



Scene in Rice County

The St. Olaf College wind turbine turns quietly behind a row of snowy trees on the campus. With a second turbine located near Carleton College, this is a good example of the county utilizing renewable energy sources.

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Single-Stream Recycling off to Great Start; Annual Volume Could More Than Double

It will take a full year to be sure, but single-stream recycling in Rice County is off to a great start, according to Solid Waste Director Mike Cook. In fact, if early levels continue, the county could see recycling more than double in volume, growing from 2,200 tons per year to an estimated 5,200 tons. "This is exciting," notes Cook. "When we went to the new system, we were hoping for an improvement of 25 to 50 percent."

In August, the county switched to a system that allowed residents to place recyclable materials in a single 65-gallon wheeled cart rather than sorting paper, metal cans and plastic into separate containers. It also began accepting pop, cereal, cake and cracker boxes,

magazines and catalogs, junk mail and flattened, corrugated cardboard cut down to fit in the carts, which are emptied every other week by a truck similar to the one used to pick up trash, resulting in reduced fuel usage.

Public response has been gratifying, says Cook. Some residents are so enthusiastic, in fact, that they've asked how they can get additional carts. (They're available at a cost of \$44 at the Recycling Center, located halfway between Northfield and Faribault, one mile to the east of State Highway 3 on 145th Street East.)

"The county contracts with the haulers for recycling collection," notes Cook. "If you have

[See Single-Stream Recycling, page 2](#)

Social Service and Public Health Programs Aid Residents Impacted by Economy

When times are tough, businesses have fewer customers. Government social service and public health agencies, among others, have more.

In 2007 more than 36 million adults and children (12.2 percent of Americans) didn't have all the food they needed, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Some of those hungry Americans live in Rice County. Their numbers are growing, say Social Services Director Mark Shaw and Director of Health Mary Ho, who have seen steady increases in the number of people seeking assistance to feed themselves and their families as well as help with housing, energy costs, health care and transportation.

"Times are hard for a growing number of Rice County residents and getting harder," notes Shaw. "Many don't know what kind of government services might be available for themselves or for family and neighbors newly in need. We want them to know about the federal, state and county programs that are available to them."

"It can be difficult to know where to get started," says Ho. "The first step is to call one of our offices. If we can't assist you, we'll put you in contact with someone who can."

Providing Safety Nets for Those in Need

What kinds of services are available to county residents? You'll find some examples below. For comprehensive, detailed information, call Social Services or Public Health or visit: www.co.rice.mn.us/social/index.php www.co.rice.mn.us/health/index.php

Social Service Department Programs – 507-332-6115

Income Maintenance Assistance

- **The Minnesota Family Investment Program** provides families with dependent children and some pregnant women with monthly cash or food benefits.
- **General Assistance** aids clients who cannot work and who are not receiving help from other programs, providing a monthly payment that can be used for clothes, food, housing and other basic needs.
- **Minnesota Supplemental Aid** provides monthly aid to people who are over 65 or disabled.

[See Social Service and Public Health, page 3](#)

Commissioners

Election 2008 Brings One New Member to County Board

In November, Rice County citizens reelected two long-time county commissioners and elected a new one. Reelected were Jake Gillen, District 1, and Milt Plaisance, District 3. New to the Board is Jeff Docken, District 5, who will take office on Jan. 1, 2009. The backgrounds and occupations of the commissioners vary, but each cares deeply about how Rice County develops in coming years and about serving its residents. To learn more about your commissioners, visit www.co.rice.mn.us/board/index.php

DISTRICT 1

Jake Gillen

has served on the Board since 2005 and lives on a farm in Walcott Township.



DISTRICT 2

Galen Malecha

has served on the Board since 2007 and is a lifelong resident of Northfield.



DISTRICT 3

Milt Plaisance

has served on the Board since 1989 and has lived in the Faribault area all his life.



DISTRICT 4

Steve Bauer

has served on the Board since 2005 and lives in rural Faribault near French Lake.



DISTRICT 5

Jeff Docken

is the newest member of the Board. A lifetime resident of Rice County, he lives on a farm in Webster Township.



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Single-Stream Recycling Information

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garbage service, your hauler will pick up your recycling for free. County residents who don't have a hauler can pick up a cart for free by stopping at the Recycling Center, but they will need to transport their recyclables themselves or contract to have their recycling picked up."

Have people been recycling appropriately? Cooks says that there have been some problems with oversized cardboard jamming the conveyor system, as well as unapproved materials such as "strollers, old recycling bins, parts from cars and plastic bags." Residents who are uncertain about what is approved and what is not can consult the lists at right, also available at www.co.rice.mn.us/waste/recyclingbin.php

Landfill Fees Increase, Due to Township Tax

More recycling means less reusable solid waste heading for rapidly filling landfills. It also means more revenue from recovered materials. Allied Waste Systems in Minneapolis, where the mixed materials are hauled, is paying the county \$35 per ton for the materials collected.

At the same time, unfortunately, the county must deal with a host tax Bridgewater Township has enacted on the Rice County Landfill, which will cost an estimated \$140,000 annually. [See www.co.rice.mn.us/news/newsitem.php?id=299 for details of the legal background of the issue, which was decided Sept. 11, 2008, by District Court Judge Thomas Neville.] In order to pay the tax, which is assessed for each delivery of waste deposited at the Rice County Landfill, the county is going to add the tax to the fees at the landfill. It is likely, in turn, that haulers will have to raise fees for their customers.

This host tax resulted in the following fees: Small garbage loads \$19.89 (increased from \$17.55), medium garbage loads \$28.78 (\$25.27), self hauler per ton \$63.33 (\$60.00), licensed garbage hauler \$51.33 (\$48.00) and demolition \$26.75 (\$26.00).

The Dos and Don'ts of Rice County Recycling

YES – PAPER

Business envelopes (window type OK), business forms, cardboard (flattened and cut to fit carts), cereal/detergent/shoe boxes, computer/copy/fax/typing paper, file folders, junk mail, ledger/scratch paper, magazines, manila envelopes (pressure sensitive OK), newspaper, sticky notes, telephone books.

YES – FOOD CONTAINERS

Aluminum/steel/tin cans, aluminum pie tins/trays/foil, beer/wine/liquor bottles, food jars, glass jars, milk/juice (aseptic containers), ketchup bottles, narrow-neck plastic bottles (regardless of the number on the bottom), soda/juice/water bottles.

NO

Auto/mirror or tinted glass, blueprints/overhead transparencies, carbon paper, carpeting, clothing, hazardous waste or containers, crystal-type materials or beverage glasses, disposable diapers, foil-type containers (alcohol wipes and direct mail samples), light bulbs, metal or steel objects (including nails, wire, hangers, case strapping), paper towels/napkins/facial tissue, pet-soiled paper, photography or photographic paper, plastic materials (take-out food trays, wrap, strapping, film cups), Pyrex and other heat-resistant ovenware, rubber-type materials/Latex, self-adhesive labels, styrofoam products, toys, wax-coated products.

IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

- Rinse food from containers
- No trash, hazardous waste or food items
- Break down all large items to maximize space
- Do not block or place obstacles in front of recycling container

Conservation Tree Seedlings and Shrubs for Sale

The Rice Soil and Water Conservation District, 1810 NW 30th Street in Faribault, is taking orders for their 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. The selection includes conifers (Eastern red cedar, Norway pine and Black Hills spruce, among

many others); deciduous trees (including quaking aspen, river birch, black walnut), and shrubs (cranberrybush, common purple lilac, hazelnut and others).

Orders are taken on a first-come, first-served basis with trees arriving in April. For an order form or free help with a tree planting, call the district office at 507-332-5408 or visit www.riceswcd.org.

Social Service and Public Health Programs

Continued from page 1

- **Emergency Assistance** and **Emergency General Assistance** provide short-term help for people dealing with a crisis such as a fire, utility shut off, illness or eviction.

Services for Children

- Services include child foster care and establishment and enforcement of child support.
- Residents may be eligible for child care aid if their income is at or below 75 percent of the state's median income and they need child care services in order to secure employment, retain employment, or to obtain training or education.

Health Care and Housing Assistance

- **Medical Assistance**, a federal program, helps people under age 21 or over 65, pregnant, blind, or mentally or physically disabled to pay their medical bills.
- **General Assistance Medical Care**, a state program, aids people who can't receive Medical Assistance.
- County social workers and mental health professionals provide and arrange for mental health services such as case management, community support, crisis intervention, therapy, in-home therapy and/or placement for treatment.
- Services for vulnerable adults unable to live independently, developmentally disabled, emotionally disturbed, mentally ill and chemically dependent persons include: case management, foster care and adult protection, and assistance with guardianships and conservatorships.

Public Health Programs – 507-332-6111

Services for Families with Children

- In addition to providing family planning, pregnancy testing, in-home prenatal visits, prepared childbirth classes and postpartum support, the Public Health Department administers the federal **Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program**, which provides nutrition education and food such as milk, cheese, cereal, juice, eggs, peanut butter and formula to income-eligible pregnant and breastfeeding women, infants up to one year of age, and children up to five years of age. For more information, visit www.fns.usda.gov/wic/ or www.health.state.mn.us/divs/fh/wic/wic.html.
- **Childhood immunizations** – A donation of \$5 per shot is requested, but immunizations are provided regardless of whether a

donation is made. **Child and teen check-ups** are available through the Medical Assistance/Minnesota Care program.

- **Health care assistance for adults** includes education programs, long-term care consultation services, home visits for sick and disabled persons of all ages, and information on free breast and cervical cancer screening for uninsured and underinsured women over the age of 40.
- The Rice County Public Health Nursing Service also maintains useful **directories of public and private community health resources**, including guides to long-term care resources such as assisted living facilities, foster homes and home care services, and ways to save money on prescriptions. These are available in the Government Services Building in Faribault or online – go to the documents section of the web site at www.co.rice.mn.us/health/index.php.
- The Public Health Office offers brochures on helpful, non-governmental programs as well, including Healthfinders (volunteer doctors, nurses, social workers, interpreters serving low-income, uninsured county residents), Hope Center (helping victims of domestic abuse and sexual assault) and The Welcome Center (assisting immigrant and mainstream residents in English, Spanish and Somali, and building multicultural understanding).

Helping Others in Need

Are you looking for a way to reach out a helping hand at this difficult time? There are many easy ways for Rice County residents to help others, notes Ho, from donating money or canned goods to area food banks and warm clothing to community action programs to volunteering at programs organized by local organizations and communities of faith.

It doesn't take a lot to help someone, adds Shaw. It can be as simple as helping the senior citizen next door clear his sidewalks this winter or install weatherproofing that will lower her energy bills. Every little bit helps.

Extension Services Moves

The University of Minnesota Extension Office moved to the 4-H Building at the Rice County Fairgrounds in order to better serve citizens. Its new mailing address is 1900 Fairgrounds Drive #17, Faribault, MN 55021.

County Profile



Sue Hein

**Child Support Officer
Rice County Social Services**

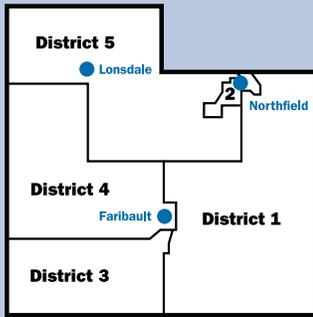
Sue Hein has been working on child support issues for more than 25 years, first as a legal secretary in the Rice County Attorney's Office and, since 1987, as a child support officer for Social Services.

What keeps her on the job? "I feel good about helping children get the support they need," says Hein, "and helping parents be responsible for their kids."

Hein works with clients to establish and enforce child support orders that consider both parents' incomes and determine fair contribution levels. There is a \$25 fee for the service and things don't happen overnight, but a support order can make a huge difference in a child's life. It also can be a relief to adults involved, she says. "Most parents want to do right by their kids; sometimes they just need help putting things in place."

Hein attended Bethlehem Academy and South Central College. She and her husband, Dave, an employee of Anvil International in Bloomington, have three children. Megan, 23, works one floor above her mother in the Government Services Building, in administration, and Mike, 22, works a block away in the Sheriff's Department. Andy, 18, is a high school senior whose involvement in sports keeps his parents busy. In her spare time, Hein enjoys camping and travel, as well as scrapbooking.

Contacts



Rice County Board of Commissioners (as of January 1, 2009)

District 1

Jake Gillen
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District 2

Galen Malecha
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District 3

Milt Plaisance
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District 4

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

District 5

Jeff Docken
952-652-2876
jdocken@co.rice.mn.us

www.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.

Planning Commission

Meets the first and third Thursdays of the month, 7:30 p.m., Commissioners' Room, Rice County Government Services Building.

Board of Adjustment

Meets the second and fourth Mondays of the month; 7:00 p.m., 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
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Attorney Paul Beaumaster
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Auditor/Treasurer Fran Windschitl
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Community Corrections Director James Haas
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Court Administrator Robert Langer
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Planning & Zoning Director Julie Runkel
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Public Health & CHS Director Mary Ho
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Recorder Marsha DeGroot
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Sheriff Richard Cook
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Social Services Director Mark Shaw
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Solid Waste Director Michael Cook
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Veterans' Services Officer Carol Soeters
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Rice County
REPORT

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