

Security Enhancements at the Courthouse

Visitors to the Rice County Courthouse should allow extra time to get through security. The only access is now the west entrance, adjacent to the Government Services Building, due to its ADA accessibility. All other entrances are locked.

In December, the courthouse introduced the new security system, which includes a walk-through metal detector and an X-ray scanner. The entrance is staffed by deputies, and all bags, purses and briefcases will go through the X-ray scanner while the visitor walks through the metal detector or is wanded.

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- Dundas • Faribault
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Government Services Building Construction Project Creates Space, Improves Customer Service Areas

Construction is already in progress on the Rice County Government Services Building in Faribault. The project involves a 19,000-square-foot, two-story addition to the east side of the existing building, being facilitated by Met-Con Construction of Faribault.

The new construction will allow for expansion of the Social Services and Public Health departments, create private conference areas for staff to meet with clients, and make better use of existing space throughout the building. An important aspect of the addition and subsequent remodeling will be to better serve the public. Rearranging to keep more of the human services departments together will allow for more convenient access for visitors.

Lower Level

Social Services will be housed in the new addition while the existing portions of the department will be remodeled. When construction is completed, the department will have a friendlier, roomier lobby plus a family waiting area, along with more interview and conference rooms.

The Public Health department will also be remodeled to have a more customer-friendly lobby. The current service counter



will be combined with WIC (Women, Infants and Children) for better efficiency. The Housing Office will move downstairs, next to Public Health.

The new addition will let more natural light enter the building due to window wells with windows along the entire east side. The finishing touches of the remodeling include adding family restrooms plus a public mother's room to the lower level.

Upper Level

The new addition on the upper level will create more space, a friendlier work environment, and allow for more daylight to enter the

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Storm Damage Continues to Affect County Residents

Tornadoes quickly came and went in Rice County on Thursday, September 20, 2018, but their effects will be felt for a long time.

"It's not over. It's still a recovery process," says Rice County Emergency Management Director Jennifer Hauer-Schmitz. "The one thing about this massive storm is that the cleanup is still ongoing."

The storm happened in September, then it started getting cold in October and November, leaving only a limited amount of time before winter to clean up residential and building damage and begin harvesting damaged crops.

Rice County ended up having 10 tornadoes touch down that day, out of a total of 27 within the whole storm system, which ranged

from the south border of Minnesota, diagonally through the county and into Wisconsin. Those 10 tornadoes caused about \$2.8 million in damage, impacting 435 residences and 40 businesses (which are a mix of farms and businesses) throughout the county.

State of Emergency Declaration

Because this was such a large-scale natural disaster, Rice County declared a State of Emergency, as did the cities of Faribault, Morristown, and Northfield. By making these declarations, they can apply for state aid reimbursements for public infrastructure expenditures that were put into cleanup and

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Summer Fun

McCullough Park Cabin, Site Rentals Available Soon

Last summer brought a new highlight to McCullough Park, Rice County's campground on the north side of Shields Lake, 11 miles northwest of Faribault. The newly remodeled, three-bedroom cabin, adjacent to the park, was almost completely booked for the 2018 season, with most dates being reserved in March.

The cabin rents for \$500/week, plus refundable cleaning and security deposits.

Online reservations for the cabin, as well as all the park's campsites, will open on **March 1, 2019, at 10 a.m.** Visit www.co.rice.mn.us/Facilities/Facility/Details/McCullough-Park-1 for bookings and complete rate information. For questions or assistance, call 507-333-3720 or email RCCamping@co.rice.mn.us.

The park features 30 campsites (20 with water and electricity; 10 with water, electricity and sewer), all with picnic tables and fire rings. Three of the camping sites are accessible to campers with disabilities. Nine seasonal sites are available for \$2,100 per season (campers must be removed at the end of the season).

Park amenities include modern toilet/shower facilities, an RV dump station, a picnic shelter, playground equipment, Wi-Fi Internet access, and a dock/fishing pier.

For more information about the other parks in Rice County, visit www.co.rice.mn.us/198/Parks-Facilities.

Changes Coming to Government Services Building

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building. Many offices and departments will be redesigned or move to different locations for more efficiency.

Veterans Services will move closer to the entrance and will not share space with any other departments. The office will be outfitted with a larger waiting area, and have a dedicated conference room to meet with clients.

The Finance Department and Property Tax & Elections (previously the Auditor/Treasurer's Office) will now have a new, dedicated absentee voting room, instead of using a conference room for elections. This will allow the department to have space for testing and storing voting equipment and conduct more efficient absentee voting.

The Parks & Facilities Office will move to an unshared, dedicated space with a waiting area, plus a larger office with enough space for small meetings.

Administration and Human Resources will be reorganized to provide a more efficient layout, along with a conference room that can be accessed from the hall, rather than walking through the administrative area.

A redesign in the Assessor's Office will allow for extra conference rooms and a friendlier, larger space, while the Planning & Zoning Office will be remodeled for efficiency and better flow.

The new addition will feature a large conference room with space for 100+ people and a manual divider to create two or more smaller

rooms. Finally, the upper level will add new restrooms along with a family restroom.

Exterior Changes

Once construction is completed, other changes will be implemented to improve access and safety. The road surrounding the parking lots and following the north and east sides of the building will change to one-way traffic, with diagonal parking on the east side. The west side of the parking lot will be moved to a single entrance and align with the Fourth Street/Fourth Avenue parking lot to alleviate congestion at the intersections, and feature the addition of a marked pedestrian crossing. The Third Street/Third Avenue intersection, leading to the south entrance of the building, has already been converted to a four-way stop. Finally, new steps will be added from the east parking lot to the Rice County Courthouse, leading to the new, secure entrance of the Courthouse.

Preliminary Timeline

Construction of the new addition is scheduled to be finished in July/August 2019. At that time, remodeling of the lower level will begin, starting with Social Services (anticipated completion date of December 2019/January 2020), then the Public Health area (anticipated completion date of April/May 2020). Finally, remodeling of the upper level will continue with an anticipated completion date of July/August 2020 for the entire project.

Public/Residential Solid Waste Facility Fee Schedule

Rice County Recycling Fees — Effective January 1, 2019

Demolition	\$28/ton (\$15 minimum)
Self Haulers – Car, pickup, trailer (single axle)	\$25 (tax included)
Large Loads – Waste (multiple axles)	\$63.33/ton (plus tax)
Asbestos (24-hour notice; by appointment only)	\$80/ton -or- \$45/pickup -or-
Note: Double fee if found in load without notification/appointment)	\$9/bag (up to 3 bags)
Mattress or Box Spring (recyclable)	\$25/mattress or box spring
Mattress or Box Spring (landfilled)	\$35/mattress or box spring
Appliances (washers, dryers, air conditioners, electric refrigerators, etc.)	\$15/item
Gas Refrigerators (over 4 feet)	\$150
Gas Refrigerators (under 4 feet)	\$75
Electronics: Computer towers and small home printers	\$5/item
Small electronics/rechargeable devices	\$5/item
TVs and computer screens	\$15/item
Household Hazardous Waste	\$0 (no fee)
Tires: Tires (16" and under)	\$2/each up to 8; \$5/each >8
Truck Tires (17"–20")	\$5/each up to 8; \$10/each >8
Truck Tires (over 20")	\$10/each up to 4; \$15/each >4
Tractor Tires (without rim)	\$25/each up to 2; \$35/each >2



Rice County Landfill, Recycling and Household Hazardous Waste Facilities

3800 145th Street E., Dundas, MN 55019

507-332-6833 • www.co.rice.mn.us/207/Solid-Waste-Facility • rcsolidwaste@co.rice.mn.us

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday–Friday: 7:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

Saturday: **April–October:** 7:30–11:30 a.m. (2nd and 4th Saturdays only)
November–March: 7:30–11:30 a.m. (2nd Saturday only)

2019 Recycling Calendar/Schedule

Your single-sort recycling will be picked up on a schedule set by your garbage hauler (bi-weekly or weekly). Call your garbage hauler if you are not sure of your week (blue or white, indicated below; your hauler may use different colors).

= Rice County Landfill, Recycling, Household Hazardous Waste Facilities are closed

<p>JANUARY 2019</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			<p>FEBRUARY 2019</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28			<p>MARCH 2019</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31							<p>APRIL 2019</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30									
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Did You Know?

The Cannon River Wilderness Area Remains Closed

After the severe storms and tornadoes that tore through the area last September, the Cannon River Wilderness Area park remains closed because of extensive damage.

The trails are impassable due to hundreds of trees falling across them, and the park shelter was damaged.

The county is in the process of getting bid proposals for cleaning up the trails, bringing them back to pre-storm condition. It is hoped that cleanup can be done by mid to late March and the park reopened in April.

Updates will be posted on the park's website: www.co.rice.mn.us/Facilities/Facility/Details/Cannon-River-Wilderness-Area-4

Rice County Holidays

All Rice County departments and services observe the following holidays – offices will be closed.

2019

- Jan. 1 – New Year's Day
- Jan. 21 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Feb. 18 – President's Day
- May 27 – Memorial Day
- July 4 – Independence Day
- Sept. 2 – Labor Day
- Nov. 11 – Veterans Day
- Nov. 28 – Thanksgiving Day
- Nov. 29 – Friday after Thanksgiving
- Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve
- Dec. 25 – Christmas Day

2020

- Jan. 1 – New Year's Day
- Jan. 20 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Wetland Regulations in Rice County

Wetlands are an extremely important resource that must be protected. Wetland benefits include water quality improvements, flood control, erosion control, wildlife habitat, recreation, and carbon storage.

Wetland regulation in Minnesota can be a confusing topic, especially since wetlands come in many different types. Some wetlands are obvious, like a cattail marsh, but others are harder to distinguish, like a wet meadow or a seasonally flooded wetland. Even those who use their land for profitable income

and have had to do some wetland permitting can get confused about what is allowed or exempted from wetland regulations.

Before you dig, ditch, tile, fill, or excavate, it is important to identify the wetlands on your property and obtain the proper permits. The two most common wetland laws that pertain to work conducted in or around wetlands are the **Wetland Conservation Act** (state law) and **Swampbuster** (federal law).

The Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) was passed by the state of Minnesota in 1992. The WCA is administered by local government units, usually soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs), that receive oversight provided by the Board of Water and Soil Resources. Enforcement is provided by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) conservation officers.

In Rice County, the Rice SWCD is the local government unit that administers the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act, except in the City of Lonsdale. This means that any work (tiling, ditching, filling, draining, or excavating) being done in or around a wetland needs to be reviewed by the Rice SWCD Wetland Conservation Act administrator before

work is started. **If you fail to contact the administrator, any wetland impacts caused by your actions may be subject to enforcement or replacement, which could cost you thousands of dollars. You could also be fined up to \$10,000 for non-permitted activities. Contractors also have a liability that can cost them up to \$1,000.**

The federal Swampbuster is a provision of the Food Security Act of 1985 and is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Swampbuster

regulates farming and draining activities in wetlands. **If you are a landowner that is filing a 1026 with your local Farm Service Agency (FSA) or the Natural Resources Conservation Service office for wetland review regarding Swampbuster, you must also get a review and approval from the Rice SWCD before starting your project so that your work is in compliance with the Wetland Conservation Act.** If you do not collect benefits from the FSA, then you still need to contact the Rice SWCD regarding your wetland work.

Additionally, the wetlands on your property may also require permits from the federal Army Corp of Engineers and the Minnesota DNR. Contact these agencies before beginning your project.

If you are planning on working in or around a wetland and would like to make sure your project is in compliance of state wetland regulations, please contact the Rice SWCD at 507-332-5408 or email justin.fuchs@riceswcd.org in order to get your project evaluated. Learn more about wetland regulations at our website, www.riceswcd.org.

**Before you dig,
ditch, tile, or fill,
know the
wetland regulations
in Rice County!**

Conservation Tree Seedlings and Shrubs for Sale

The Rice Soil and Water Conservation District, 1810 NW 30th Street in Faribault, is currently taking orders for its annual tree sale. The district sells a wide variety of tree seedlings and shrubs (in quantities of 25, 50, etc.) to be used for conservation purposes such as windbreaks and wildlife plantings. **Order trees before February 26 for best selection.** Trees arrive in mid-April.

Native prairie plants for rain gardens and butterfly gardens may also be ordered now and picked up in May.

To receive a tree or native plant order form or get free help with a windbreak plan, call the District office at 507-332-5408 or visit www.riceswcd.org. New this year is an online store where you can buy online and pay by credit card at riceswcdonlinestore.com.

Storm Damage

continued from page 1

recovery efforts due to the storm. Damage expenses among all affected entities reached nearly \$2.8 million in Rice County alone. These expenses included the costs of emergency measures such as putting up barricades, marking downed power lines, closing off streets and roads, overtime costs of law enforcement, fire and public works personnel, and, most importantly, debris removal, which was the costliest portion of a storm like this. Every area along the storm track was affected by debris.

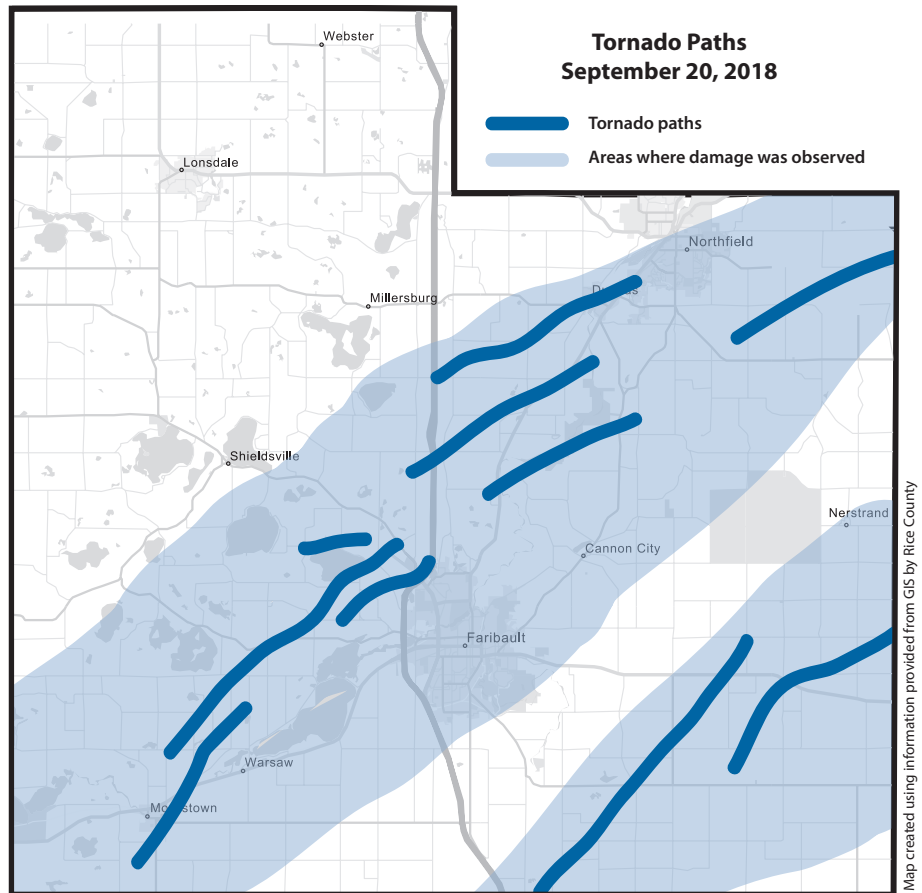
However, the \$2.8 million total was not enough to qualify for federal relief (FEMA), which would need to reach approximately \$8 million in damages. Because the county did not meet the federal threshold, there is no eligibility for individual assistance funding. Thus the responsibility for individual properties relies on each owner and their insurance company to repair, clean up, and remove debris from their property.

Crop Damage

Over 5,100 acres of cropland were in the direct path of the tornadoes, and many more acres outside of that area potentially experienced damage. The Rice County Farm Service Agency (FSA) estimated that approximately 10,000 acres of corn were damaged and possibly about 2,000 acres were a complete loss. Reduced yields were expected on the rest – losses were reported at anywhere from 25 bushels/acre to 80+ bushels/acres of corn. Soybean yields were largely okay, however many farms required the use of specialized equipment to harvest broken or leaning corn, which was costly and time consuming. Many fields could not be harvested until storm debris was completely cleared to ensure safe passage for harvesting equipment.

The 2019 growing season will bring continued ramifications for field management. Large amounts of corn left in the field could result in volunteer corn, which can act as a weed and can significantly reduce crop yields during the 2019 growing season. University of Minnesota Extension has information on controlling volunteer corn at <https://www3.extension.umn.edu/local/article/dealing-volunteer-corn-after-the-storms>.

To help farmers cope with farm and rural stress, the Minnesota Department of



Agriculture has assembled helpful information at <https://www.mda.state.mn.us/about/mnfarmerstress>

In addition, Rice County Ag Extension Educator Claire LaCanne is available to help with crop production and resource questions at 507-332-6165 or lacanne@umn.edu.

Ongoing Damage

As spring arrives, Rice County may still be finding additional damage. Trees took the most obvious brunt of the storm. Everywhere along the path of the storm, you will see downed or broken trees. A stark and stunning look at the force of the storm can be seen by the Cannon River along Highway 3 north of Faribault. The bridge at the intersection of C.R. 29 used to be surrounded by thick areas of trees, and now less than a quarter of them remain. The rest are broken off or have fallen into the river. The nearby Cannon River Wilderness Area remains closed until trails can be cleared of downed trees.

Rivers and lakes will be very dangerous areas in the upcoming months, especially when spring arrives and water levels rise. Trees and other debris from the storm can be completely hidden from view, causing safety issues. Many of the lakes now have boat lifts, docks, and downed trees submerged along the shores, which

can be dangerous for boating or water skiing. The Cannon River, which was heavily impacted in several places by the storm, is a popular place for canoeing, kayaking, and tubing, and will be even more dangerous this year due to hidden debris.

Emergency Alerts

When asked about the most important aspect to consider about this storm, Hauer-Schmitz said, “With all this damage, we had no deaths and no injuries. It’s a miracle.” A lot of this can be contributed to prevention and notifications from various weather services. “The shortest amount of warning that we received in Rice County was 10 minutes in the Morrystown area, which is actually a long time for a warning,” she said. In addition to sirens sounding, many weather alerts went out, including a WEA (Wireless Emergency Alert) on people’s phones, which did its job and got the public to take heed and stay safe.

To receive emergency or important community alerts, sign up for Everbridge Citizen Alert, a free service for Rice County residents. Messages can be sent to all standard voice and text communication devices that you register, including land-line phones, cell phones, email, and more. Visit www.co.rice.mn.us/272/Everbridge-Citizen-Alert.

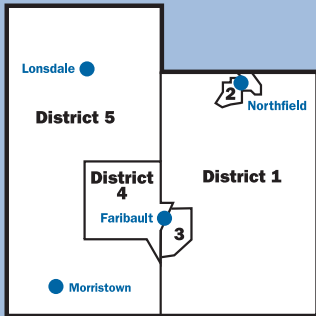


Rice County Report

Rice County Government Services Building
320 Third Street NW
Faribault, MN 55021

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Contacts



Rice County Board of Commissioners

(as of January 1, 2019)

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District 2

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District 3

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District 4

Steve Underdahl
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sunderdahl@co.rice.mn.us

District 5

Jeff Docken
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jdocken@co.rice.mn.us

Phone Numbers

General Information 507-332-6100

Toll-Free Numbers (do not dial "1" or area code)

From Northfield 645-9576
From Lonsdale 744-5185

Rice County Standing Meetings

Board of Commissioners

Meets the first and third Tuesdays of each month as a Committee of the Whole/Work Session, 8:30 a.m., Commissioners' Room, Rice County Government Services Building.

Meets the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month as a Regular Board, 8:30 a.m., Commissioners' Room, Rice County Government Services Building.

Board of Adjustment

Meets the first Thursday of the month; 7:00 p.m., Commissioners' Room, Rice County Government Services Building.

Planning Commission

Meets the first Thursday of the month, immediately following the Board of Adjustment meeting, Commissioners' Room, Rice County Government Services Building.

Community Corrections Advisory Board

Meets the third Thursday of March, June, September and December, 3:30 p.m., Rice County Government Services Building.

Community Health Services

Citizens' Advisory Committee

Meets the fourth Wednesday every other month (January, March, May, July, September, November), 6:30-8:00 p.m.; call 507-332-6111 for location.

Rice County Emergency Preparedness

Advisory Council

Meets quarterly, 7:00-9:00 p.m.; call 507-332-6119 for meeting date and location.

Mental Health Advisory Council

Meets the fourth Wednesday of January, February, March, April, September and October, 12:00 p.m. (noon), Friendship House, located at 310 First Avenue NW, #1, Faribault.

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Veterans' Services Officer

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