



County Economic Development Department Goal: Growing the Tax Base, Jobs, by Building “Bridges”

The purpose of the Rice County Economic Development Department, created in 2006, is to help grow the county’s commercial/industrial tax base and develop high-quality job opportunities here. Many things go into accomplishing something like this – from near-term tasks such as improving the county web site, email communications and marketing brochures to long-term and ongoing initiatives that include making sure that policies and processes are adequate and competitive. But the most crucial component associated with all county economic development activities, says Economic Development Director Deanna Kuennen, is “building bridges.”

She’s talking about the kind of relationships – networks, collaborations and coalitions – that enable public and private partners to work collectively and effectively to foster and encourage common economic development projects and goals.

“It’s all about bringing the right people to the table. It takes a team to do what needs to be done. We don’t care who gets the credit – if it’s the county leading the way with a business

prospect or, as is often the case, if it’s one of our cities and they’re bringing us in because of what we can provide. What matters is listening to the business and making things work.”

Who are some of the partners Kuennen commonly works with to help businesses grow? Community economic development staff members are always at the table, but Kuennen has also forged great relationships with less “traditional” partners with resources that are valuable to businesses. Steele-Waseca Electric Cooperative, for instance, provides utilities to a good portion of the county and is also the conduit to federal loan dollars and other incentives through its parent organization, Great River Energy. Southern MN Initiative Foundation, dedicated to helping businesses and entrepreneurs, offers a variety of loan and grant programs. And South Central College, along with its sister schools, provides opportunities to ensure that the area workforce is trained.

Because of relationships built with groups such as these, with community economic

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Winter and Health Safety Information Available Online in English and by Phone or Radio in Other Languages

Winter in Minnesota is beautiful, but it can be deadly unless you know how to dress and drive appropriately and be active outdoors. Little things can make the difference between safety and suffering: having a survival kit in your car, changing the batteries in your carbon monoxide detector, or staying well hydrated during outdoor fun. You can find tips about these and other matters at the web site of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, www.winterweather.state.mn.us/. Click the link in the left-hand column labeled “Winter Weather.” In the main text, you will also find a link to a Winter Survival Kit app for Android and iOS phone users. Available free from the North Dakota State University Extension Service, it is designed to help

motorists stuck in winter weather.

The left-hand column also provides a link to details on how to receive information about “Weather Safety in Other Languages,” provided through the Emergency & Community Health Outreach (ECHO) Minnesota collaborative. Sponsored by the Association of Minnesota Counties, ECHO TV broadcasts and web site information deliver health- and safety-related information to Minnesota residents who speak Hmong, Khmer, Lao, Somali, Spanish and Vietnamese. This information is available in a variety of formats including audio (over phone or radio), on TV, or via CD or video PSAs. In addition, ECHO also has audio information in Russian, Arabic and Oromo on other health and safety topics.

www.co.rice.mn.us

Dundas • Faribault
Lonsdale • Morristown
Nerstrand • Northfield
Warsaw • Webster

By the Numbers: A Day in the Lives of

In ways both large and small, Rice County government affects the daily lives of area residents — from the four veterans transported to the VA Medical Center in Minneapolis by the Veterans Office to the thousands who travel safely on the 431 miles of county roads maintained by the Highway Department.

In November we asked county offices to record what they did on a typical day — and quickly learned there's no such thing

as a "typical" day in public service. As the County Attorney's Office puts it, "It's never the same, but it's always busy!"

The examples below, while not comprehensive, illustrate some of the many ways the men and women who work for Rice County fulfill their mission "to proactively address the needs of the public we serve in an efficient and effective manner to enhance the quality of life for the citizens." How many of them have impacted your life in recent years?

HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health

- Home visits by Public Health Agency staff to Rice County residents receiving direct services: 91
- Phone calls to public health receptionist seeking some type of assistance: 45
- Number of uninsured individuals immunized against communicable diseases: 30
- Public health nurse instruction on health and safety to a support group of 12 families with newborns
- Uninsured children seen at the Public Health office for dental education and dental varnishing: 5
- Car seat and instruction provided on car seat installation and safe usage: 1

Housing

- Walk-in customers: 20
- Rent changes processed: 6
- Individuals served via phone calls: 24
- Rental payments processed: 347 households
- Work on annual compliance audit (this includes gathering 54 client files and 41 individual rent change actions for the auditors to review and preparing electronic records as requested)
- Consultations with other housing agencies (comparing best practices, brainstorming solutions to common issues, researching client files, etc.)
- Collaboration with other housing agencies on the implementation plan for the housing study and on development of housing programs

Social Services

Front Desk

- Calls fielded daily: 160–190
- Visitors served: 120
- Pieces of mail received: 200 (averaging 5 pages per item)
- Pieces of mail sent: 150
- Medical assistance packets sent: 4–5
- Third-party verifications made for other agencies: 4

Other Social Services

- Calls for child support: 55–100
- Child protection reports: 5
- Child protection assessments started daily: 1
- Child protection case management case opened: 1 per week
- Checks on welfare completed: .5 (1 done every other day)

ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Services

- Building applications/permits issued or taken in daily (on average): 14
- Septic applications/permits issued or taken in daily (on average): 7
- Letters written: 13
- Phone calls answered: 84
- Inspections/site visits performed: 26
- Front counter inquiries answered: 30
- Emails/faxes sent: 53
- Meetings attended: 2–3

Extension

- Community nutrition education classes offered at local schools and community organizations: 8
- Agriculture and horticultural management questions answered via calls, emails, walk-ins or on-site visits: 5
- Production agriculture courses held on a variety of topics, including pesticides and land rent: 2

- 4-H After School programs: 2 (includes working with a new youth officer, grocery shopping for weekend activity, organizing presentations for trainings)
- Answering phone calls/emails throughout the day

Recycling and Solid Waste

Landfill

- Garbage deposited: 159 tons
- Demolition waste deposited: 16 tons

Recycling

- Mixed/curbside recycling deposited per day: 32 tons
- Business cardboard: 12 tons
- Electronics: 750 pounds
- Appliances: 14
- Used oil: 25 gallons
- Used oil filters: 25 filters
- Scrap steel: 610 pounds
- Used lead acid batteries: 55 pounds
- Used antifreeze: 4 gallons

Household Hazardous Waste

- Public drop offs: 11
- Hazardous waste collected and processed: 1,011 pounds
- Good product given back to public for free: 146 pounds

Other Daily Tasks

- Environmental monitoring (leak detection, inspection checklist)
- Storm water monitoring
- Tending to state reporting requirements
- Education and outreach, including tours and presentations
- Development of departmental plans
- Grant writing
- Reviewing analytical results for acceptance of problem materials (contaminated soil, sandblasting sand, etc.)
- Monitoring leachate land application
- Clerical duties, including scale monitoring, customer service and preparing bills for payment

Rice County Government Departments

GOVERNMENT

County Administrator

- Number of emails received and sent on different matters: 55
- Meetings attended: 3 (these included a planning meeting pertaining to land-fill and recycling program, meetings with a county commissioner-elect and an economic development prospect)
- Discussions with social service director, environmental services director, economic development director, human resource manager, parks and facilities director, 3 county commissioners, 1 city administrator, 1 citizen
- Reviewed documents concerning budget, human resources and other items

Auditor/Treasurer's Office

- Ownership transfers made in the property tax system: 15 per day
- Election day registrations entered into the Statewide Voter Registration System (after elections are over): 215
- Invoices processed for payment: 40
- Time sheets entered into payroll system: 36
- Phone calls answered addressing accounting, property tax, elections, ditch, and licensing questions from departments, public and vendors: 220
- Collection transactions entered into financial system: 204
- Tax statements, notices, letters, and elections communication mailed: 253
- Inquiries responded to by email: 224

Human Resources

- Employee inquiries fielded: 30
- Applications evaluated per job posting: 50-250

Maintenance

- Hot water boilers inspected daily: 11
- Bins of mail collected at Post Office: 5
- Monitoring automated building controls: 5 buildings
- Preventive maintenance work orders: 2
- Other work orders: 15 (includes replacing lights, moving furniture, installing cabinets, painting, lock repair, event setup, lawn mowing, trash disposal)
- Unlocking and locking Courthouse and Government Center daily

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LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY

The jobs of those who work to keep Rice County safe can be dangerous at times, but it is always demanding. Many departments are available and on-call 24 hours a day and 365 days a year.

Attorney's Office

Daily activities include drafting and responding to pleadings documents, calendaring hearings and deadlines, preparing for/making court appearances, coordinating and prepping witnesses for court appearances, and handling phone calls and drop-in visits from attorneys, defendants, county employees, law enforcement, state agencies, court personnel and county citizens with wide-ranging legal concerns. In between, attorneys and staff juggle research projects, writing legal opinions, preparing training materials for other departments and law enforcement agencies, preparing for and attending various meetings with local law enforcement agencies, numerous and varied task force groups, and numerous interagency meetings.

- Average number of court appearances per day this fall: 21
- Average percentage of criminal cases heard before Rice County's three full-time District Court Judges: 60 percent
- Average percentage of civil cases heard: 40 percent (Attorneys on civil cases also appear at informal administrative hearings for the HRA, at vulnerable adult appeals before Administrative Law Judges, before Child Support Magistrates in the expedited court process, before a court-appointed three-person panel of land commissioners, as well as in Tax Court, and before other administrative agencies.)
- Average number of complaints and cases per month during the first nine months of 2012: 211 (These include: new felony, misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor criminal cases; criminal complaints from investigative reports received from nine agencies.) Juvenile cases (felony, misdemeanor, traffic, delinquency and truancy

matters); Child In Need of Protection and Termination of Parental Rights actions; paternity and child support enforcement actions; civil commitment actions (mentally ill, chemically dependent, developmentally delayed, mentally ill and dangerous individuals); guardianship/conservatorship cases; and administrative/civil files opened to process issues as received from Rice County departments.

Community Corrections

Probation officers and clerks handle these tasks and many others each day.

- Phone calls answered: 144
- Offender office visits: 22
- Emails received/sent: 336
- Faxes received/sent: 14
- Home visits: 5
- Field visits: 17
- Victim contacts: 4
- Miles traveled: 71
- Urine screenings: 4
- Chronos entered: 185
- PSIs opened: 5
- PSIs completed: 7
- PSIs assigned: 4
- New cases assigned: 14
- Pre-dispositional investigations completed: 2
- Administrative caseload work: 16
- Court hearings: 1
- Bail evaluations: 3
- Meetings: 28
- Walk-in clients: 26

Sheriff's Office

- Average number of miles covered by a deputy in an 11- or 12-hour shift: 135
- Average number of calls for service handled by a deputy per shift: 9 (These include calls from citizens, traffic enforcement activity, vehicle crashes, public and private property checks, extra patrol requests, civil and criminal paper service, and assisting other law enforcement and public safety agencies. Needs and requests change daily and most calls require the generation of reports and documentation of incidents for future reference.)

Thank You!

2012 Retirements

In 2012, several employees retired after long careers with Rice County. We wish to recognize them here and thank them again for their many years of service.

Judy Ackman

Public Health
Nurse, Public
Health Department
1969–2012



Dan Carlson

Office Manager –
Attorney, County
Attorney's Office
1992–2012



Barry Hendrickson

Sergeant,
Sheriff's Office
1979–2012



Susan Kaderlik

Administrative
Secretary,
Sheriff's Office
1973–2012



Ron Kadrlik

Operations
Supervisor, Solid
Waste/Environmental
Services Department
1991–2012



Milt Plaisance

County
Commissioner
1989–2012



Roger Riesing

Maintenance
Operator, Highway
Department
1970–2012



Lawrence Trnka

Maintenance
Operator, Highway
Department
2000–2012



A Day in the Lives of Government Departments

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PROPERTY AND ROADS

Assessor's Office

The Office of the Assessor is responsible for discovering, listing and valuing all taxable property, both real and personal, for tax purposes. There are 30,000 parcels of land in Rice County, all of which are subject to inspections of various kinds, including building permits and property classification. The office handles applications for homestead, green acres, rural preserves and abatements, inputs sales of all property, and answers phone and in-person inquiries.

- While appraisers view property all over the county, the most viewed property is those that take out building permits. Last year there were 1,277 permits issued county-wide. Appraisers also handle questions from taxpayers and maintain the property data in a Computer Aided Mass Appraisal system. All of this information is available to the public via the Internet.
- County appraisers also classify all property as to its use. The residential class is the largest class with 21,230 parcels.
- The GIS mapping section processes all property splits, combinations and plats. A common, everyday job is doing agricultural and breakdowns and tax estimates.
- The clerical support staff handles customers at the counter as well as all phone and email inquiries. It also inputs sales of all property, information that provides the basis for the next assessment cycle.

Highway Department

Public services provided by the department's employees include construction and engineering services, administrative functions and daily maintenance activities. On the day recorded, engineers:

- Worked on closing out 2012 construction projects.
- Continued design work on the 2014 project to reconstruct County State Aid Highway 1.
- Inventoried materials for the end-of-the-year reporting and 2013 needs.
- Completed the advertisement process for a 2013 bridge replacement project on County State Highway 26.
- Competed field survey work for a potential culvert replacement project on County Road 95.

- Worked on closing out contract payments, preparing for year-end audits, submitting pay requests to receive allocated construction funds, billing suppliers, processing payroll, and processing daily time for the department's cost accounting process.

Other activities included:

- Reviewing construction activities permitted within the highway right-of-way by others to ensure compliance with permit conditions.
- Completing preliminary planning work on the five-year construction program.
- Researching historical road records to assess future maintenance and construction.
- Advising landowners on the rights and use of public highway easement land.
- Managing the countywide rural address sign project.
- Taking advantage of weather conditions to complete pot hole patching, removing trees and vegetation within the highway right of way, perform routine servicing on equipment, and mount sanding units on snow plow trucks.
- Assigning staff to haul and place aggregate and blade some of the county's 81 miles of gravel roads in preparation for winter.
- Investigating roadway ditches and culverts to assess conditions and prepare preliminary needs for replacements or repairs for the following year.
- Working on re-purposing an old highway snowplow truck for use at the landfill.
- Outfitting the county's 11 snowplow trucks and tuning up the four motor graders for snow removal season.
- Hauling and stockpiling salt/sand mixture to the out shops located in Lonsdale, Morristown and Dundas.
- Stockpiling "cold mix" asphalt materials to be used during the winter and spring months for the temporary repair of potholes.

LICENSES AND RECORDS

Recorder's Office

- Land records entered: 57
- Marriages recorded: 2
- Requests handled for certified copies of birth records: 6
- Requests handled for certified copy of death records: 5
- Uniform Commercial Code transaction handled: 1
- Passports processed: 7
- Passport pictures handled: 5

Rice County Landfill, Recycling and Household Hazardous Waste Facilities

3800 145th Street E. • Dundas, MN 55019
 507-332-6833 • www.co.rice.mn.us/waste • 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)

2013 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).

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

<p>JANUARY 2013</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 2013</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 2013</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 2013</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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On the Web

Subscribe to Email Updates

Interested in receiving email updates on any of the following topics? Sign up at the Rice County web site: www.co.rice.mn.us/mailling-list-sign

Economic Development:

- Programs & Updates
- News

Auditor/Treasurer:

- Township Officials
- City Clerks
- School District Clerks

Housing:

- Section 8
- News

Public Health:

- General Public Health Updates
- Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP)
- Emergency Preparedness

Social Services:

- Licensed Child Care Providers
- Mental Health Resources

Sheriff:

- Press Releases
- Crime Alerts
- Safety Bulletins

Environmental Services:

- Feedlot Operators
- Planning Commission Agendas & Packets
- Special Events & Educational Workshops
- Building News
- Septic News
- Recycling/Solid Waste News
- Water News
- General News

Highway:

- Seasonal, Road Closures, Weather
- Construction & Maintenance
- Bids for Projects
- 1 & 5 Year Construction Plans
- Hot Topics
- Project Updates

County Board/Administration:

- General News

Well Sealing Cost-Share Assistance Available

Rice County was awarded grant funds from the State of Minnesota through the Clean Water Legacy Act. This financing is available to assist property owners in sealing unused wells that pose the potential to negatively impact ground/surface water.

Unused wells that have not been properly sealed can be a source of groundwater contamination, potentially affecting nearby drinking water wells. They may threaten the quality of the water in city water wells, your neighbor's well or even your own well. There are many reasons to properly seal abandoned wells. Unused wells pose both environmental and safety hazards, including:

- Contamination of aquifers by allowing surface runoff carrying pollutants to enter the groundwater;
- Cross contamination of aquifers by the well passing through more than one aquifer; and
- Safety hazards to both people and animals.

In 2012, the Rice County Board of Commissioners approved a cost-share assistance program to assist property owners in sealing unused wells. Property owners that meet the funding requirements will be eligible for cost-share in the amount of 50% of the cost (up to \$1,000). The program currently has \$10,000 to provide cost-share assistance to property owners. Priority will be given first to wells located in municipalities' Drinking Water Supply Management Areas (DWSMAs), and then to wells in the same aquifer as one or more nearby public water supply wells as designated by Minnesota Department of Health, wells subject to flooding or multi-aquifer wells. Wells that have already been sealed are not eligible for retroactive funds.

For more information or application materials, visit www.co.rice.mn.us/planning or contact Rice County Environmental Services at rcplanningzoning@co.rice.mn.us or 507-332-6113.

e-Waste and Rechargeable Battery Recycling

With the holiday season behind us, many of you are dealing with the problem of what to do with old and unwanted electronic items and spent rechargeable batteries. Several options exist for proper recycling of e-waste.

Rechargeable batteries are banned from being placed in your household trash and must be properly recycled.

The Rice County Landfill/Recycling Center accepts rechargeable batteries at no charge for proper shipment and recycling. Ace Hardware Stores in Faribault (421 2nd Avenue NW) and Northfield (670 Water Street S) also offer rechargeable battery recycling. Alkaline batteries (AA, AAA, C, D, etc.) may be placed with your household trash.

Many manufacturers, retailers and local nonprofits offer free e-waste recycling options:

- Apple (www.apple.com/recycling)
- Best Buy (www.bestbuy.com/recycling)
- Canon (www.usa.canon.com/environment) click on the "Environment Initiatives" link at bottom of the page.
- Dell (www.dell.com/recycle) click on United States.
- River Bend Nature Center (www.rbnc.org/gogreen) in Faribault also accepts certain items at no charge (i.e., laptops, keyboards and some computers).
- Ruth's House in Faribault will accept used cell phones and small ink cartridges (no toner cartridges) free of charge by contacting them at 507-332-2236.
- Rice County Recycling Center (www.co.rice.mn.us/reduce-reuse-recycle) also accepts all e-waste items for a small fee.

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 only, such as windbreaks and wildlife plantings.

Orders will only be taken until February 28 this year, with trees arriving in April.



To receive an order form or get free help with a tree plan, call the district office at 507-332-5408 or visit www.riceswcd.org.

Growing the Tax Base, Jobs, by Building “Bridges”

continued from page 1

development officials, and during workshops conducted with area business leaders and government representatives, Kuennen notes, “When I get that prospect call, I have an entire team of people I can get involved to meet a business’s needs.”

Location, Location, Location

Why do aspiring and existing businesses contact the Department of Economic Development? Often it’s because they’re checking to see what kind of opportunities are available in the county for their sort of enterprise. Space needs were at the heart of three projects Kuennen has been part of in recent years, including B&B Manufacturing, which relocated from Owatonna to larger facilities in Faribault, and Perkins Specialized Transportation Contracting Inc., which has expanded already in Northfield, but has continued to grow and is looking to expand again to meet the needs of customers for custom equipment like the mammoth hydraulic platform trailer it built to haul 760,000 pounds of low-level hazardous steam generators from California to Utah.

The department was also instrumental in the establishment of Living Greens Farm in Faribault, an innovative enterprise that raises lettuce and other leafy greens in a windowless warehouse using aeroponic farming technology. Aeroponics allows plants to grow in “air” using reusable media – in this case, microfleece, the material in baby blankets. With their roots exposed to oxygen, a steady supply of a nutrient-rich water mist, and ample grow lighting, plants grow 100 percent faster than they would in soil. Add to that the fact that the plants can be stacked vertically in trays, making maximum use of space, and are not susceptible to the vagaries of weather.

One of the things Kuennen likes about the Living Greens project is the synergistic way it fits into the culture of a county filled with corn, soy and dairy producers. “It’s innovative,” she notes, “and it’s ag-based.”

Championing Business and Growth

The department serves as a “champion” of business. The government regulations and processes involved in establishing or expanding a business can seem overwhelming at times, notes the 2011–2012 Work Plan of the Department of Economic Development (available online at www.co.rice.mn.us/data-center, where the work plan for 2013–2014 will soon

be posted). The department can assist businesses with understanding applications (loans, permits, etc.), subsidy requests, and the general navigation of processes – upon request – to ease the potential burden of doing business in the county.

In addition to responding in a timely and efficient matter to questions about incentives and programs, the department also promotes the county throughout the state. In 2010, it completed a marketing plan that identified strategic memberships, conferences and advertising opportunities to promote Rice County as a place to do business, and developed a related brochure and ad campaign that highlighted the characteristics that make the county distinctive and desirable to employers. In 2012 it developed a new, more coherent and more assertive logo with which to identify the county. Visible now on the top banner of the county web site, it will be rolled out in full this winter and spring.

What else is on the department’s agenda? Among other things, the retention and expansion of already established enterprises. “It is always in the best interest of a community to retain local businesses,” notes Kuennen. “National statistics indicate that 60–80 percent of job creation occurs within existing business sectors. Therefore, it is imperative that Rice County is aware of issues affecting existing businesses so that we can ... provide businesses the support they need, connect them to necessary resources, and respond quickly to issues.”

Longer-term initiatives include working to realize the potential of the I-35 corridor, a primary transportation route between Texas and Minnesota with tremendous carrying capacity and economic opportunities. “Rice County views I-35 as a conduit to economic activity for the county and its communities.” A giant step in that direction is the County Road 76 project, for which the county has received nearly \$1 million in grant monies. Construction will get underway in 2014, following engineering work in 2013. The project will facilitate economic development and job growth by improving transportation on that roadway and opening up additional acres (with interstate visibility) that are ripe for development.

For more information and/or assistance with your developing business, contact Deanna Kuennen, 507-332-6126 (Faribault) or 507-645-9576/507-744-5185 (Northfield/Lonsdale) or email RCED@co.rice.mn.us.

County Profile



Teresa Ennis

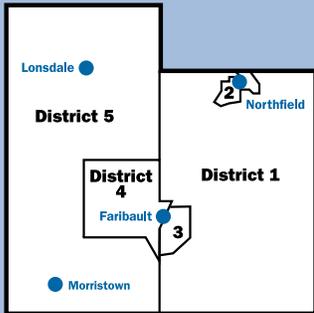
GIS Technician, Rice
County Assessor’s Office

What Teresa Ennis likes best about her work is that she’s always learning new things to do with GIS (geographic information system). GIS is a method for integrating hardware, software and data to capture, manage, analyze and present information about the features of an area.

GIS plays a major role in county affairs, as Teresa explains. “As a GIS technician, I create and maintain geographic and attribute databases to reflect all property divisions with the county, such as splits, combinations, new plats and property line corrections. I determine estimated market values, green acre values, and new construction values for all property divisions. I also determine the land classification (i.e., tillable, pasture, woods, etc.) through aerial photography interpretation, determine tax estimates for individual taxpayers, realtors and lawyers concerning property divisions and green acres. I provide the planning and zoning department with copies of maps for all property divisions so they can update their records to issue permits and keep the 911 database current.”

A graduate of Faribault High School, Teresa began working for the county in 1989 as a mechanical drafter, drawing on skills learned at Faribault Technical College. She and her husband, Cliff, have three grown children (Sheila, Amy and Curt), nine beautiful grandchildren, and a “spoiled little dog named Roscoe.”

Contacts



Rice County Board of Commissioners (as of January 1, 2013)

District 1

Jake Gillen
507-334-5746
jgillen@co.rice.mn.us

District 2

Galen Malecha
507-645-6041
gmalecha@co.rice.mn.us

District 3

David Miller
507-334-4763
dmiller@co.rice.mn.us

District 4

Steve Bauer
507-334-9700
sbauer@co.rice.mn.us

District 5

Jeff Docken
952-652-2876
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 even-numbered months (February, April, June, August, October, 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.

Emergency Medical Services Provider 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 the month, 12:00 p.m. (noon), Friendship House, located at 212-B Central Avenue, Faribault.

Rice County Departments

Administrator Gary Weiers
507-332-6101 gweiers@co.rice.mn.us

Assessor Paul Knutson
507-332-6102 pknutson@co.rice.mn.us

Attorney Paul Beaumaster
507-332-6103 pbeaumaster@co.rice.mn.us

Auditor/Treasurer Fran Windschitl
507-332-6104 fwindschitl@co.rice.mn.us

Community Corrections Director Christine Curtis
507-332-6106 ccurtis@co.rice.mn.us

Court Administrator Hans Holland
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