

Our Mission: We strive to provide exceptional services that enhance quality of life and promote a safe, healthy, and welcoming community for all.

**Date:** Oct. 1, 2024  
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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The following actions were taken at the Oct. 1, 2024, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota.

## **County Board appoints managers to watershed districts**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners appointed managers to two watershed districts Oct. 1.

The board reappointed William Armstrong of Lake Elmo as a manager of the Valley Branch Watershed District for a first full term beginning on Nov. 15, 2024, and expiring Nov. 14, 2027.

The board appointed Larry Odebrecht of Stillwater as a manager of the Brown's Creek Watershed District to a first full term beginning on October 22, 2024, and expiring October 21, 2027.

**Contact: Megan Carlson, Administrative Assistant, 651-430- 6001**

## **Sheriff's Office receives grant funding for rapid response patrol boat purchase**

The Washington County Sheriff's Office received a \$225,000 Port Security Grant Program through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, for the purchase of a rapid response patrol boat.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted the grant Oct. 1. The county will provide \$75,000 in required matching funds to accept the grant.

The goal of the Port Security Grant Program is to strengthen port-wide risk management and protection of critical marine transportation system infrastructure from acts of terrorism, major disasters, and other emergencies. The program provides funding to enhance maritime security capabilities throughout U.S. ports.

The Sheriff's Office is the primary law enforcement agency for all waterways in Washington County and is part of the area maritime security plan, providing layered security to several Maritime Transportation Security Act (MTSA) facilities in pool two of the Mississippi River. The Sheriff's Office also provides security and patrol resources for lock and dam number two. The Sheriff's Office would be the primary and coordinating agency, assisting in events such as spills, train derailments, bridge collapses, and other emergencies. The investment in a rapid response patrol boat will allow the Sheriff's Office to provide enhanced security measures and deploy resources quickly and efficiently in the event of an emergency.

**Contact: Laura Perkins, Law Enforcement Public Information Manager, 651-430-7994**

## **October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month in Washington County**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners have declared the month of October to be Cybersecurity Awareness Month.

The board passed a resolution making the declaration Oct. 1.

Cybersecurity Awareness Month is dedicated to the public and private sectors working together to raise awareness about the importance of cybersecurity. Over the years it has grown into a collaborative effort between government and industry to enhance cybersecurity awareness, encourage actions by the public to reduce online risk, and generate discussion on cyber threats on a national and global scale.

The county has taken many steps to enhance cybersecurity within the organization including delivering countywide training, supporting tools to report and respond to phishing attempts, providing system security patches, and performing security reviews of new applications before they are used at the county.

The county also encourages the public to take the following simple actions at home, not only during October but every day throughout the year, to stay safe online:

- **Recognize and report phishing attempts.** Be cautious of unsolicited messages asking for personal information. Avoid sharing sensitive information or credentials with unknown sources. Report phishing attempts and delete the message.

- **Use strong passwords.** Strong passwords are long, random, unique, and include all four character types (uppercase, lowercase, numbers, and symbols). Password managers are a powerful tool to help you create strong passwords for each account.
- **Turn on multi-factor authentication (MFA).** You need more than a password to protect your online accounts and enabling MFA makes you significantly less likely to get hacked. Enable MFA on all your online accounts that offer it, especially email, social media, and financial accounts.
- **Update software.** Ensuring your software is up to date is the best way to ensure you have the latest security patches and updates on your devices. Regularly check for updates if automatic updates are not available.

**Contact: Cassandra Lidgerding, Senior Communications Specialist, 651-430-6419**

## **County Board approves 2024-2042 Washington County Solid Waste Management Plan**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the 2024-2042 Solid Waste Management Plan Oct. 1.

The 2024-2042 Washington County Solid Waste Management Plan will guide county waste management activities. This revised plan replaces the 2018-2036 Washington County Waste Management Plan and is consistent with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Policy Plan.

Community input was an important component of the revision process. A stakeholder engagement effort was implemented to gather information from residents, businesses, waste haulers, and local governments through surveys and interviews. A Waste Reduction Advisory Committee provided input on aspects of the plan revision.

The Plan includes strategies to increase waste reduction, reuse, and recycling to achieve waste objectives. Priorities of the Plan include:

- Reducing risk to public health and the environment.
- Policy development.
- Extended producer responsibility.
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Advancing race and health equity and environmental justice.

- Preventing and managing food waste.
- Waste reduction and reuse.
- Market development.
- Trash as a resource.
- Business support for programs.

The county will now submit the plan to the Commissioner of the MPCA for review and approval. The updated 2024-2042 Solid Waste Management Plan can be viewed on the [county's website](#).

**Contact: Caleb Johnson, Senior Community/Environmental Health Program Manager, 651-430-6680.**

## **County to install all-way stop at Myrtle Street and Brick Street in Stillwater**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved plans to install signs to create an all-way stop at County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 12 (Myrtle St. W.) and Brick Street S./Birchwood Drive Oct. 1.

Washington County Public Works staff have been in discussions with area residents and City of Stillwater officials regarding concerns related to traffic speeds near Brick St./Birchwood Drive and the difficulties crossing the county highway as a pedestrian in this area.

Upon studying various traffic control options and locations within the corridor, staff recommended the conversion of the intersection at Brick St. to all-way stop control. This option was determined to be the most effective option to provide a controlled crossing location while also improving speed control for eastbound traffic.

**Contact: Joe Gustafson, Traffic Engineer, 651-430-4351**

## **October 7-11 is Customer Service Week in Washington County**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners declared Oct. 7-11 as Customer Service Week in Washington County. The board made the declaration and honored staff Oct. 1.

In 1992, the first full week in October was proclaimed National Customer Service Week by the U.S. Congress to recognize the work of customer service professionals throughout the year and the importance of that work in a wide range of businesses, including government.

All Washington County employees live out the county's mission every day, providing exceptional services that enhance quality of life and promote a safe, healthy, and welcoming community for all.

The board's proclamation noted that the county's Property Records and Taxpayer Services staff have extensive technical knowledge in performing a wide variety of county services for the public. The board also noted that the staff provides prompt, friendly, and accurate customer service as a requirement of that staff doing its job well and serving county residents with its utmost ability.

**Contact: Amy Stenftenagel, Property Records and Taxpayer Services Director, 651-430-6182**