



Mono County Employee Newsletter

SPRING 2012

Coffee with the CAO

My ongoing coffee with the employees was held on April 23 & 24. We had about 75 employees attend both sessions. I plan to do these on a regular basis and again I invite ALL employees. Some of the issues discussed and questions raised were:

1. Is Mono County planning on Furloughing employees? The mid-year budget showed that everyone is watching their spending. I know tax revenue will decrease approximately 3-5% according to the Assessor, so we still have to watch how we spend. The Board of Supervisors has not embraced furloughs since it affects customer service. I would not encourage Mono County to go in that direction.

2. What reserves does Mono County have in the bank? A few years ago the Board of Supervisors decided it was important to establish reserves (a bank account for emergencies). They saved approximately \$7.5 million in that account. During recent years with dropping tax revenues and increasing expenses the Board has utilized that account to pay for improvements. At the mid-year budget review the Board decided that revenues from the increase in Mammoth Mountain assessment be placed in our cash reserves. Our reserves at that point stood at \$1.2 million and the Board added another \$500,000. So we presently have \$1.7 million. The County budget last year was over \$66 million.

3. Union versus At-Will employees. Much has been said about recent negotiations and the impact on the various groups. We have 5 bargaining units and approximately 66 At-Will employees.

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Environmental Health Behind the Scenes in Everyday Life

The following article was printed in The Union, a Nevada County publication, in May 2012. The author is Wesley Nicks, Director of Environmental Health in Nevada County. Since the issues and programs noted in the article relate to most or all environmental health jurisdictions, including Mono County's Environmental Health division of the Health Department, I thought it would be a good opportunity to pass Wesley's insights on to folks in Mono County to give a clearer perspective on what we do. I've interjected a few comments in parentheses here and there to tailor the subject to our Environmental Health division.

Louis Molina,
Environmental Health Manager

Many people think of the word "environment" and assume that the Environmental Health Department must look after the world of nature, protecting the trees, birds, lakes, flowers, etc.

People seem comfortable with the perception that the department focuses only on the health of the natural environment. And while we are all becoming more concerned with impacts on our natural world, the main focus of environmental health is really on the human environment — mak-

ing sure we all have safe and healthy places to live, work and play.

Environmental health (EH) programs, for the most part, operate in the background. You might think of environmental health as the antivirus program on your computer: It is always in the background, doing its job, and you rarely have to pay attention to how it works.

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Upcoming Events

May 28 - Memorial Day Holiday

June 5 - Election Day

July 4 - Independence Day Holiday

July 9 - Employee Appreciation Picnic - Mammoth

July 10 - Employee Appreciation Picnic - Bridgeport

July 23 - Coffee with the CAO - Mammoth

July 24 - Coffee with the CAO - Bridgeport



Spring Cleaning Around the County



The beautification of the outdoor area at the Bridgeport Fleet Maintenance and Road Shop was completed with large boulders lining the perimeter.



The Facilities Division continues rehab of the old clinic building. Here you can see they are pressure washing the building for a fresh coat of paint.

HR Corner - Age of Opportunity

We live in an age of opportunity: if you have drive, ambition, smarts, you can rise to the top of your profession. With opportunity comes the responsibility of managing yourself. It is up to you to carve out a place in the work world and know when to change course. It is up to you to stay pro-

ductive and engaged in your job. To do these things well, you need to cultivate an understanding of yourself, your strengths and weaknesses. Know whether you work better with others or alone and what type of environment you can make the greatest contribution. Based on your strengths,

work style, you can determine how you can make your greatest contribution and be a star performer.

Please take a moment to meet our new employees.

Teresa Neely



Roberta Downey
Psychiatric Specialist
Mental Health
Start Date: 3/26/12

Steven Sakoguchi
Social Services
Eligibility Worker
Start Date: 3/12/12



Katherine Freeman
Vocational Trainee
Social Services
Start Date: 4/16/12

Sandra Villalpando
Social Worker
Social Services
Start Date: 4/16/12



Paul Clark
Public Works
Facilities Maintenance Worker
Start Date: 5/8/12

Joey Swager
Public Works
Facilities Maintenance Worker
Start Date: 4/23/12



Not Pictured
Ingrid Braun
Sheriff's Department
Deputy Sheriff
Start Date: 2/21/12

Not Pictured
Michael Hallum
Sheriff's Department
Deputy Sheriff
Start Date: 4/23/12

Environmental Health
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We take it as a good sign that people rarely think about their efforts, but I would like to take this opportunity to clarify what your county Environmental Health Department does for our community that positively affects your everyday life.

The idea that environmental issues have a direct effect on our health began in the 19th century when physicians from Europe and the United States began to understand that many of the diseases that caused millions of people to suffer or die were directly related to how we manage our immediate surroundings.

They discovered that sewage leaking into drinking water caused cholera outbreaks, turning entire communities into ghost towns.

That lead plumbing and utensils caused mental and physical illness, that garbage harbored rats and fleas which acted as a vector for the black plague resulting in the deaths of millions, and that perishable food supplies must be managed to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria.

In more modern times, industrial chemical usage and accidents have resulted in injuries, death and serious long term illnesses. Even today, millions of people suffer each year in less developed countries from these same causes.

The Nevada County EH staff are California registered environmental health specialists, combining many disciplines such as toxicology, biology, chemistry, epidemiology and industrial hygiene to manage environmental health programs. *(This is also true of your Mono County EH staff.)*

These specialists are assigned into three main divisions to prevent unhealthy conditions from occurring today. These are the consumer protection, land-use regulation and hazardous materials management divisions. *(This is also true in Mono County. We have Environmental Health Specialists specializing in consumer protection, small public water systems, solid waste and hazardous materials management. However, since we only have one person specializing in each of these programs, all EHSs in Mono County cross over to cover needs in all EH programs. So in many ways, our "specialists" in Mono County are a bit more of the old school variety and work as "generalists", when necessary.)*

The consumer protection division helps protect our residents and our tourism industry by evaluating restaurants and food vendors for proper storage, preparation and delivery practices to minimize the potential for food-borne illness.

EH staff conduct inspections of public water delivery systems and water wells to ensure drinking water is free from harmful bacteria and chemical contaminants remain below regulatory limits.

They also track diseases, such as West Nile virus, Relapsing Fever, Hanta virus, plague, and Lyme disease that can spread

from animals to people.

The staff also conducts inspections of recreational swimming pools to prevent children from becoming trapped by suction pump equipment and to ensure proper chemical treatment is maintained to stop water-borne disease.

And they monitor public housing, such as camps and detention facilities, to ensure health standards are maintained.

The land-use division staff conducts site plan reviews and field inspections to verify adequate wastewater disposal resources and drinking water resources are present for proposed development.

They also inspect septic system design and installation to prevent sewage from contaminating drinking water and identify potential hazards from Nevada County's rich mining history that left behind toxic chemicals and exposed hazardous minerals that you certainly don't want in your backyard.

The hazardous materials division ensures the safe management and disposal of industrial and household hazardous wastes, the proper disposal of solid waste and garbage and the safe storage and usage of commercial chemicals by businesses in our neighborhoods.

Staff in this division also oversees the cleanup of chemical spills to protect against public exposure including leaking underground storage tank sites, chemical spills, or any other environmental health emergency, 24 hours a day. *(In Mono County we also have a staff person specializing in the program of solid waste. This program involves the oversight of all solid waste facilities in Mono County, which comprise three landfills and seven transfer stations. Regulations dealing with the program of solid waste are primarily rooted in the preservation of groundwater quality.)*

We are very fortunate to live in our modern community where the science of environmental health is understood and practiced.

And although there are only a few of them, the dedicated professionals of your county Environmental Health Department do a big job preventing chemical releases, minimizing the potential for illness and employing a watchful eye to potential disease outbreaks.

The Department will continue its dedicated efforts from behind the scenes to ensure that all citizens of *(Mono County)* continue to live and flourish in a safe and healthy human environment.

Sheriff Department Promotion



The Mono County Sheriff's Office had a promotional opportunity for the position of Patrol Sergeant. Through a competitive process of a State written test, supervisory evaluations, writing skills, and oral interviews, the selection was made. I am pleased to announce that Seth Clark will be our newest supervisor for the Mono County Sheriff's Office. His promotion will be effective February 21, 2012. Sergeant Clark has been assigned as our Mono Narcotics Enforcement Team member for the last four years. He has over 10 years experience starting his career with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office, then working as a patrol officer with the University of California Santa Barbara Police Department. For the last 6 years Seth has been with the Mono County Sheriff's Office. Sergeant Clark is married and his wife Eryn also works for the County in the Social Services Department.

We know he will be an effective supervisor for the Sheriff's Office and he is looking forward to the opportunities and challenges that front line supervisors face.

Congratulations to Seth Clark.

Sheriff Rick Scholl

Matt Davis honored by Board

On Tuesday, April 10, 2012 the Mono County Board of Supervisors adopted and presented a resolution in appreciation of Matt Davis for his service to our country.

Matt served as an active duty mechanic for the United States Marine Corps from 1999 until 2005, and has served as a reserve in the Nevada Army National Guard since 2005.

In December 2010, Matt was moved from reserve status to active duty in order to prepare and train for deployment. In January 2011 the Equipment Mechanic in our Road Department since 2005, was deployed to Operation Enduring Freedom with the Nevada Army National Guard Company C 422D Expeditionary Signal Battalion.

Matt returned to the states in January 2012, he was then released from active duty and returned to his position in the Road Department in February 2012. The County wishes to extend a sincere 'thank you' in appreciation for Matt Davis' service.



Coffee with the CAO
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Few people know that when we bargain a labor agreement with MCPE (our largest bargaining unit), At-Will employees are affected by most of those same changes. For example, during the last bargaining session changes were made in co-payment for premiums for health insurance, reduction in cash back for duplicate health care policies for couples, and elimination of the ability to sell back sick leave once you've gone over your maximum bank. All these concessions also affected At-Will. I've been told the reduction in cash back only affected one At-Will person. This simply is NOT true. It is true that these concessions affected some individuals more than others, during all bargaining that happens. We attempted to be as fair as possible with all groups and consistent with changes across all our groups including At-Will.

4. Why is Mono County negotiating changes/reductions in wages/benefits?

Anyone who has followed the National and State economy is aware that both California and Nevada were the top two States hit by the latest recession. The State of California found itself with a huge deficit and that filtered down to the Cities and Counties. Many municipalities have cut their workforces by 30-50%. Many put their employees on furlough days. Many cut pay and bene-

fits. This started with most municipalities 3 years ago. Mono County planned and had a reserve fund that protected the county for several years. The reality now is that our bank account is running extremely low and the County CAN NOT continue as nothing has happened. We were forced to cut \$2 million out of last year's budget. I'm anticipating another \$1-\$1.5 million reduction this upcoming year. Projects that are being done right now are to help in our goal of reducing costs. Replacing windows in Annex 1 this year, upgrading the HVAC (heating & ventilation) system, plans to shut down the old hospital building, are all energy issues. Upgrades at Community Centers are usually ADA (Americans with Disability Act) projects or projects that were funded long ago. We are watching what we spend very closely.

5. What is the status of Digital 395? The Board of Supervisors was requested to consider appointing someone to oversee the Last Mile aspect of Digital 395. This is the phase of the project that actually provides links to our communities for broadband service. The Board decided to approve my recommendation of Nate Greenberg as GIS Coordinator/Digital 395 Manager. Nate is extremely knowledgeable in this area. This project is extremely important to Mono County and we wanted to insure that it had the proper oversight. We thank Nate for taking on this task and wish him the best.

6. Longevity verses Performance Pay? One question that I am continually asked is about



the difference in longevity versus performance pay. As most Union members know after a certain period of time they are eligible for longevity pay. The amount varies from MOU to MOU and so do the years of services. This pay is given for years of service. Performance pay is a 5% increase that is potentially given to At-Will employees based on their performance and can be taken away at anytime if they fail to meet the standards of the CAO. Performance pay is not compounded. Not all At-Will employees receive it and new At-Will employees are no longer eligible for it.

Since I have limited space here I will continue in future additions to give you information about Mono County. Once again, I appreciate your dedication to this great County and look forward to speaking with each of you.

Jim Arkens, CAO

Low Cost Vaccination/Dog Licensing Clinic

This annual 'doggy social' is sponsored by our Animal Control Department and the Eastern Sierra Veterinary Medical Association. Rabies vaccinations will be offered for \$6, other canine and feline vaccinations/boosters will also be available.

All dogs over the age of 4 months are required to be vaccinated for rabies at prescribed intervals. They are also required to have and wear a current Mono County Dog License.

For additional information you may call Animal Control at (760) 932-5582

The 2012 schedule is as follows:

Saturday, June 2
Crowley Lake Road Shop from 8-11:30 am
Chalfant Fire Hall from 1-2:30 pm
Benton Road Shop from 3:30-4:30 pm

Saturday June 9
Lee Vining Road Shop from 9:30-11 am
June Lake Fire Hall from 1-3 pm

Saturday June 16
Walker Fire Hall from 8:30-11:30 am
Bridgeport Animal Control Bldg from 2-3:30 pm