executive director and CEO, had an employment contract that was set to expire at the end of this year. Russo and the NAFA Board of Directors agreed on an exit strategy that will permit Russo to leave before then.

“Phil is well-respected and appreciated by the fleet management community,” said NAFA President Patti Earley, CAFM. “He has left an indelible mark on the association; we thank him for his service and wish him well in his new ventures.”

Under Russo’s leadership, NAFA accomplished the following:

- A rebrand that included a name change, a logo redesign and a revision of bylaws
- Growth in annual conference sponsorship
- An increase in reserve funds
- An increase in member engagement through a fleet sustainability credential, a micro-certificate exam, extensive government affairs activities, and an online community initiative

Russo’s last day with NAFA was Aug. 2. “I am eagerly and excitedly pursuing new opportunities,” he said.

NAFA is beginning an immediate search for its next CEO. Bill Schankel, CAE, NAFA’s chief of staff and operations, will serve as the association’s interim CEO.

### Americans favor local governments setting aside funds for revitalization projects

**ASHBURN, VA.** — More than four in five Americans — 85% — want their local governments to fund park and recreation revitalization projects, including the restoration of parks, playgrounds, recreation centers and community centers, according to a recent poll conducted by the National Recreation and Park Association.

When comparing respondents who are most likely to completely or strongly support park and recreation revitalization projects, parents are the most dedicated proponents — 66% — followed by millennials — 64% — while more than half of Americans overall are also ardent supporters — 59%.

“Communities everywhere rely upon well-maintained parks and recreation facilities. Local government officials need to dedicate money for park and recreation revitalization projects to ensure everyone has access to a great park,” said Kevin Roth, NRPA vice president of professional development, research and technology. “Not only do these investments contribute to the overall wellbeing of a community, they also boost the local economy. In 2015 alone, America’s local park and recreation agencies’ spending generated \$154 billion in economic activity and supported more than 1.1 million jobs.”

This poll is part of NRPA’s Park Pulse, a continuing series of monthly surveys that gauge the public’s opinion on topics relating to parks and recreation. To explore previous Park Pulse survey results, visit [www.nrpa.org/Park-Pulse](http://www.nrpa.org/Park-Pulse).

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](http://www.themunicipal.com). Call (800) 733-4111, ext. 2307, or email [swright@the-papers.com](mailto:swright@the-papers.com).

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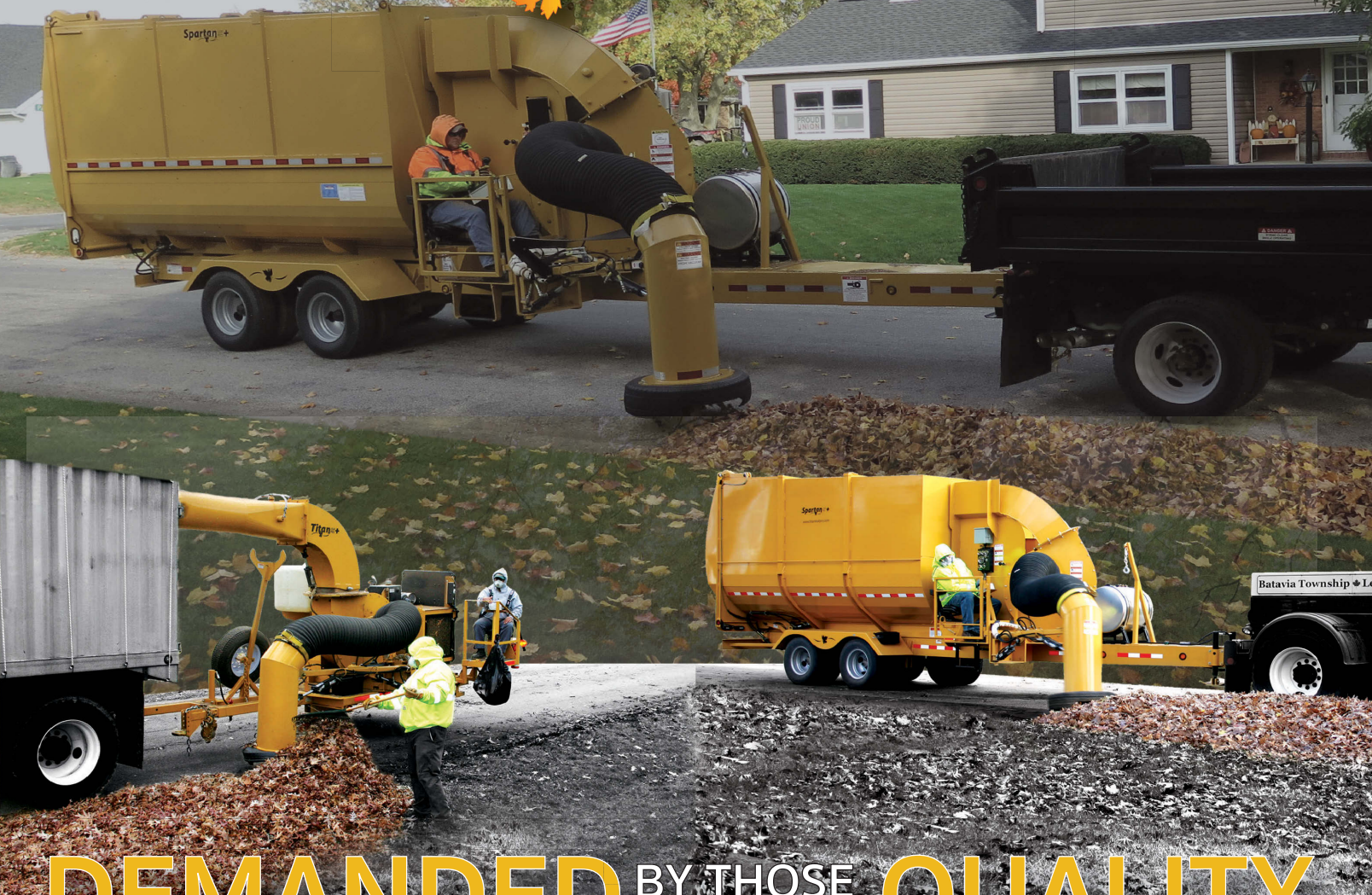
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