Many thanks to all of you who took the time to read the County’s first eNews as well as those who have signed up to receive future newsletters. We feel that this is a valuable tool to reach citizens and ask that you help expand our distribution by sharing with friends and family.

It is that time of the year when we work on the budget for 2017. Currently, we are in the process of conducting Budget Hearings. The Appropriation requests were due from the Elected Officials and Departments Heads on September 30, 2016.

We have requested that the Township Trustees across the County provide a list of intersections in their township that they consider to be dangerous, primarily because of their current signage. It is our intent to work with the Townships, County Engineer, Sheriff, and ODOT to make these intersections safer for citizens.

The Water Study through the Wood County Economic Development Commission has been released and the options are currently being reviewed. We will keep you informed as progress is made to ensure safe, reliable sources of water for Wood County.

Because of the opiate epidemic that is plaguing Wood County, Ohio, and the United States, we are working with the Adult Probation Department to provide treatment for people who will soon be released from the Northwest Community Corrections Center.

We hope that you and your families have a safe upcoming holiday season and we look forward to serving you in 2017.
WOOD COUNTY PROBATE COURT VOLUNTEER GUARDIAN PROGRAM

As Wood County has grown, so has the need for court-appointed guardians. The Probate Court, operating under the direction of Judge David Woessner, hears guardianship cases in our county. A guardian is appointed to make personal or financial decisions for an individual who is declared legally incompetent. Unfortunately, these individuals may not have anyone close to them or suitable who can act in this role.

As a result of the need for guardians, Judge Woessner created the Wood County Probate Court Volunteer Guardian program. The program, established in 2011, provides assistance by training, appointing, and overseeing volunteer guardians. The guardians provide assistance in a variety of ways. Guardians may assist with housing or medical decisions. A volunteer may also assist in engaging those they oversee in social events such as movies or recreational activities. Volunteer guardians are not involved in financial matters. This program, made possible by a group of dedicated and caring volunteers from all walks of life, provides a much needed service that directly enhances and impacts the lives of those in need of assistance.

At this time, 17 volunteers are assisting 20+ individuals in Wood County. The number of people needing assistance is expected to increase as our population ages and families continue to be separated by distance. Therefore, the Court is seeking additional volunteers to serve as guardians.

Current volunteer, Dee Kern, considers it “a privilege to work with these special people.” Further, she feels the residents of Wood County are “very fortunate have such a program.” Denise Niese, volunteer and Executive Director of the Wood County Committee on Aging, feels “strong systems of support are available to protect the individual and their assets” and the volunteer program “provides a fulfilling volunteer opportunity which dramatically impacts the lives of adults needing a friend or advocate.”

Training is provided to familiarize the volunteer with the guardianship process and Court procedures. Any person, age 21 or older, who is interested in this program, may contact Jennifer Robeson at 419-354-9230 for more information.
NEW SPAY AND NEUTER PROGRAM

Wood County registered dog owners will receive a low cost spay or neuter coupon enclosed with their 2017 dog license renewal application. Applications will be mailed at the end of November, and dog license sales will commence on December 1, 2016.

The spay or neuter coupon is provided through the “Big Fix”, a program made possible through a collaboration among Wood and Lucas counties and Humane Ohio, a low cost spay or neuter clinic. The coupon reduces the cost of a spay or neuter performed by Humane Ohio to $10.00. The 2017 renewal application will ask owners if their dogs have been spayed or neutered.

County dog license benefits:
- Compliance with state law
- Loose dogs wearing current tags often receive a free ride home
- Dogs wearing current tags have five times longer redemption period
- Reduced shelter impound and redemption fees
- Annual compliance results in low license fees

The Wood County Dog Shelter conducts door to door dog license checks throughout the year.
WHEN DO YOU NEED TO APPLY FOR A RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMIT/APPROVAL IN WOOD COUNTY?

The 2013 Residential Code of Ohio is adopted by the State of Ohio and is required to be enforced for all one, two and three family dwellings. The Building Code does not officially use the term permit, but instead it uses the term approval.

Approval/permits are required for: the construction, alteration, movement, enlargement, replacement, repair, equipment, use and occupancy changes, maintenance, removal, and demolition of every, one, two, and three family dwelling, any appurtenances connected or attached to such buildings or structures, or any accessory structures.

102.10 Work exempt from approval. Approval/permits shall not be required for the following:

Building:

1. One-story detached accessory structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses and similar uses, provided the floor area does not exceed two hundred square feet (11.15 m²) and playground structures.
2. Fences not over six feet (1829 mm) high.
3. Retaining walls which are not over four feet (1219 mm) in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge.
4. Water tanks supported directly upon grade if the capacity does not exceed five thousand gallons (18 927 L) and the ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed two to one.
5. Sidewalks and driveways not more than thirty inches (762 mm) above grade and not over any basement or story below and which are not part of an accessible route.
6. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work.
7. Swings and other playground equipment accessory to a one, two, or three-family dwelling.
8. Window awnings supported by an exterior wall which do not project more than fifty-four inches (1372 mm) from the exterior wall and do not require additional support.
9. Decks not exceeding 200 square feet (18.58 m²) in area, that are not more than 30 inches (762 mm) above grade at any point, are not attached to a dwelling, and do not serve the exit door required by section 311.4

These are a just a few examples of questions received daily by inspection department:

- Is a permit required to replace my water heater? **YES**
- Is a permit required to replace my furnace or air conditioner? **YES**
- Do I need a permit to build my garage or shed if greater than 200 sq. ft.? **YES**
- Is a permit required to replace my existing windows and doors with no structural changes? **NO**
- Do I need a permit to replace my roof? **YES/NO** depends if roof decking/framing members are being replaced.
- Do I need a permit to replace my bathroom shower, sink, and water closet? **YES**
- Is a permit required to run a electrical service to my garage? **YES**
What is the purpose of approvals (permits) and Building Codes?

The purpose behind building codes is to give reasonable assurance that a home is safe from structural failure, fire hazards from electrical and heating systems, electrical shock, and health risks. The approval/permits provide a permanent record of the work performed and inspections conducted on the project.

Contact the Wood County Building Inspection Department before you start your next project if you have any questions. Visit the department’s webpage for additional information at wcbiinspect.co.wood.oh.us

NEED TRANSPORTATION TO YOUR NEXT MEDICAL APPOINTMENT?

The Wood County NET Plus program provides non-emergency transportation to Wood County residents at no-cost to the individual to services such as medical, dental, vision, mental health and addiction treatment appointments. There is no limit to the number of trips. Transportation is available to providers located in Wood County and the surrounding counties. Services provided are curb-to-curb but are ADA accessible. A personal care attendant may accompany the resident for free.

This program is a partnership among the Board of County Commissioners, Wood County Health District, and Job and Family Services in order to provide transportation for our citizens.

To schedule a ride, residents must call the hotline at least 5 days prior to the appointment at 1-844-353-6779 which is answered by the Children’s Resource Center. **Callers will go through a screening process to determine eligibility for one of the funding sources. Callers who may access other available free community transportation will be referred to those services.**

The hours of operation are 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information, visit woodcountyjfs.com.
GOT YOUR BAGS?

Americans use and dispose of 100 billion plastic shopping bags each year, plastic bags from the grocery, department stores, you name it. Many of these bags end up as litter...polluting waterways, hanging in trees, blowing in farm fields and ditches and causing harm to wildlife. Lately, we have seen an increase in the number of plastic bags collected during local litter cleanups. The Ocean Conservancy reports that during 2015, plastic bags were one of the top ten items collected during the International Coastal Cleanup with over 75,000 bags collected from U.S. waterways. After speaking with residents many are willing to help, but have stated that they struggle to remember their reusable bags. Many have them in their cars, but forget to bring them into the store.

“Got Your Bags?” is a marketing campaign that has been successful in other areas of the country and focuses on reducing bag usage by promoting reusable bags and also on recycling plastic bags by promoting local collection points. The Wood County Solid Waste Management District kicked off the campaign at the Wood County Fair by passing out plastic bag dispensers for collection, shopping lists printed with a reminder and “Got Your Bags? decals. The decals can be placed on windshields as a reminder for shoppers.

You can help!

**Reduce & Reuse:** Take your reusable bags on every shopping trip. Using reusable bags reduces the need for plastic or paper grocery bags.

**Recycle:** Take your plastic bags back to the store for recycling. Plastic grocery bags are 100% recyclable and can be used to make new bags or turned into lumber for benches, playground equipment and more! Did you know? Locations accepting plastic bags can also recycle other types of film plastic such as newspaper sleeves, case wrap, bread bags, bathroom tissue packaging, produce bags and other similar items.

Although plastic bags (of any kind) are not permitted in curbside recycling bins or accepted at our local recycling drop-offs, many local stores provide recycling containers for this type of plastic. For a full list of recycling locations, visit the District’s website at [www.recyclewoodcounty.org](http://www.recyclewoodcounty.org).
ARE YOU READY? IS YOUR ORGANIZATION READY?
By Brad Gilbert, Director, Wood County Emergency Management

Being prepared for disasters is critical for your family’s well-being as well as your organization’s well-being because it is not a matter of “if” but a matter of “when” a disaster will impact you.

In 2015, County Administrator Andrew Kalmar met with me to discuss increased emergency planning for county offices. We decided to develop a plan to step participating county offices through the Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) process. COOP is a method of emergency planning for organizations to evaluate their threat and risks and develop emergency plans to keep their organizations operational in the event of a disaster. This process helps an organization to determine the immediate critical minimal staffing needs and operational space and technology needs to immediately get their organization operational for the first 30 days following a disaster until more temporary or permanent arrangements for the organization’s operations can be determined. EMA Deputy Director Chris Diefenthaler was tasked with developing and implementing the step-by-step process county offices were to complete to develop their own COOP. The process was broken down into 4 different informational meetings consisting of threat and risk assessment, mission essential functions, mission essential staffing, and records/communication needs. County offices worked on these items over the course of the past 8 months. By the end of October, participating county offices will be placing all of the COOP information they have been compiling into a final COOP document that can be used to train their staffs and provide guidance when a disaster strikes. The overall purpose of these plans is to keep county government functioning for the needs of its citizens.

The Emergency Management Agency is also in the process of updating the countywide all-hazards emergency operations plan (EOP). Political subdivisions and first responders will be involved with reviewing and approving the updated EOP in early 2017.
BUDGET-IN-BRIEF

General Fund Actual Receipts through September 30th = $32,637,400.59

General Fund Actual Expenditures through September 30th = $29,831,486.74

Appropriation requests were due on September 30, 2016. Budget Hearings are under-
way through the end of October. To view the Commissioners meeting agendas and
minutes, please visit www.co.wood.oh.us.

Thank you for taking the time to read the County’s Electronic Newsletter.

PLANNING TO TILE OR RE-TILE YOUR FARM?

If you retile your farm land in a manner that will change the flow of water from one
ditch to another, you must first petition the Commissioners to see if this is
permissible.

A petition would need to be filed with the Commissioners’ Office using Ohio
Revised Code 6131. A view and hearing will need to be held. The Engineer will
determine whether the change will put a hardship on the watercourse. In some
cases the change may not be feasible.

CLERK OF COURTS-AUTO TITLE DIVISION OFFICE TO BE CLOSED

The Wood County Clerk of Courts-Auto Title Division is looking forward to an update to their Title Office
software which will take place over the holiday weekend of December 30, 31st, 2016 and January 1st &
2nd, 2017.

All title offices across the State of Ohio will be unable to process any vehicle and watercraft titles starting
on December 29th, 2016 @ 8:00 P.M. through January 3, 2017 @ 8:30 A.M.

To accommodate any end of the year vehicle sales, the Wood County Clerk of Courts-Auto Title
Division, located at 1616 E. Wooster Street, Bowling Green, OH 43402 will remain open for business to
process any vehicle and watercraft titles on December 29th until 7:00 P.M.

The Title Office will then be closed for business on Friday, December 30th, 2016 all day; and Saturday,
December 31st, 2016. January 1st, 2017 is New Year’s Day; and January 2, 2017 is the official County
Holiday.

The staff of the Wood County Clerk of Courts, Auto Title Division anticipates being open for business on
Tuesday, January 3, 2017 at 8:30 A.M.