

FOCUS ON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

MONTHLY UPDATE FROM THE DESK OF WAUKESHA COUNTY EXECUTIVE
DANIEL P. VRAKAS



In this issue:

- County Awarded Triple A Bond Rating
- Public Health Emergency Scenario
- New Website Launched
- Budget Town Hall Meetings
- Staying Safe in Weather
- Tornado Safety Plan



Dear Friends,

Imagine a streamlined, efficient government. A government that has kept property tax increases in line with new growth, so as to not grow faster than the taxpayer's ability to pay. A government that keeps costs low by eliminating post employment health benefits and unfunded liabilities. A government where a pay-for-performance system is in place, rather than automatic pay increases, where employees are paying toward their pension and where health care costs are reduced because the government invests in employee wellness through a robust program.

Well, no need to imagine, this government already exists – it is Waukesha County.

In many ways, some of the positive changes that we are seeing governments make now are changes that Waukesha County made long ago. The state government recently put caps on levy increases in line with new construction growth. In Waukesha County, this is something that we have done for years. Our five-year growth in property tax levy has been largely limited to the growth in new construction.

Waukesha County is a desirable place to work. We invest in our employees, yet have implemented programs and initiatives to limit the overhead costs of delivering quality services to our residents. Our employee benefits are about 30% of our payroll, which is in line with the private sector and far below other governments.

Our fiscally sound principals are to balance spending with the taxpayers' ability to pay, paying off our debt in 10 years and working to protect our AAA/aaa bond rating. We seek out a return on investment on all of our programs and make decisions based on measurable objectives in order to leave a legacy for the next generation.

I am extremely proud and honored to have the opportunity to help lead Waukesha County, and our team will continue to work hard to make Waukesha County the best place in Wisconsin to live, work, raise a family and retire.

Sincerely,

515 W. Moreland Blvd., AC320
Waukesha, WI 53188
262.548.7902 office • 262.896.8510 fax
www.waukeshacounty.gov

COUNTY AWARDED AAA/Aaa BOND RATING

As a sign of Waukesha County’s strong fiscal health, Moody’s Investors Service and Fitch Ratings recently awarded the County triple A bond ratings, the highest ratings possible. The ratings evaluate the County’s debt obligations and maintaining a triple A bond rating helps lower borrowing costs and the tax rate in Waukesha County.

“The county benefits from a strong, proactive financial management team,” Fitch Ratings highlighted in their report, adding that Waukesha County “budgets conservatively, resulting in consistent operating surpluses and solid reserve levels.”

Moody’s Investors Service said in their report that Waukesha County is in “a strong financial position,” and allows for “considerable budgetary flexibility.”

“Waukesha County has a great team that manages County finances with efficiency and skill,” said County Executive Dan Vrakas. “This triple A bond rating, ultimately, allows Waukesha County to save taxpayers’ money by allowing us to pay lower the interest rates on loans to fund highway and other capital projects each year.”

This year marks the 23rd consecutive year that Moody’s has awarded, and the 14th consecutive year that Fitch has awarded Waukesha County this rating. Waukesha County was Fitch’s first AAA bond rated government in Wisconsin.

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY SCENARIO

The Waukesha County Division of Public Health trained staff and tested plans, policies and procedures in a mock mass medication dispensation clinic on Wednesday, June 15th at the Waukesha County Expo Center.

After months of planning alongside the state Department of Health and other local health departments, a team developed a mass anthrax attack scenario requiring medication to be dispensed to residents. The purpose of the exercise was to practice, in real time, the response and cooperation that is necessary to successfully handle this type event as a department, county and region. The goal was to identify strengths and weaknesses in response, which will enable the County to refine and streamline plans in the event they are needed for a real emergency.

Over 150 individuals, including public health nurses, County personnel, representatives from other local health departments and community volunteers participated in the exercise. Community volunteers played the role of residents coming to the clinic to receive medication. Each person was scripted to play the role of an individual with a unique need.



County employee, Michelle Bertram, assists with medication distribution.

“Waukesha County: Leading the Way ...”

COUNTY LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE DESIGN

Earlier this month, Waukesha County launched a new design of the County website which includes major changes to the website's homepage. The changes are aimed at being more user-friendly and provide useful links in easy to find locations.

The revamped homepage is intended to make it easier for users to find what they are looking for with a single click.

The links on the webpage have been broken down into user type and the featured links are dictated by usage. The links most popular by website users are the links that are featured. Users can select a tab for "I live here," "I work here" or, "I relax here."

The "live" tab features links most requested by residents. The "work" tab features links most requested by businesses and the "relax" tab features recreation links most popular with residents and visitors. By organizing links this way, users should be able to easily find the links they are seeking.

The spotlights section on the lower half of the page features new or special items the County would like to highlight. These spotlights will change on a regular basis so be sure to visit the website frequently.

BUDGET TOWN HALL MEETINGS

As part of the budget creation process, Waukesha County holds a series of Budget Town Hall meetings to communicate with residents on our budget activities. These meetings are essential in the budget process as they provide an opportunity for stakeholders – taxpayers – to provide input and feedback on how the county is doing.

This year, Waukesha County will be holding three Budget Town Hall presentations. The dates and locations are outlined below:

Thursday, July 14, 2011 - 6:30 p.m.

Delafield City Hall

500 Genesee Street, Delafield

Exit #285 off I-94, Take County Trunk Highway C north (Genesee Rd.)

Thursday, July 21, 2011 - 9:00 a.m.

Mukwonago Citizens Bank – Waukesha Branch

2109 Corporate Drive, Waukesha

Corner of Highway 59 (Les Paul Parkway) and then south on Center Rd., and take left onto Corporate Drive

Monday, July 25, 2011 - 6:00 p.m.

Waukesha County Courthouse

515 W. Moreland Blvd., Room 350, Waukesha

SW corner of Pewaukee Road (Hwy. J) and Moreland Boulevard



The County Executive presents at a 2010 Budget Town Hall Meeting.

“Waukesha County: Leading the Way ...”

FOCUS ON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

WAUKESHA COUNTY PARKS ACTIVITIES

Camping - Waukesha County Park's camping locations: Menomonee Park, Mukwonago Park, Muskego Park, and Naga-Waukee Park. There are group campsites that patrons can reserve, as well as family sites that are on a first-come first- served basis. Family Camping fees are \$14.50 per unit, per night, without an annual Park Sticker and \$11.25 per unit, per night, for those with an annual Park Sticker. The Waukesha County Park System does not have hook-ups and the maximum trailer allowed is 20 feet. Firewood is available at all locations for \$5.50 a bundle.

Family Days at Waukesha County Golf Courses - All season long, any youth (age 17 and under) can golf for free with a paying adult (limit one child per adult). Moor Downs Golf Course, 438 Prospect Avenue in Waukesha, Sundays after 12 noon. Wanaki Golf Course, N50 W20830 Lisbon Road in Menomonee Falls, Saturdays after 3 p.m. For more information, log onto www.golfwaukeshacounty.com



Follow County Executive Dan Vrakas on Twitter!

**Username:
CoExecDanVrakas**

TORNADO SAFETY PLAN

This month marks one year since an F-2 tornado touched down in Eagle damaging over 100 homes and businesses in the area. April through July is considered peak tornado season, making now the time to make a "tornado safety plan," if you have not already done so for yourself and for your family. Here are some key tips on making that plan:

- In a home or building, move to a pre-designated shelter such as a basement, or get under a sturdy table or stairs.
- If a basement is not available, move to a small interior room or hallway on the lowest floor and cover yourself, creating as many walls as possible between you and the storm. Stay away from windows.
- If caught outdoors, seek shelter in a sturdy building. If you cannot quickly walk to shelter, get into a vehicle, buckle your seatbelt, and drive to the closest sturdy shelter.
- Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornados. You should leave a mobile home and go to the designated storm shelter or the lowest floor of a sturdy building nearby.

"Waukesha County: Leading the Way ..."