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Coordinator/HR Office**

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Carlton County

County-wide newsletter brought to you by the County Coordinator's Office

Issue 01 January / February / March 2020

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COVID-19 Information and Updates

With media information inundating us with information, Carlton County wants to highlight a few key resources and pieces of information that will help as you filter through all of the information coming at you.

Carlton County Press Releases (daily): Please find these posted daily to the "News Flash" section of the website [homepage](#). This is the most up to date information about general resources, health recommendations and county updates each day. If interested in being notified when a new release is added, please sign up [here](#). Carlton County is continuing to follow the recommendations from the [Minnesota Department of Health \(MDH\)](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) in best practice for all guidance related to COVID-19.

A few key health messages:

- Face Coverings: [CDC Guidance](#)
- MDH: [Protecting Yourself and Your Family: COVID-19](#)
- MDH: [COVID-19 Print Materials & Videos](#)
- MDH: [Hand Hygiene Resources](#)
- MDH: [Sign up](#) for COVID-19 email updates

Carlton County Resource Hub (GIS): Carlton County has created a new COVID-19 resource hub through GIS technology, for the public to use and populate with resources and information for Carlton County related to the COVID-19 situation. Please visit the website [here](#), or by clicking the "COVID-19" icon on the county's website homepage, and feel free to populate information under "Maps & Resources."

Governor's Stay at Home Order and Dashboard: Continue to check the www.mn.gov/stayhomemn website for updated details on the Governor's executive order. Staying home will save lives by slowing the spread of COVID-19. During the stay at home order, leave home only to:

- Get food, medicine, and other essentials
- Seek health care
- Care for family, friends, and pets
- Spend time outside
- Go to work if you provide critical services
- If you need to leave your home, always stay at least 6 feet away from other people

On Friday, April 3rd, Governor Walz announced a new State of Minnesota website and dashboard to provide Minnesotans with data and information that drives the response to COVID-19. The website includes data and statistics as well as information on what to do if you are sick, when to seek medical attention, news and actions from the Governor's office, and other resources. Visit [Coronavirus Disease in Minnesota](#) for more information.

Mental Wellness Resources: As things progress with COVID-19 prevention efforts, you or your loved ones may be experiencing increased stress and anxiety. Consider the tips provided [here](#), support to your mental well-being during these uncertain times. It is important to be gentle with yourself and others, and to take steps to support both your own and your family's mental well-being.

Additional Mental Wellness Resources:

- "[Stress and Coping](#)" (CDC)
- "[Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health During an Infectious Disease Outbreak](#)" (Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration)
- "[Tips for helping your family and yourself deal with the isolation of staying home to stay safe](#)" (Community Health of Central Washington)

Continued on page 2

Continued COVID-19 Information and Updates

Other links:

- Based on new evidence, the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Learn how to make and wear a face covering appropriately [here](#).
- The **Senior LinkAge Line** (1-800-333-2433) is one stop shop for Minnesota Seniors – a telephone information and assistance service that makes it easier for older adults and their families to find community resources that are available to them like a local provider of grocery and medication delivery that can be especially helpful during the stay at home order! Also visit the website [here](#).
- Volunteer Services of Carlton County, Inc. “Groceries-To-Go”: For people 60+ years old. Call 218-879-9238 to register. Place your order over the phone and volunteers will deliver groceries and other products to your door wearing protective gloves and a no-contact drop.
- Thanks to Hunger Impact Partners, families in need can now use a mobile app to find locations serving free meals for children under 18 in their community, including some school locations that have been able to convert to open sites, as well as many community locations. Search “Free Meals for Kids” on the Apple App Store and Google Play Store. Find more details about the app on their [website](#).
- Over the past few weeks, several state and federal programs have been built to assist

small businesses struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic. Different programs make sense for different businesses, so the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development is providing a summary guide to help small businesses quickly see which programs might be right for their situation. Find the guide [here](#).

- The Minnesota Department of Agriculture has compiled information related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Find more information about Food and Beverages, Farmers and Ranchers, Animals, etc. [here](#).
- The Arrowhead Library System is continuing to offer services through the pandemic – please visit their [website](#) to check out their services!
- “Empowering and protecting your family during the COVID-19 pandemic” (Video) – Dr. David Price, Weill Cornell Medical Center

m MINNESOTA
#StayHomeMN

Buddy Check!

6 ways to help

- 1** Reach out to friends, family and neighbors, especially the elderly!
- 2** Volunteer to deliver groceries or other essential items to a neighbor staying at home.
- 3** Donate money to food shelves and other non-profits. Buy a gift card online from a nearby business.
- 4** Donate blood to combat a blood shortage during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 5** Donate your time! Contact an organization registered with the Minnesota Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (MnVOAD).
- 6** Give new, unused Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) like gowns, masks and gloves. Contact your county or tribal emergency manager.

Staying home will save lives.

Leave home only to:

Get essential items	Seek health care	Care for others	Spend time outside	Provide critical services
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Let the Doctor Come to You With Blue Cross Blue Shield Doctor On Demand

Let the Doctor come to you. All you need is a smartphone, tablet or computer to get quick, convenient care for many common conditions from board-certified physicians and licensed psychologists and psychiatrists. Book a same day appointment from anywhere, visit with a doctor on your smartphone or computer and get prescriptions at your pharmacy. Get started with **Doctor On Demand** today.

The cost is typically less than an in-person visit, although temporary changes to Doctor On Demand have been made. A psychiatry visit is no cost to you through April 13, 2020. A medical visit is no cost to you through April 13, 2020.

Ways to Reduce Your Property Taxes

Carlton County would like to remind all homesteaded property taxpayers to research and apply for the Minnesota Property Tax Refund (PTR) from the State of Minnesota's Department of Revenue.

For those who are unaware, the State of Minnesota Department of Revenue has two types of Homestead Credit Refund and you may qualify for both. They are:

- Regular – this is based on your income and the amount of property taxes paid. You must have lived in your home on January 2, 2020 and your total household income must be less than \$115,020. The maximum refund is \$2,820.
- Special – this is based ONLY on how much your property tax increased. You must have lived in your home January 2, 2019 and January 2, 2020 and your property tax increased at least 12% and a minimum of \$100. This increase cannot be due to improvements done to your property (i.e.: new construction, remodel, etc.)

You may claim your refund online, through a software provider or through the mail (there are printed out applications in both the County Assessor's and County Auditor's offices available, but the program itself is administered entirely by the Department of Revenue). For more information please visit the [Minnesota Department of Revenue website](#).

Make sure you use your property tax statement that is mailed out in March or April (mid-July for manufactured homes in a park). DO NOT USE the Notice of Proposed Taxes.

Historically, Carlton County residents have qualified for an average refund of approximately \$850. According to the MN Department of Revenue only 1/3 of eligible residents apply for the PTR. This means many Carlton County residents are forfeiting this money, YOUR MONEY, simply because they do not apply! All residents are strongly encouraged to apply for this refund. This program is intended to help offset property taxes for residents who experience financial hardships, or live in an area with unusually higher needs of services which can drive up local costs, thereby causing higher property tax levies upon its residents. Many of our residents who apply and are awarded a refund use that refund to make the 2nd half property tax payments in the fall.

Please share this newsletter and word of the Property Tax Refund with all homeowners you know. There are millions of dollars of refund monies that go unclaimed annually!

Ways to Reduce Your Property Taxes

The Minnesota Department of Revenue details multiple **property tax reduction** programs on their webpage. Please visit <https://www.revenue.state.mn.us/property-tax-refund> for **MN property tax reduction information**. Three of these programs are summarized below.

Property Tax Refund — For Homeowners and Renters — File by August 15, 2020

There are two types of Homestead Credit Refunds:

- Regular — based on your income and property taxes
- Special — based on how much your property tax increased

You may be eligible for one or both refunds even if you have not qualified in previous years.

2019 Form M1PR, Homestead Credit Refund (for Homeowners) and Renter's Property Tax Refund can be found at: https://www.revenue.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/2019-12/m1pr_19.pdf

Instructions for Form M1PR can be found at: https://www.revenue.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/2019-12/m1pr_inst_19.pdf

Senior Citizen Property Tax Deferral — Senior citizens who need help paying for their property taxes may qualify for the Senior Citizen Property Tax Deferral Program. To qualify, you must be **65 or older**. If married, and one of you is 65 or older, the other must be at least 62. Your **household income must be \$60,000 or less**. You must have lived in, owned your home, and had it homesteaded for the last 15 years. Other liens against your property must be less than 75% of the estimated market value. You must not have a reverse mortgage, a life estate, or any state or federal liens on your property.

A fact sheet for this program can be found at: <https://www.revenue.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/2019-10/Fact%20Sheet%207%20Senior%20Citizens%20Deferral.pdf>

Important: Participation in the Senior Citizen Property Tax Deferral Program is voluntary. If you participate, a tax lien will be placed on your property. This lien must be satisfied when your property is sold. In the event of your death, your heirs must satisfy the lien before they can acquire clear title. Read the instructions on the back of form CR-SCD carefully before completing the application. Homeowners with a reverse mortgage do not qualify to participate in this program.

Homestead Exclusion for Veterans with a Disability — You may qualify for a property tax exclusion on your homestead if:

1. You are an honorably discharged veteran who has a service-connected disability rating of 70% or higher
2. You are a surviving spouse of a qualifying veteran
3. You are a primary family caregiver of a qualifying veteran

A fact sheet for this exclusion can be found at: <https://www.revenue.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/2020-01/Fact%20Sheet%2011%20Exclusion%20for%20Veterans%20with%20a%20Disability.pdf>

TACKLE TOUGH TIMES

BUILD RESILIENCE TO OVERCOME ADVERSITY.

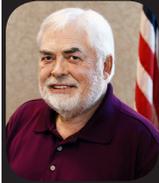
The Employee Assistance Program offers no-cost, confidential support to help you meet life's challenges.

Contact the EAP Today
PHONE 1.800.550.6248 ONLINE SandCreekEAP.com

YOUR EAP IS SIMPLE TO USE. IT IS CONFIDENTIAL. IT HELPS.

Employees, their spouse and dependents have access to no-cost counseling services statewide through their employment with an MGT public entity member.

2020 Carlton County Board of Commissioners



Dick Brenner
Member
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District 1
Dick.Brenner@co.carlton.mn.us



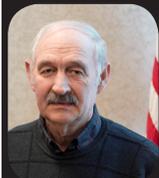
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*Board meetings are held at the Transportation Building on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 8:30 a.m. and the 4th Monday of every month at 4:00 p.m.

Tick and Mosquito Prevention

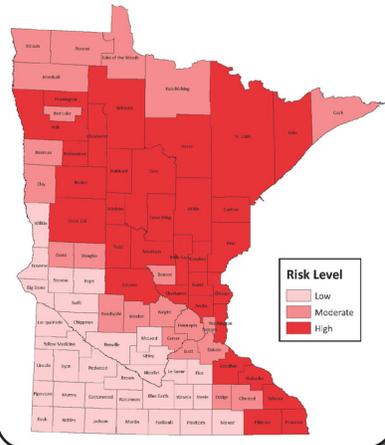
It's that time of year! A variety of diseases may be spread by ticks in Minnesota. The majority of tickborne diseases result from the bite of an infected blacklegged tick (also known as the deer tick). Carlton County is at high risk for tickborne diseases (see map), but some simple prevention measures can help greatly! There are also a variety of diseases that may be spread by mosquitoes. The number of mosquitoes that are actually capable of causing infection in humans is relatively small, but it is always advisable to take preventive measures to protect yourself.

Prevention:

- 1) Use EPA-registered repellents (containing up to 30% DEET), including permethrin for clothing and gear. Make sure to wash off when you return indoors.
- 2) Tumble dry clothing and gear
- 3) Maintain your property: check & repair screens, frequently empty containers that hold water, and remove old tires
- 4) Add tick checks to your daily routine
- 5) Talk to your vet about tick control for your pets

The Minnesota Department of Health has videos regarding ticks for both kids and adults on their webpage – check them out [here](#). Videos are also provided for mosquito-borne diseases [here](#). (Article and photo credit: Minnesota Department of Health)

Tickborne Disease Risk in Minnesota



Carlton County Land Department Participates in Annual Polar Plunge

A week before the annual Polar Plunge in Duluth, GIS Technician Siona Roberts threw down the challenge to her workmates, daring the rest of the Land Department to sign up and take the Plunge into the icy cold waters of Superior Bay. In a matter of hours, the entire Land Department had registered, including Siona's fiancé, pledging to raise about \$500.00. Siona's team, along with family support, met at a Canal Park watering hole to get preheated for the 2:00 p.m. plunge on February 15, 2020.

The crew jumped in line for the next available bus to bring them out to Park Point, where the Duluth Fire Department and area EMT's had cut a hole in the ice, inflated a 20 foot tall polar bear and put up heated changing tents. At 3:00 p.m., the time to Plunge arrived. Everyone lined up at the water's edge, counted to three and jumped in. The next few seconds mysteriously erased all memory, but photo evidence shows they all made the jump, climbed out safely and had a very fun time. The bus ride back to Canal Park was warm and full of laughter. Celebrations in Canal Park further confirmed that the event was a successful team building exercise. [Click here](#) to watch their jump. Way to go Land Department!



Carlton County Committee's

Building Committee -
2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:30 a.m.
(Transportation Building -TB)

Committee of the Whole -
1st Tuesday of the month at 4:00 p.m. (TB)

Diversity Committee -
3rd Thursday of the month at 9:00 a.m.
(PH&HS)

Finance Committee -
1st Tuesday of the month at 2:30 p.m. (TB)

Policy Committee -
3rd Monday of the month at 2:00 p.m.
(Law Enforcement Center - LEC)

Management Team -
1st Tuesday of the month at 8:30 a.m. (TB)

Supervisors Committee -
3rd Thursday quarterly at 2:00 p.m.
(Varies)

Wellness Committee -
2nd Wednesday of the month at 8:30 a.m.
(PH&HS)

**For a more detailed Carlton County
Committee list [click here](#).**



Are you interested in submitting an article in the next Carlton County Newsletter? Email or mail your articles and pictures by the June 19, 2020 deadline to:

Shanny Hurst
Carlton County Coordinator's Office
P.O. Box 510
Carlton, MN 55718
shanny.hurst@co.carlton.mn.us

*Please note that all submissions are subject to editing, as needed.

Let's Get Acquainted with the Carlton County Assistant County Engineer



Let's get acquainted with the Carlton County Assistant County Engineer Aaron Gunderson.

What role do you play at Carlton County?

I'm the Assistant County Engineer at the Transportation Department. I help plan and manage the County's roads and bridges. This year we have the new Barnum shop expansion project going as well.

What work experiences and education led you to a career at Carlton County?

I've been a civil engineer for 14 years working on road & bridge projects in a few different states. The best experience is working outside on the jobs. I've changed jobs a few times always looking

to do what's best for the family and that's what brought me here. I'm thankful for my new gig.

What are the things you like most about your work?

The variety of the work and the people keep it interesting. I like change, learning new things and problem solving.

Tell us a little something about your family.

My wife and I have been married 15 years and have 5 kids ages 1 to 9. We live on a small farm in Carlton County.

Tell us a few things most people might not know about you.

I lived in my truck during college. I've climbed Mt. Rushmore (I used to be in shape). I have a dry sense of humor. I'm not good at counting.

What are your hobbies?

I enjoy outside activities with the family. I'm into a lot of different things in small doses, hunting and gathering most of all. I'm a bit of a history nerd too.

What is one experience you will never forget?

We had our first kid in our living room during a January blizzard. In Wyoming when the weather gets bad they close the roads. The nearest hospital that accepted our insurance was over 90 miles away, so we were prepared just in case. Yeah, I probably won't ever forget that.

Who was the biggest influence in your career?

Mom. My folks didn't go to college and wanted us kids to go. When I picked engineering, my Mom said I'd never make it. I guess she knew me well enough to know what would motivate me. Thanks Mom!

What question would you ask yourself?

People hate driving through road construction, but if you think it's frustrating to drive through it, imagine having to do it for your job. Sometimes I wish I could go back and ask myself, "What the heck are you thinking?"

What are the main lessons you have learned in life?

It's not about me.

"This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer."