

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION
COMMITTEE MEETING**

FEBRUARY 7, 2008

8:30 A.M.

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioners Theresa Abed, Daryl Baker, Leo Farhat, Mike Hosey and Carol Strachan.

ALSO PRESENT: Commissioner Joe Brehler, Robert Sobie and John Fuentes.

The February 7, 2008 meeting of the Information Technology and Communication Committee was called to order at 6:08 p.m. by Chairperson Abed.

Commissioner Hosey moved to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2008 meeting. Commissioner Farhat seconded. Discussion held, Commissioner Strachan requested Mr. Fuentes provide meeting materials to members in the event of their absence. Motion carried.

Mr. Sobie discussed the County's new Content Management System, which is being implemented to enhance the County's Web site. This new system will decentralize the publishing of on-line content from departments to the Web site, incorporate control features to manage the updating of content to ensure information is current and standardize the County's Web site with a common design. Implementation is anticipated for early April 2008 with training scheduled for employees in late March.

A proposed replacement policy to the County's current e-mail policy was distributed to the committee members. The new policy reflects the importance of classifying some e-mail as official government records. It also references the importance of applying state approved records retention schedules to e-mail as well as preserving e-mail with respect to disclosure resulting from Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests and litigation.

Commissioner Farhat moved to recommend approval of the amendment to the County's e-mail policy to the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Baker seconded. Motion carried.

In conjunction with the policy revision, employees will be provided training regarding the significance of record retention of e-mail and the implications of FOIA and litigation disclosure for these records. The Committee suggested that the Board of Commissioners also be provided training on this subject.

Information regarding the National Association of Counties, County Government Week, April 6-12, 2008 was provided. This year's theme is "Protecting Our Children." The Committee discussed methods to promote this designation, including the use of press releases. The

Committee suggested that the Health and Human Services Committee coordinate with appropriate departments to arrange for lobby displays to be scheduled during the week.

The Committee discussed increasing the use of press releases to communicate important activities and actions taken by the Board. Mr. Fuentes will work with Chairman Brehler to determine the best mechanism for the most effective way to determine what will be communicated to the media via press release.

Chairperson Abed and Commissioner Strachan reported that they met with the new editor of the Grand Ledge Independent and discussed ways to facilitate the publication of County information, including the Lansing Community Newspapers family of publications. They provided Mr. Fuentes with the information to initiate these improvements.

Commissioner Baker moved to adjourn the February 7, 2008 meeting of the Information Technology and Communication Committee at 7:15 p.m. Commissioner Strachan seconded. Motion carried.

The next regular scheduled meeting of the Information Technology and Communication Committee will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 6, 2008 in Conference Room 101 of the Courthouse.


Theresa Abed, Chairperson

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2008

6:00 P.M.

AGENDA

1. Approval of the January 10, 2008 Minutes.
2. Website Development Update.
Content Mgmt.
3. E-mail Policy Revision Update.
Bd
4. E-mail Access for other Committees.
Historical Comm.
5. Communication Initiatives.
 - NACO County Government Week.
6. GIS Mapping-Master Plan Update.
to utilize consultant for this \$6,000
7. Miscellaneous.

Eaton County Electronic Mail Policy

POLICY

In order for government to function administratively, undergo periodic audits, provide for its legal requirements and document its heritage, it must manage its records properly. Through a collaborative process of policy development, this electronic mail policy meets the objectives stated above. Therefore, Eaton County, hereinafter referred to as County, requires its employees to retain and destroy electronic mail records that are sent and received in the course of conducting official business in accordance with an approved records Retention and Disposal Schedule. This schedule may be a general records schedule or an agency-specific schedule, both of which are approved by the Michigan Historical Center and the State Administrative Board.

The specific purpose of this policy is to provide guidance with regard to the capture, filtering, storage, use, management (organization, security, confidentiality) and disposal of electronic mail records.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all County-appointed department heads and their respective employees regardless of employment status (i.e. full-time, part-time, temporary, intern, etc.). Unless otherwise agreed upon in writing between the County Controller and the Chief Judge(s) of the Court(s) this policy shall not apply to the judiciary and its respective employees.

PROCEDURES

Definitions:

- **Convenience Copies:** are copies of original records that document official County business transactions and are produced for dissemination to internal or external parties. A convenience copy may be stored in any format (i.e. paper, digital). A convenience copy shall not be considered a backup copy of the original record. A backup of the original record is created by the Information Systems Department and is stored offline and in an alternate location from the main computing facility.

- **Electronic discovery (e-discovery):** Electronic discovery refers to any process in which electronic data is sought, located, secured, and searched with the intent of using it as evidence in a civil or criminal legal case. E-discovery can be carried out offline on a particular computer or it can be done in a network. Court-ordered or government sanctioned hacking for the purpose of obtaining critical evidence is also a type of e-discovery.
- **Electronic mail (e-mail):** is a means of exchanging messages and documents using telecommunications equipment and computers. A complete e-mail message not only includes the contents of the communication, but also the transactional information (dates and times that messages were sent, received, opened, deleted, etc.; as well as aliases and names of members of groups), and any attachments. Transactional information can be found and printed or saved from the e-mail system (see Appendix A for a sample from the County's current e-mail system).
- **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Litigation Coordinator:** is the County Controller and/or outside County legal counsel.
- **IT: Information Technology.** It is a common acronym used to represent the industry as well as local technology arrangements,
- **Litigation hold (also known as "preservation orders" or "hold orders"):** is a stipulation requiring the County to preserve all data that may relate to a legal action involving the County. This requirement ensures that the data in question will be available for the discovery process prior to litigation. The County must preserve records when it learns of pending or imminent litigation, or when litigation is reasonably anticipated. Litigation hold prevents spoliation (destruction, alteration, or mutilation of evidence) which can have a catastrophic impact on the defense. An attorney may issue a litigation hold letter or the County may issue a hold order internally. The order applies not only to paper-based documents but also to electronically-stored information (ESI).
- **Records:** includes general and agency-specific records, maintained in any format, which documents a County business transaction.
- **Records Retention and Disposal Schedules:** are listings of records or records series that are maintained by government agencies in the course of conducting their official business that identify how long the records must be kept, when they may be destroyed and when certain records can be sent to the Archives of Michigan for

permanent preservation. In accordance with Michigan law, records cannot be destroyed unless their disposal is authorized by an approved Retention and Disposal Schedule. Retention and Disposal Schedules are developed by the Department of History, Arts and Libraries, Records Management Services, through consultation with an agency about its records. These schedules are then approved by the Michigan Historical Center and the State Administrative Board.

- TIFF (Tagged Image File Format): A widely used bitmapped graphics file format.

General Electronic Mail Guidelines:

- The County provides an e-mail system to its employees and officials for conducting County business. Using this system is a privilege, not a right. The electronic records created are the property of the County, not the persons who create them.
- The County reserves the right to monitor the use of the e-mail system, make periodic technology updates to it (including replacement), and to retain or dispose of e-mail messages within the scope of this policy and general and agency-specific record retention schedules.
- The County informs employees and officials that Michigan law may require the reproduction of e-mail messages to third parties.
- The e-mail system shall not be used for any purpose the Board of Commissioners deems to be inappropriate, immoral, or illegal.
- The e-mail system may not be used for any political advocacy, including, but not limited to, campaigning for or against a candidate for any federal, state, or local elected office, implying that employee views are in any way a representation of official County policy, and areas that may violate the state of Michigan's Campaign Finance Act of 1976 (P.A. 388).
- The County reserves the right to implement appropriate filtering systems and processes to: 1) avoid sending and receiving non-productive e-mail, 2) and the elimination of potentially harmful e-mail and attachments containing computer viruses.
- E-mail records can be retained online until the allocated digital storage space (approximately 500MB) for each employee has been consumed through sending and receiving messages. Under the following conditions and procedures, additional storage space can be requested:
 - With approval from the employee's Department Head and/or immediate supervisor, employees may receive additional digital storage space if the nature and functions of their job responsibilities justify the request,
 - AND unused digital storage space is available for allocation to the employee.

- In the event digital storage space cannot be allocated, without disrupting the storage requirements of other business systems, no additional space shall be granted. Under this condition, the Director of Information Systems will include a general plan to increase storage capacity during the next fiscal year's budget development cycle if not already planned for in the next budget.
- However, if waiting for the next fiscal budget to be developed and adopted is unacceptable to the requesting Department Head, either the Department Head or the Director of Information Systems can submit a supplemental budget request to the Finance Committee for consideration. The committee's decision shall determine if storage space will be expanded outside the County's normal budget cycle.
- This storage policy shall be under continual review by the Director of Information Systems because of rapidly changing resource requirements and capacities.

Employee Responsibilities:

- Senders and recipients of e-mail messages shall evaluate each message to determine if they need to keep it as documentation of their role in a process that represents official County business.
- Senders are generally considered to be the person of record for an e-mail message. However, if recipients of the message take action as a result of the message, they should also retain it as a record.
- Shall evaluate the content and purpose of each e-mail message to determine which Retention and Disposal Schedule defines the message's approved retention period.
- Employees shall retain e-mail that has not fulfilled its legally-mandated retention period by: 1) printing a paper copy and filing it in an appropriate storage location, 2) printing it to an Adobe PDF © file and storing the e-mail on the County's computer network (i.e. H: drive) or transferring the PDF file into a document imaging system, 3) or printing it directly to a document imaging system as an image file (TIFF).
- Shall retain transactional information (see Appendix A for an example) with the e-mail message if there is a substantial likelihood of relevancy to litigation.
- Shall organize their e-mail messages so they can be located and used. It is recommended that employees store e-mail messages, transactional information, and attachments organized by the content or purpose of the message rather than by file type (i.e. do not organize Microsoft Word © documents together, do not organize Microsoft Excel © files together).

- Shall dispose of transitory, non-record and personal e-mail messages from the e-mail system.
- Shall dispose of e-mail messages that document the official functions of the agency in accordance with an approved Retention and Disposal Schedule. Note: Records, including e-mail, shall not be destroyed if they have been requested under FOIA, or if they are part of on-going litigation, even if their retention period has expired.
- Shall provide access to their e-mail to the FOIA or Litigation Coordinator upon request.
- Shall retain all work-related appointments, tasks and notes stored in the e-mail system, as calendar entries, for 2 years by: 1) printing a paper copy and filing it in an appropriate storage location, 2) printing it to an Adobe PDF © file and storing the e-mail on the County's computer network (i.e. H: drive) or transferring the PDF file into a document imaging system, 3) or printing it directly to a document imaging system as an image file (TIFF).
- Recognizing that e-mail messages that are sent and received using the County's e-mail system are not private, employees are encouraged to manually delete personal appointments (such as sick leave or annual leave) from the e-mail system after the event takes place.
- Convenience copies of records may be created as necessary and in support of business processes. Confidential data shall not be copied to any removable storage device (i.e. USB "storage stick") or attached to an e-mail addressed to an external account without authority from the employee's Department Head and/or immediate supervisor.

County and/or Department-Level Responsibilities:

- Shall ensure that its records are listed on an approved records Retention and Disposal Schedule.
- Shall ensure that all employees with e-mail accounts are aware of and implement this policy.
- Shall notify the Information Systems Department when the accounts of former employees can be closed.
- Shall ensure that the e-mail messages of former employees are retained in accordance with approved Retention and Disposal Schedules.
- Shall notify the FOIA or Litigation Coordinator when a department or agency becomes involved in litigation or receives a FOIA request. The FOIA or Litigation Coordinator shall immediately notify the Director of Information Systems to prepare for an electronic discovery and to implement a litigation hold.
- Exceptions to the procedures in this document may be granted in writing by the Board of Commissioners.

FOIA and Litigation Coordinator Responsibilities:

- Shall work with the Information Systems Department to:
 - Identify if the records that are requested by the public are stored in e-mail, even if the public does not specifically request e-mail.
 - Notify affected employees that a FOIA or e-discovery request involving e-mail was received to prevent the destruction of relevant messages, thus creating a litigation hold.
 - The Director of Information Systems shall immediately take the necessary steps to prevent the destruction of relevant messages in compliance with a litigation hold notice.
 - Shall identify all records relevant to litigation to which the agency is a party that are stored in e-mail.
 - Ensure e-mail is retained and stored on suitable media for inspection and/or duplication in a secure environment.

Administration and Enforcement:

- This policy is applicable to all departments and agencies referenced under the previous section of this policy titled SCOPE.
- In accordance with the mandates described in this policy, the Director of Information Systems, either directly or through delegation of authority to an experienced designee, shall:
 - Maintain an inventory of e-mail and/or other records storage assets including network and standalone servers, storage medium, and formats of electronically-stored information (ESI). The list of assets shall be updated at least once each fiscal year.
 - Periodically audit the capture, filtering, storage, use, management (organization, security, confidentiality) and disposal of electronic records and report notable violations of this policy to the County Controller.
 - Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of this policy through "readiness testing," including but not limited to, simulating a pre-discovery meeting seeking answers to specific IT questions relating to discovery of records based upon a pre-defined theme (i.e. contract management, sexual harassment).
 - When delegated by the Director of Information Systems, Information Systems staff shall comply with the IT Audit Policy previously adopted by the Board of Commissioners.
- As directed by the County Controller, or through a request from a department or court, the Director of Information Systems shall coordinate and schedule periodic informational training sessions to educate employees about this policy. Training

material may be provided in small group sessions or made available on the County's internal shared network (Intranet) for efficient and cost-effective information dissemination.

Revision History:

- This policy was approved on xx/xx/2008 by the Board of Commissioners and supersedes all earlier versions of Electronic Mail Policy's approved November 20, 2002 and December 2000.

APPENDIX A. Sample Electronic Mail Transactional Data.

Mail From: Dr. Robert J. Sobie
File Edit View Actions Tools Window Help

Close Reply Forward

Properties Personalize

Message Id: 46A5BF0A-9F2-81-40747
Subject: Blackberry
Created By: rsobie@eatoncounty.org
Creation Date: 7/24/2007 8:57 AM
From: Dr. Robert J. Sobie

Recipients	Action	Date & Time	Comment
eaton info Eaton County	Delivered	7/24/2007 8:57 AM	
To: John Fuentes (fuentes)	Read	8/1/2007 1:02 AM	

Post Offices

Post Office	Date & Time
eaton info Eaton County	7/24/2007 8:57 AM

Files

File	Size	Date & Time
MESSAGE	1143	7/24/2007 4:57 AM
Text.htm	969	7/24/2007 8:57 AM

Options

Auto Delete: No
 Concealed Subject: No
 Expiration Date: None
 Notify Recipients: Yes
 Priority: Standard
 Reply requested by: None
 Security: Standard
 To Be Deleted: Standard

Eaton County Board of Commissioners Electronic Mail Policy

Last Date of Revision: December 2000

Commissioner Tower moved the approval of the following resolution.
Seconded by Commissioner Johnson.

It is a requirement of the Board of Commissioners that the following Electronic Mail Policy be adhered to by all county departments. Changes to this policy will be made and approved by the Board of Commissioners based on changes in technology, philosophy, and business practices.

Eaton County makes its electronic mail system(s) available to its employees and officials for conducting County business. Using this system(s) is a privilege, not a right. The records created through the use of this system(s) are the property of Eaton County, not the persons who create them. Eaton County reserves the right to monitor the operation of this system(s), to access all of the records within it, and to retain or dispose of those records as it deems necessary. The individuals who use this system(s) may make occasional personal use of it in accordance with this policy and their respective department manager's internal office policies. In doing so, they acknowledge that Michigan law may require the reproduction of electronic mail messages to third parties. In addition, the e-mail system may not be used for any purpose, which the Board of Commissioners deems inappropriate, immoral, or illegal.

Electronic mail systems may not be used for any political purpose including, but not limited to, campaigning for or against a candidate for any federal, state or local elected office, expressing personal views on government issues, and other areas that may violate the state's campaign finance act.

Routing of pictures, jokes, stories, and other non-productive e-mail will not be allowed.

The Director of Information Systems will review e-mail violations with the County Controller.

Any violation of this policy may constitute a violation of county work rules and disciplinary action may be taken against the employee.

Carried.

COUNTY OF EATON)
STATE OF MICHIGAN) ss

I, M. Frances Fuller, Clerk of the Circuit Court for said County of Eaton, Do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a record now remaining in the office of the Clerk of said County and Court.

In Testimony Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and affixed the seal of said Court and County, at the City of Charlotte this 26th day of Feb A.D. 2001

By Jayce Blake Dep. Clerk



NATIONAL

GOVERNMENT
WEEK

2008

April 14 - 20

For information on
how to participate in
National Government Week,
please visit our website at
www.naco.org/governmentweek



NACO *National Association of Counties*

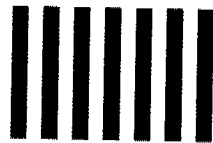
The Voice of America's Counties

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN





NATIONAL
COUNTY
GOVERNMENT
WEEK



2008

April 6 - 12

**PROTECTING
OUR CHILDREN**



About NACo - The Voice of America's Counties

The National Association of Counties (NACo) is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States. Founded in 1935, NACo provides essential services to the nation's 3,066 counties. NACo advances issues with a unified voice before the federal government, improves the public's understanding of county government, assists counties in finding and sharing innovative solutions through education and research, and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. For more information about NACo, visit www.naco.org.

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■ Protecting Our Children

Dear Fellow County Official,

Counties play an important role to serve and protect children and families. From access to healthcare and public safety to maintaining our parks and providing year-round recreational activities, county services touch every family. When children are underserved, at risk or victimized, counties often serve as the safety net.

This year's theme for National County Government Week, April 6-12, is "Protecting Our Children." It provides a great opportunity to show your community the many ways your county works to protect and enhance the health, welfare and safety of children.

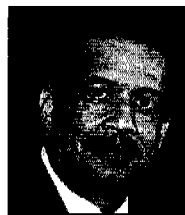
The theme coincides with my two 2007-08 Presidential Initiatives. One is the Campaign Against Sexual Exploitation, which we are conducting in partnership with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. This initiative seeks to engage communities to protect children from becoming victims of sexual exploitation.

My second initiative, Aging Out of Foster Care, seeks to raise public awareness about the challenges faced by children leaving the foster care system. Too often, these young adults become homeless, jobless, drug addicted, incarcerated, ill and/or diseased after aging out of the foster care program. I encourage you to learn about these issues and get your county involved.

First celebrated in 1991, National County Government Week (NCGW) was created to raise public awareness and understanding about the roles and responsibilities of the nation's counties. The activities held during the week help citizens better understand how counties respond to their needs and serve the community.

This booklet provides ideas for a variety of ways to celebrate NCGW and promote your county's efforts to serve and protect children and all residents. You can hold open houses or public tours at county facilities, visit schools and business groups to talk about county services and issue a county government week proclamation. This booklet also provides helpful information about media outreach strategies.

I know you are proud of the services your county provides each day. I encourage your county to participate in National County Government Week.



Eric Coleman
NACo President
Commissioner, Oakland County, Michigan

■ Getting Started

National County Government Week, April 6-12, is an excellent opportunity for your county to highlight effective county programs and raise public awareness and understanding about the various services provided to the community. This year's theme is "Protecting Our Children." Try to plan events around this theme. Here are a few ideas on how to get started:

Establish a National County Government Week planning committee

The committee will initiate, organize and coordinate all activities relating to NCGW. Committee members should include representatives from the county board and administration, a representative from each county department, a representative from the school system and a public information officer or county official experienced in working with the local media. All areas of county government and local schools should be involved in the planning effort.

Decide how extensive your activities will be

Plan weeklong activities, or perhaps, just one or two days of events. Plan activities to reach different segments of your community, such as schools, community groups, business groups and news organizations. Activities should be designed to bring residents to county facilities or send county representatives to locations where residents are located. Several suggestions for activities, such as holding open houses and public tours or issuing proclamations, are described elsewhere in this booklet.

Involve the media

Be sure the local media is aware of NCGW and the activities your committee is planning. Media outreach tips are described elsewhere in this booklet.

The following pages will provide you and your planning committee several tried-and-true ideas on what to include in your county's celebration of NCGW.

■ Give Them the Facts

National County Government Week offers an opportunity to address any negative or incorrect public perceptions of county government. One effective way to accomplish this goal is to simply present the facts. As part of NCGW, prepare and distribute "County Fact Sheets" on services provided to the community.

Children and family services

- How many children received direct county services last year?
- How many county programs are available to serve children exclusively?
- How many county employees work directly with needy or at-risk children?
- How many children participate in county recreational programs each year?

Other county services facts

- How many bridges and miles of county roads are maintained each year?
- How many calls were responded to last year by the county police, sheriff and fire department?
- How many building permits were approved last year?
- How many building inspections were done last year?
- How many seniors received direct county services last year?
- How many documents were filed with the county clerk's office last year?
- How many inmates are housed in the county jail?
- How many patients were served at the county hospital last year?
- How many calls seeking information were received from the public and responded to last year?
- How much money was saved last year through energy-efficiency initiatives?
- How many old light bulbs were replaced with new, energy-efficient light bulbs last year?

Fact sheets can be distributed at county facilities, sent to local reporters, posted on the county Web site and made available at community meetings.

■ Open the County to the Public

Your goal is to educate residents about county services either by getting them to visit county facilities or conducting outreach events where the people are assembled. Keep in mind this year's "Protecting Our Children" theme. Here are some ideas:

Hold an open house at the county courthouse/administration building

Have displays featuring county departments showing what each department does. Have employees on hand to describe the services they provide and their responsibilities. Focus on unique and interesting programs as well as those that provide essential services. Schedule tours through the courthouse/administration buildings.

Highlight your county's history. Use your local historical society or library to put together presentations or displays to inform residents about your county's rich history. Use visuals to tell the story of your county's past.

If the weather is nice, have the displays outside in the plaza of the courthouse or nearby parking lot. Have music and entertainment for children. Make it a fun and interesting learning experience.

Tip: Schedule the open house for the best day and time people can attend such as early evenings or weekends. Promote it well in advance.

Schedule tours of county facilities

Schedule tours of facilities that are away from the courthouse/administration building. County parks, landfills, jails, sheriff and fire departments and public works facilities are all possibilities. Reach out to community groups, such as service clubs, 4-H, and Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts and encourage them to come as a group to see how various county facilities operate.

Bring informational displays and materials to the people

If it is unlikely that people will come to the county office buildings, bring exhibits to the people. For example, you could hold a public outreach event at a local mall, shopping center, library or other location where people are expected to gather. Arrange to set up displays. Provide fact sheets, brochures and conduct presentations on county services.

Tip: Other possible sites: community centers, school foyers and other locations holding community events.

■ School Involvement

Schools play a critical role in "Protecting Our Children." Use the opportunity to educate students about the roles and responsibilities of county government.

Presentations in schools

Plan visits to schools by various elected and appointed county officials. Discuss how county government is organized. Explain how local government works. Consider organizing a panel discussion with people who have been positively impacted by county programs. Make information on county government available to teachers to use in presentations or as part of their lesson plans.

Career day

Plan a career day at local high schools. Share information about various occupations within county government. Social workers, nurses, public works, parks and transportation employees, police officers, sheriff deputies and firefighters should be included. Emphasize the essential service that these workers provide to their communities.

Tours of county facilities

Encourage schools to set up tours of county offices and facilities. The approach should be part of a class lesson on government structure, the legislative process, public safety, health care and other services.

County official for a day

High school students interested in government could be part of a program to become a county official for a day (or "shadow" an official for the day).

Contests

Sponsor a poster, essay or coloring contest involving a county services theme, such as parks and recreation or public safety. This is an ideal way to involve students of all ages.

Lectures

Offer to speak to or teach a class at a college in your area. The topics could include economic development, technological improvements in the county, transportation projects or a career in county government.

Debates

Encourage college and high school students to become involved in and aware of county issues by debating important and timely issues. Hold the debates in classrooms or as part of a high school assembly.

■ Meet with Members of Congress

National County Government Week is not only an ideal time to take your message to county residents, but it is also a great time to discuss county government with the members of Congress who represent your county.

During NCGW, schedule a meeting with your Congressional representatives or key staff members in your Congressional district. Use the meeting to explain the great challenges facing your county and how Congress can help.

There are many important issues being debated nationally that will dramatically affect counties, such as adequate funding through the Community Development Block Grant program, Medicaid reform, continued federal health coverage for poor children, adequate funding for homeland security and public safety efforts, reauthorization of the federal airport and aviation programs and the farm bill.

In addition, invite members of Congress to attend your NCGW events.

Tips: Be prepared with facts and information about how specific issues affect your county. Know where your federal representative stands on the issues.

Choose one or two major legislative issues to discuss at the meeting that the Congress has a role in. Your message should be focused, compelling and relevant. To find out about NACo's major legislative priorities and get fact sheets on current issues, visit NACo's Web site at www.naco.org.

■ NACo Helps Counties Help Communities

The National Association of Counties has many initiatives and programs available and is a terrific source of technical and financial assistance for counties.

President Coleman has two presidential initiatives which coincide with National County Government Week's "Protecting Our Children" theme. The Campaign Against Sexual Exploitation (CASE), in partnership with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, is engaging communities to protect children from becoming victims of sexual exploitation. His second initiative is raising public awareness about the challenges faced by children Aging Out of Foster Care. Too often, these young adults become homeless, jobless, drug addicted, incarcerated, ill and/or diseased after aging out of the foster care program.

Consider coordinating public events in your community in support of these initiatives. For example, you could assemble a diverse alliance of stakeholders to discuss how the community can better protect children from becoming victims of sexual exploitation. Or you could invite an expert speaker to address the county board or a community assembly about the challenges young adults face when they age out of foster care and discuss how some communities are effectively addressing the situation.

A little known fact emerged during recent debate on Capitol Hill regarding reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) for poor children: many children eligible to enroll in the program or Medicaid are not enrolled. Why not, as part of NCGW, raise public awareness about SCHIP and provide information to families to determine if they are eligible.

If your county participates in any of NACo's programs, NCGW is an excellent opportunity to educate the public about them. If not, consider getting your county involved in one or more of NACo's programs and announce it during NCGW.

NACo Prescription Discount Card Program

Many children may not have prescription drug coverage. By participating in the NACo Prescription Discount Card Program, you can help provide real savings to families. If your county already participates, highlight the program's success by announcing the total savings so far. Inform the community where the free cards are available or hand them out during open houses or at community centers. If your county is not a participant, start the program as soon as possible for a county government week program launch!

Program highlights:

- More than \$60.6 million has been saved by consumers since late 2004.
- County residents have saved an average of 22 percent per prescription.
- More than 920 counties are participating nationwide.
- The cards are free to obtain and easy to use. No forms to fill out.
- There is no cost to the county, county taxpayers or consumers to participate.

- There are no age, health or income restrictions.
- The program offers the uninsured or underinsured with at-the-register discounts on prescriptions through a nationwide network of 57,000 participating pharmacies.

Contact: Andrew Goldschmidt at 202/942-4221 or agoldsch@naco.org.

NACo Green Government Initiative

It is often said that children are our future. With that thought in mind, NACo in 2007 launched the Green Government Initiative to provide comprehensive resources for county governments on all things green, including energy, air quality, transportation, water quality, land use, purchasing and recycling. Through the initiative, NACo is increasing education and outreach on all things green; helping to educate counties and helping them educate the public; promoting environmentally-preferable purchasing and facilitating an open dialogue with the private sector.

Contact: Kelly Zonderwyk at 202/942-4224 or kzonderwyk@naco.org.

NACo County Climate Protection Program

The program supports counties as they work to have a positive impact in their communities by reducing emissions, protecting the environment and public health and saving taxpayer dollars. It provides counties with best practices, tools and resources to assist them in developing and implementing successful climate change programs.

The first step for a county to participate is to adopt a pledge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by a numerical target. Because one size does not fit all, NACo offers counties a pledge template allowing them to select from existing national campaigns with quantifiable targets to reduce global warming or to establish their own appropriate goal.

Contact: Kelly Zonderwyk at 202/942-4224 or kzonderwyk@naco.org.

Other NACo Programs

NACo has many other programs available to member counties such as the Indoor Air Quality Program, the Criminal Justice Program, the Energy Management Program, the Geographic Information Systems Program, the Health Program, the Homeland Security Program, the Land Use Program, the Transportation Program, the Water Quality Program and family success and child development programs.

NACo has two special information centers which address specific urban and rural community challenges: The Center for Sustainable Communities and the Rural County Governance Center.

For more information on these programs, visit the County Resource Center on the NACo Web site, www.naco.org.

■ Sample Proclamation

National County Government Week April 6–12, 2008

Protecting Our Children

WHEREAS, the nation's 3,066 counties provide a variety of essential public services to communities serving 300 million Americans; and

WHEREAS, counties take seriously their responsibility to protect and enhance the health, welfare and safety of its residents in sensible and cost-effective ways; and

WHEREAS, many county government services directly touch the lives of children and families; and

WHEREAS, in 13 states, all or some of the counties are responsible for child welfare and foster care systems; and

WHEREAS, more than 500,000 children are in foster care, removed from their families, as a result of suspected abuse or neglect; and

WHEREAS, one in five girls and one in 10 boys will be sexually victimized before adulthood; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties is the only national organization that represents county governments in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties first celebrated National County Government Week in 1991 to raise public awareness and understanding about the roles and responsibilities of the nation's counties to meet the needs of the community; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the leadership, innovation and valuable service provided by the nation's counties, especially in the protection and welfare of children,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT I, [name/title of elected county official], do hereby proclaim April 6-12, 2008 as National County Government Week in [your county's name].

■ Six Ways to Secure Positive Media Coverage

Proper media planning is essential to maximize public awareness of county government week and the county services and programs you are highlighting. Here are six ways to help secure positive media coverage:

Educate the media

Inform local reporters, editors and broadcasters early and often about National County Government Week and your county's plans to celebrate it.

Plan to make news

Carefully coordinate events or announcements to be newsworthy. You can launch new initiatives, announce plans for new programs or publically honor county employees for their good work. Keep in mind that newspapers want in-depth facts, television stations want good visuals and radio personalities want snappy sound bites from knowledgeable and articulate interviewees.

Publish a calendar of events

Publish a calendar of county government week events on the county's Web site. Ask the local newspapers to publish the calendar. Ask the local television, cable and radio stations to air public service announcements about county services or events.

Write media advisories

Prepare and send media advisories in advance for specific county government week events, such as an open house, tour of the hospital or visit to a local school. Describe who, what, where, when and why. Make it newsworthy.

Write news releases

Have news releases ready to distribute the day of special county government week events for the reporters who attend as well as those who did not. Highlight what's new, beneficial and cost-effective. Use lively, concise quotes from appropriate county officials. Provide contact information.

Take your message to the media

Do not assume the media will cover your county government events. Ask for a meeting with the newspaper's editorial board; volunteer to stop by the television station for an interview; be an in-studio guest on a local radio program. Be accessible, proactive and most of all – enthusiastic about county government week and the services the county provides to the community. Take your own digital photographs of county government week events, write the photo captions, and send the photos to the newspapers. Be sure to post the photos on the county's Web site too.

For more information about media relations strategies, contact Jim Philipps at 202/942-4220 or jphilipps@naco.org.

■ Sample News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Tim Talker, 123-456-7890 • ttalker@goodcounty.co.us

April 1, 2008

Good Co. to Celebrate National County Government Week

County to highlight services to protect children and families April 6-12

Nicetown, USA – Good County will celebrate National County Government Week (NCGW) April 6-12 with open houses, informational displays and visits to local schools and community groups to highlight the many services provided to the community.

NCGW, sponsored by the National Association of Counties (NACo), was first celebrated in 1991 to raise public awareness and understanding about the roles and responsibilities of the nation's counties. The theme for this year's celebration of NCGW is "Protecting Our Children."

Good County's featured community event will be a special open house at the County Administration Building where commissioners will showcase the various initiatives the county has undertaken in recent years to protect children and families.

"Good County is proud of the variety of services it provides to the community," said Commission Chair Joe Joseph. "National County Government Week is a great opportunity for the public to take a closer look at what we do, how we do it and the people behind the services we provide."

The open house will be held from 2-4 p.m. April 6 and is just one of the events Good County has planned for NCGW. Other highlights include a public tour of the County Public Safety Building, Chairman Joseph's address at the Chamber of Commerce monthly luncheon, and the county commissioners' visits to various area schools and senior centers.

A complete list of events is attached and available on the Good County Web site: www.goodcounty.co.gov.

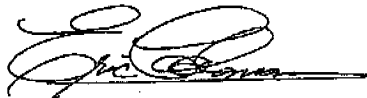
At the national level, NACo will honor the top county volunteer programs in the country at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. as part of its Acts of Caring Awards Program.

Good County is a member of NACo, the only national organization that represents county governments in the U.S. Based in Washington, D.C., NACo provides essential services to the nation's counties, advances issues with a unified voice before the federal government, improves the public's understanding of county government, assists counties in finding and sharing innovative solutions through education and research and provides value-added services to save counties and taxpayers money. More information about NACo is available at: www.naco.org.

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■ Tell Us About Your Program!

NACo wants to know what activities and programs you have planned for National County Government Week. We will share this information with other counties to help them have a successful celebration and also use it to promote the week in the national media. Please fill out the information below and fax or e-mail the activities to Tom Goodman 202/393-2630 or tgoodman@naco.org. Thank you for your help.



Eric Coleman
NACo President
Commissioner, Oakland County, Michigan

- ☐ Yes, our county is participating in National County Government Week. This is what we have planned:

County Contact: _____

Title: _____

County: _____

Address: _____

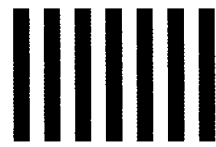
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Return by FAX to Tom Goodman at 202/393-2630 or e-mail activities to tgoodman@naco.org.



NATIONAL
COUNTY
GOVERNMENT
WEEK



2008

April 6 - 12

NACO *National Association of Counties*

The Voice of America's Counties