



Talk around Town

MADISON COUNTY NEWSLETTER

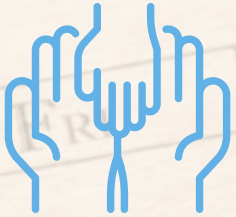


GET THE LATEST INFORMATION ABOUT MADISON COUNTY

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2021

Calendar

Nov. 18 Great American Smokeout Day



Nov. 20 National Adoption Day

Nov. 25 Thanksgiving



Nov. 27 Small Business Saturday



Nov. 30 National Day of Giving

Dec. 2 National Mutt Day



Dec. 3 National Bartender Day

Dec. 7 National Illinois Day



Dec. 13 National Ice Cream Day

Dec. 15 Bill of Rights Day



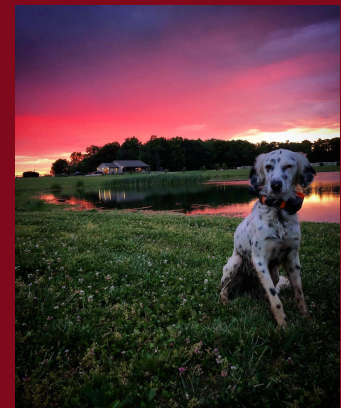
December is

National Drunk
and Drugged
Driving
Awareness
Month

National
Identity Theft
and Prevention
Month

National
Tie
Month

Cover Photo



Taken by Cody Olson at a farm in rural Highland.

Cody submitted the photo as part of the county's "Best Shot" contest to showcase photographers work across Madison County.

Wheels on the Bus



Madison County Board Member Robert Pollard (fifth for left) attends Madison County Transits ribbon cutting ceremony on Oct. 27 for its new Park and Ride at Eastgate Park and Ride facility in East Alton.



Out & About in Madison County

Got Drugs?



Madison County Coroner's Office, Sheriff's Office and Emergency Management Agency collected unwanted prescription medications on Oct. 23 on DEA National Drug Takeback Day.

Pictured below left to right: Sheriff Capt. Cale Becker, Chief deputy Sheriff Jeff Connor, Coroner Stephen Nonn, Chief Deputy Coroner Kelly Rogers, and EMA Capt. Matthew Bogard.

Trail Talks



Madison County Board members Erica Conway-Harriss (fifth from left) and Jamie Goggin (second from right) attends Madison County Transit's unveiling of 17 installed interpretive panels along along the Ronald J. Foster Heritage Trail and Nickel Plate Trail in Glen Carbon on Nov. 4. Visit [MCT](#) to find out more about the interpretive sites.



Road to Work



Madison County Circuit Clerk Clerk's Office, State's Attorney Office, Circuit Court, Illinois Secretary of State and Simmons Hanly Conry of Alton hosted a "Road to Work" event on Nov. 4 at the Alton Police Department. Local residents were given an opportunity to receive legal assistance for traffic-related misdemeanors and warrants.



Pictured left to right: Alton Police Chief Marcos Pulido, Circuit Clerk Tom McRae, State's Attorney Tom Haine and Alton Mayor David Goins.



Honoring a Hero

Pontoon Beach police officer killed in line of duty



Family and hundreds of law enforcement said farewell to a Pontoon Beach police officer shot and killed in the line of duty.

Tyler Timmins died on Oct. 26 while approaching a suspect of a stolen vehicle. He was 36, and worked in law enforcement for 14 years and served in Roxana, Worden and Hartford before joining Pontoon Beach in April 2020.

Family and friends paid their last respects on Nov. 1 and 2 during visitation and funeral service held at the Gateway Convention Center in Collinsville.

Tyler leaves behind a wife, Linsey Timmins, a Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Police officer, whom he married on Sept. 11 and a young daughter.

"Your words, love, support and generosity and continued support have been overwhelming," Linsey said. "It's so appreciated."

Linsey said the word "hero" is defined in the dictionary as a person who is admired or idolized for courage, outstanding achievement or noble quality.

"For me, the definition of 'hero' is my husband," she said.

She said everyday every day Tyler woke up and put on that uniform, strapped that vest to his chest and walked out of our door, he was courageous.

"He was courageous for choosing a career to serve and protect the lives of complete strangers, putting his life on the line everyday and in turn paying the ultimate sacrifice," she said. "Tyler loved being a police officer. He was the type of cop who truly bled blue."

"Never once did he complain about doing this job that God called him to do."

Law enforcement officers from across the county and from around the country attended the funeral service, some coming from as far away as Phoenix, Dallas and Chicago. Following the funeral, a procession of more than 100 police cars escorted the hearse carrying Timmins' casket to Woodland Hill Cemetery in East Alton.





When a line of duty death occurs, The BackStoppers steps in with immediate assistance that is then ongoing. After immediately providing \$10,000 to the family to be used in whatever way they need, we meet with the family of the fallen, eliminate their debt, and arrange to provide ongoing support for expenses such as health care, tuition, and more. Visit backstopper.org for more information.



The 34th Annual Budweiser Guns 'N Hoses

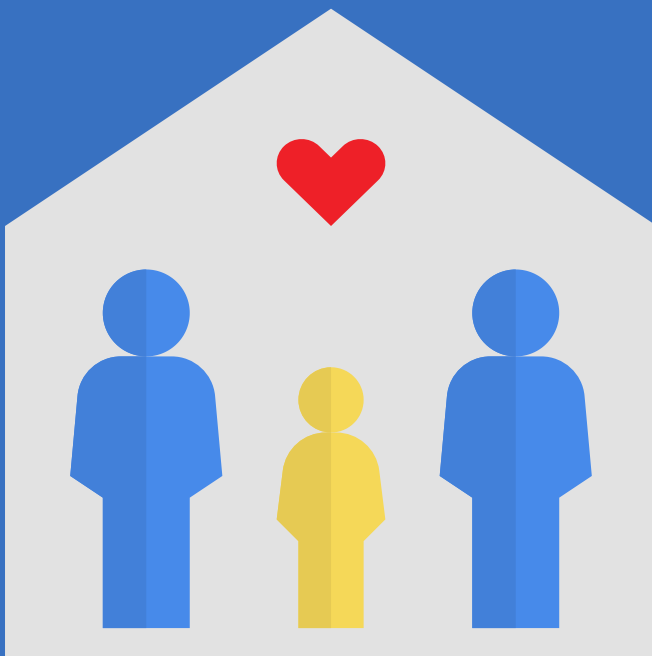
Boxing and MMA event

Wednesday, Nov. 24
Enterprise Center, St. Louis

PURCHASE TICKETS ONLINE ONLY!
Visit stlgunsnhoses.com for more information

Event Benefits The Backstoppers

Madison County proclaims November as National Adoption Month



Madison County
Chairman Kurt Prenzler
presents Third Circuit
Judge Amy Maher with a
proclamation
proclaiming National
Adoption Month.

"Madison County honors
those who have opened
their hearts and homes
through adoption."



Framed MADISON COUNTY

Madison County is showing you some of its “best shots.”

When Madison County updated its website this past summer, it wanted to highlight the communities across the county and showcase them through the “lens” of its residents. It held a contest and invited photographers to capture its beautiful scenery, activities, community, history and charm.

The contest, which was open to all and included original photos from individuals.

“We were thrilled with the participation we received and the work submitted,” Chairman Kurt Prenzler said. “It’s a way to show off our county through their eyes.”

All photos submitted are available to view on the county’s website at

www.co.madison.il.us/government/photo_gallery/2021_best_shot_submissions.php.

Submitted photos will be used on the website and in materials for Madison County and photographers will be credited for their work.



Madison County passes FY 2022 Budget

The Madison County Board approved the county's \$171 million budget Nov. 17, along with its \$30.8 million property tax levy.

"We once again balanced the budget and kept the property tax levy the same," Chairman Kurt Prenzler said. "This marks zero growth in the levy for a fourth year."

The board voted, 25-0, for upcoming fiscal year 2022 spending plan, which starts on Dec. 1. The board also approved the tax levy, 28-0.

The budget includes \$54.4 million in General Fund monies, which \$8.2 million comes from the tax levy. The General Fund makes up about one-third of the county's total tax levy, and the No. 1 cost is personnel.

Other funding sources for the budget include grants, fees, and sales tax revenue. Federal and State aid for COVID-19 relief increase the budget.

Budget highlights include: costs for personnel for the State's Attorney's Office and Circuit Court; replacement of vehicles, radio equipment and body cameras for Sheriff's Office; along with

replacement of vehicles in Facility Department, Coroner's Office, County Clerk and Probation Department.

"This year's budget includes a new accounting system for the Auditor's Office," Prenzler said.

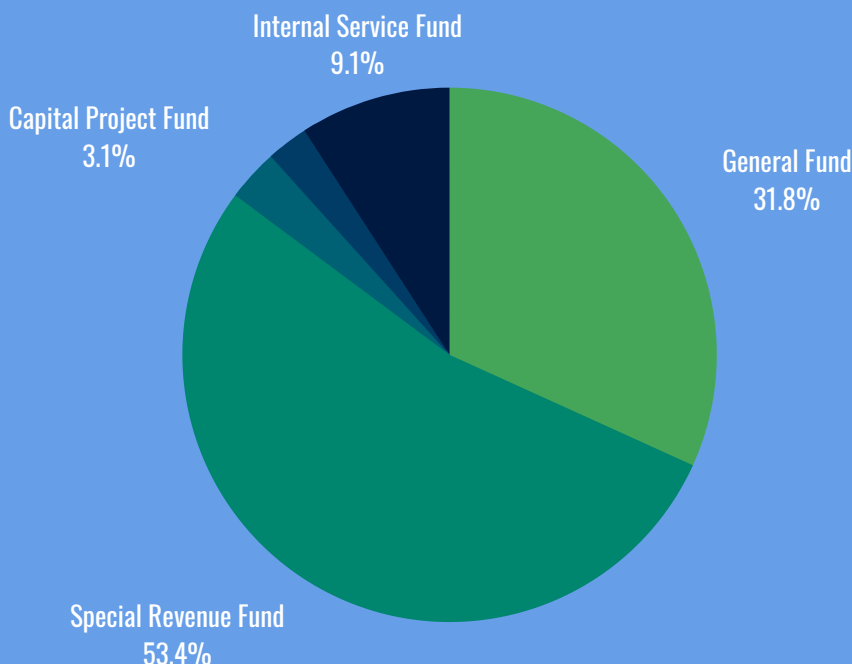
Prenzler said the county budgeted around \$600,000, which includes software and training for the improved technology. He said the new system is being paid for out of the General Fund

The current accounting software system is more than 20 years old.

Prenzler said the administration worked hard to keep budget costs down.

"It has been my priority, along with County Board members, to reduce the county's reliance on property taxes," he said. "In 2017, the tax levy went from \$32.6 million to \$30.8 million and we've kept it the same."

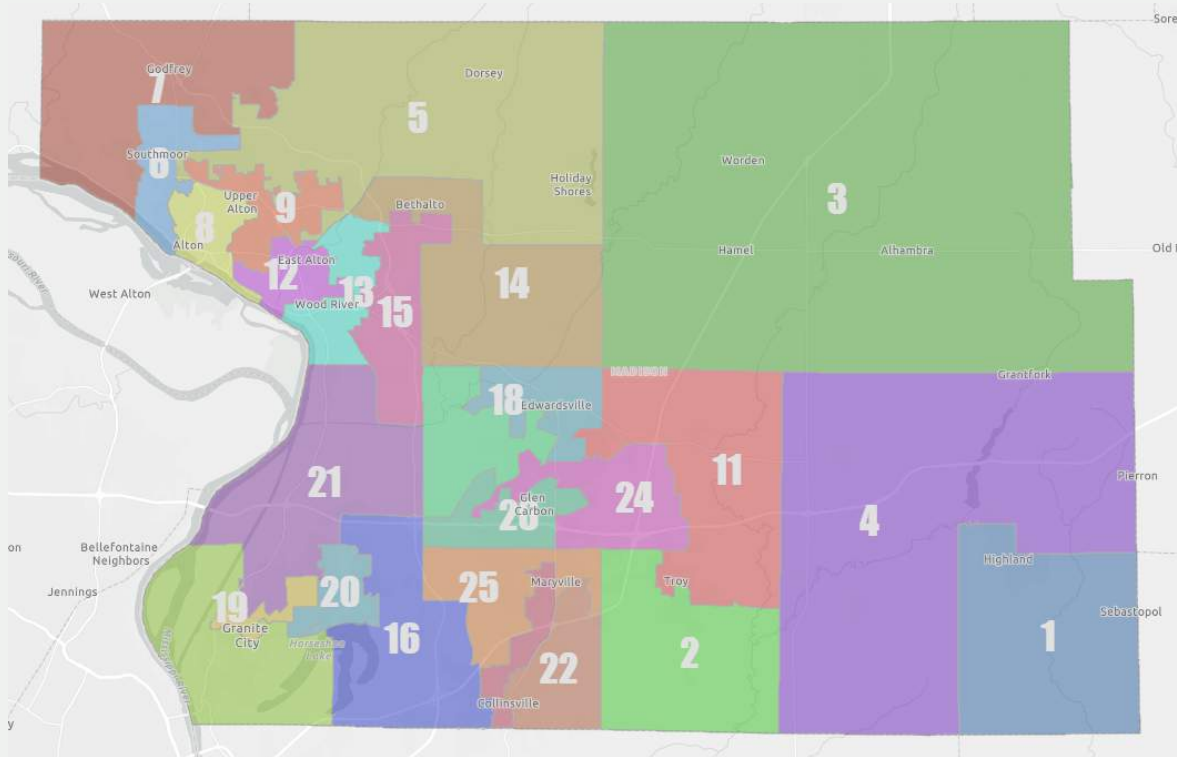
Visit www.co.madison.il.us to view a copy of the budget online.



Budget Summary

General Fund	\$ 54,402,175
Special Revenue Funds	\$ 91,421,390
Capital Project Fund	\$ 5,378,199
Enterprise Fund	\$ 4,330,196
Internal Service Fund	\$ 15,646,987
Total Budget	\$ 171,178,947

MADISON COUNTY BOARD DOWNSIZES WITH APPROVAL OF NEW MAP



The Madison County Board on Wednesday approved newly-drawn maps and downsized the number of its districts.

“We reduced the board by three seats, saving taxpayers money and providing substantially equal representation throughout the county,” County Board member Chris Guy of Maryville said. “It’s fair, reasonable and good for the taxpayers,”

The board voted 23 to 1, with Board member Nick Petrillo of Granite City casting the only “no” vote. Board members Michael “Doc” Holliday and Bill Stoutenborough of Alton, Mike Babcock of Bethalto and Jamie Goggin of Edwardsville were absent.

Petrillo said he was voting against the plan because he didn’t feel it best served the residents of Granite City. The map change consolidates two county board seats into a single district.

The map proposed by Guy reduces the board by 10 percent and saves approximately \$435,000 on salaries during the next 10 years. County Board district lines are adjusted every 10 years to reflect population changes and to ensure equal representation of residents.

Guy began working on the 26-seat map in the spring with the help of other board members and officials. It was this third map; he previously put together 29 and 27 seat maps.

In May, Chairman Kurt Prenzler presented a 25-seat map drawn by the University of Illinois Geographic Information Systems Lab at Springfield (UIS) and the board rejected it.

Prenzler said he is pleased with the board’s decision to downsize the number of districts.

“It’s moving the county toward what other counties have done — reducing the size of their boards to save taxpayers money.”

Guy said reducing government doesn’t happen too often. “A reduction of the county board is a victory for the taxpayers in Madison County,” he said.

View the map

<https://madcoil.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=17d9f70cbb76424d90dcce6b28732697>.



RiverBend

GROWTH ASSOCIATION

recognizes Health Department Director as exemplary leader



Madison County Public Health Director Toni Corona receives recognition during RiverBend Growth Association's annual LeadHership Seminar last month.

On Oct. 8, RBGA present the 2021 LeadHership "Empowerment" Award, the highest recognition given during this annual event, to Corona. Jen Jackson of Helmkamp Construction, who served as emcee for the virtually hosted event presented Corona with the award.

"Toni was nominated, then unanimously selected by our committee, for her leadership and strength over the last year," Jackson said. "Toni brings a welcoming and encouraging presence with her wherever she goes, and her sincerity is engaging. Her positive outlook, her ongoing efforts, and her unyielding fight against the pandemic are respected by all."

"Her enthusiasm for life and concern for community is, dare I say, contagious."

Corona was further recognized for her dedication to her home state, and specifically Madison County.

She was honored for maintaining professional integrity throughout extremely stressful times, as well as for maintaining high standards of professionalism and a strong work ethic.

"Toni has worked non-stop, seven days a week, for up to 12 hours a day for many months to ensure public health and safety, as well as educational awareness specific to Coronavirus," Jackson said. "She is the epitome of service with a smile, and not only serves as a professional and committed employee but also devotes her time outside of work in volunteerism and advocacy as well."

Beyond leading Madison County through the pandemic, Corona also regularly advocates for the community by serving on numerous local boards, striving to further improve the quality of life for Madison County and its residents.

"It's quite an honor to receive this award," Corona said. "I am so appreciative to be recognized by such an esteemed group of professional women. I'm fortunate that my career in public health has created an opportunity to lead with values of service and purpose — this is my 'WHY!' I'm blessed and grateful, and I wish to thank the RiverBend Growth Association for sponsoring this valuable program of women empowering women."



ABMDI

American Board of
Medicolegal Death Investigators

certifies coroner investigator to "Diplomate" status

Madison County Coroner Investigator Shelbi Nelsen earned registry certification and "Diplomate" status as a medicolegal death investigator through the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators.



"We have always been pleased to have 100 percent basic Diplomate level certification of all of our investigators as soon as they are eligible to take the exam," Coroner Stephen Nonn said.

"This onward and upward desire to achieve professionalism is what I want my staff to provide to the citizens of Madison County."

The ABMDI is a voluntary national, not-for-profit, independent professional certification board established to promote professionalism amongst death investigators in coroner and medical examiner jurisdictions throughout the United States. The registry process includes an accumulation of a minimum of 640 hours of death investigation experience, and a skills assessment review by a current member of ABMDI, character and background assessment, and a four hour written examination with 240 questions.

Nelsen first joined staff of the coroner's office in 2019. She served her college internship with the coroner's office in 2016.

She holds a bachelor degree from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville with a major in criminal justice and a minor in forensic science. She previously worked for the Federal Government.

Her next step in ABMDI Board Certifications will be for "Fellow" certification. This certification process includes successful previous completion of basic certification, a minimum of an associates college degree, the accumulation of a minimum of 4,000 hours death investigation experience, character and background assessment, and a five and one-half hour written examination in essay and multiple choice format

"We have four of the 19 advanced Fellow certification investigators in Illinois right here in Madison County", Nonn said. "I have to admit that I am very proud of the fact that Madison County has more investigators with the advanced certifications than any other coroner's or medical examiner's office in Illinois."

State's Attorney hires top violent crimes prosecutor

Madison County State's Attorney Tom Haine is pleased to announce the hiring of long-time St. Louis prosecutor Mary Pat Carl as a member of the Madison County State's Attorney's Office's violent crimes unit.

Carl served for 15 years as a prosecutor in the St. Louis Circuit Attorney's Office (CAO), trying more than 85 jury trials to verdict, and eventually becoming the Lead Homicide Prosecutor under former Circuit Attorney Jennifer Joyce. Carl ran for St. Louis Circuit Attorney twice.

Carl has spent the last several years in private practice.

"Mary Pat Carl has been a fighter for justice for over a decade and a half in the City of St. Louis, and her skills in the courtroom have earned the respect of her peers from across the region," Haine said. "We are excited that one of St. Louis's top violent crime prosecutors has joined our office, which stands committed to maintaining safe neighborhoods for all and combatting the scourge of violent crime in our area."

She was sworn in by Haine on Nov. 16, and began work immediately in the State's Attorney's Office.



— HAPPY — Retirement

After more than 40 years of working for Madison County, including being a member of the State's Attorney's staff since 1994, Mike Vrabec officially retired at the end of October.

Madison County State's Attorney presented Mike with a plaque congratulating him on his retirement, and thanking him for his years of service to Madison County and the State's Attorney's Office.

CONGRATS



Final Property Tax Instalment Due

Madison County Treasurer, Chris Slusser, is reminding taxpayers that the final installment of their real-estate tax bill is due in December.

"With the due date quickly approaching that the fourth and final tax installment will be due Wednesday, Dec. 8," Slusser said. "Remember, there are many ways to pay your tax bill."

Slusser reminds taxpayers payment options include paying at participating collector banks or credit unions throughout the county, by mail, through your financial institution's online bill pay service, the Treasurer's website at www.madcotreasurer.org, by phone at 1-844-919-4300, or in person at the Treasurer's Office in Edwardsville.

"We continue to encourage taxpayers to use alternative methods to pay taxes," Slusser said.

Slusser said there is no penalty applied to payments mailed and postmarked by the due date.

"I would encourage taxpayers to take a payment inside the post office to have it postmarked if they are planning to mail it on the actual due date," Slusser said. "Mail collected from drop boxes is often not locally postmarked, but sent to a distribution center in St. Louis, which can take several days."

He said although the Treasurer's office serves as the county's tax collector, it's important to remember that the Treasurer's office doesn't determine the amount that is billed.

"Property tax bills are determined by four factors — the assessment, the equalization factor or 'multiplier,' the tax rate and any exemptions," he said.

Each year taxpayers receive a bill that includes information indicating exactly where their tax dollars are spent, upcoming due dates and available payment options.

For more information or questions contact the Treasurer's Office at (618) 692-6260, or to pay by phone, please call 1-844-919-4300.

The Madison County Sheriff's Office, the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Illinois State Police and nearly 200 local police and sheriff's departments are reminding motorists to "Click It or Ticket" and "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" throughout the Thanksgiving holiday.

"We want our community to understand that it's up to them to make the smart decision to drive sober Thanksgiving weekend and every day," Chief Deputy Sheriff, Major Jeff Connor, said. "Remember — if you're going to drink or use other impairing substances, don't drive. We will be stepping up patrols to keep impaired drivers off the roads and ensure everyone makes it home from their celebrations."

The safety campaign will run Nov. 19 — Nov. 29 leading up to and following the Thanksgiving Day holiday, one of the busiest times on Illinois roads.

If you'll be celebrating with alcohol or other impairing substances, please remember:

- Make a plan for a sober ride home before you go out.
- If you've been drinking or using marijuana or other drugs, call a taxi, take mass transit, or call a family member to get you home safely.
- Use your favorite ride-share service, such as Uber or Lyft, or use public transportation.
- If you see a drunk driver, pull over safely and call 911.
- Make sure everyone in your vehicle wears their seat belt. It is the best defense against an impaired driver.

The Thanksgiving enforcement effort is made possible by federal traffic safety funds administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation.



Sheriff kicks off campaign for safe and sober driving



Madison County Disperses \$4.5 million In Federal Rental Assistance Funding

Madison County's emergency rental assistance program exceeded \$4.5 million in payments to residents affected by COVID-19.

"The pandemic created a housing crisis for thousands of Madison County families and landlords and this program helped eligible households with rent and rent arrearage," Madison County Community Development Deputy Administrator Chris Otto said.

Since March, Madison County Community Development (MCCD) disbursed the funding through the American Rescue Plan Act's Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) funds low and moderate income households.

The funds helped to pay rents that were past due during COVID-19 when there was a moratorium on rents. The money was also available to pay utilities such as electric, gas, sewer, trash and water as well as preventing disconnections or resuming service.

The ERAP program has been successful due to higher income thresholds than other MCCD assistance programs. Current income guidelines allows single member households with up to \$47,550 annual income to apply with a progressive scale up to \$89,650 income for a household of eight.

"Community Development anticipates servicing rental requests through Dec. 31 and paying rental requests through February 2022 as funds allow," Otto said.

Requests for rent and/or utility assistance may be applied for at the Madison County website at www.co.madison.il.us. Click Departments – Community Development — Rent & Mortgage Assistance — Emergency Rental Assistance — Tenant or Landlord Application.

To apply for rental assistance, you may complete an application for up to 12 months towards past due rent. Up to three months of future rent may be requested on a separate form. Applicants are eligible for up to 15 months of total rental assistance after which no further rental applications will be considered.

To apply for utility assistance, you may complete an application towards up to 15 months of past due bills. Note that all rental and utility applications must be completed in full to be considered.

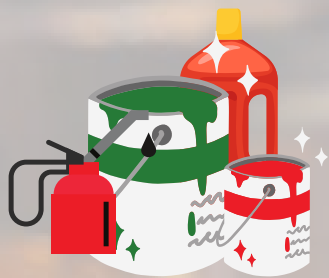
"Rental assistance has been the most requested form of assistance coming through the Madison County referral line," Otto said.



Madison County Emergency Rental Assistance Application Sites



Choteau Township	(618) 931-0360
Collinsville Township	(618) 344-1290
Godfrey	(618) 466-3381
Jarvis Township	(618) 667-2560
Nameoki Township	(618) 931-1230
Venice Township	(618) 452-1123
Wood River Library	(618) 254-4832
Hayner Library-Alton	(618) 462-0677
Madison County Urban League	(618) 463-1906
Madison County	(618) 296-5300



Madison County opens permanent site for Household Hazardous Waste

Illinois residents were given the opportunity to drop-off their household hazardous waste items on Nov. 6 for free at a new collection site that opened in Wood River..

The new collection facility located at 249 N. Old St. Louis Road serviced more than dozens of households on its first day open.

"There was a tremendous turnout on the first day," Madison County Building and Zoning Administrator Chris Doucleff said.

Each collection event will be held from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the first Saturday and third Friday of each month.

Madison County partnered with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) and Heritage Environmental, to increase the number of opportunities for residents to dispose of their household hazardous waste from twice a year to up to 24 times per year.

"This opportunity is unique to Madison County and is the only collection facility within a 5-hour drive in Illinois," Madison County Chairman Kurt Prenzler said.

Doucleff said the problem for most residents is that household hazardous waste can manifest itself in many different everyday items and unfortunately, many of the items are difficult to dispose of in a manner that's safe for the environment.

"As a result, these chemicals and toxic materials end up going into our waste streams and eventually can contaminate the groundwater, natural habitats and waterways," Doucleff said.

Resource Management Coordinator Brandon Banks said the county received daily calls from residents asking for ways to dispose of their chemicals and hazardous waste.

"In the past, we were only able to provide limited resources for them," Banks said. "Having a permanent site creates more opportunities for people to do the right thing when disposing of household hazardous waste."

Banks said the county wanted to make it easier and safe for the environment with opening the new, permanent site.

"We are excited about it," he said. "For years the household hazardous waste collections have been one of Madison County's most sought after and popular events."



Doucleff said disposal of items would be 100 percent free of charge and open to all Illinois residents.

"You do not have to be a Madison County resident to drop off household hazardous waste," Doucleff said. "However, appointments are required by scheduling one online or by calling."

To make an appointment online visit <https://RecycleResponsibly.as.me/hhwaste>, or call 618)296-5237.

Accepted HHW items include oil-based paints, pesticides and herbicides, lawn fertilizers and chemicals, cleaning solvents, paint thinners, hobby chemicals, antifreeze & motor oil, pool chemicals, household batteries, medicines, lead-acid batteries and fluorescent lights.

Non-acceptable items include latex paint, tires, electronics, ammunition, agricultural wastes, explosives, fireworks, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, farm machinery oil, business, commercial or biohazard waste.

Visit www.madisoncountybz.com for more information on HHW or how to dispose of other items such as electronics.

Doucleff said the funding for the new site comes from the "tipping fees," which are fees charges to waste haulers for disposal of items in the county's two landfills.

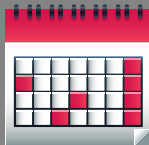
"It's a win-win for taxpayers," Prenzler said. "Residents pay nothing out of pocket and receive this new service."

Check out the Citizens Guide on the county's website to find out more on the operations of Madison County Government and its departments.



Madison County Board Meeting Update

Check out the calendar to view upcoming County Board and Committee meetings.

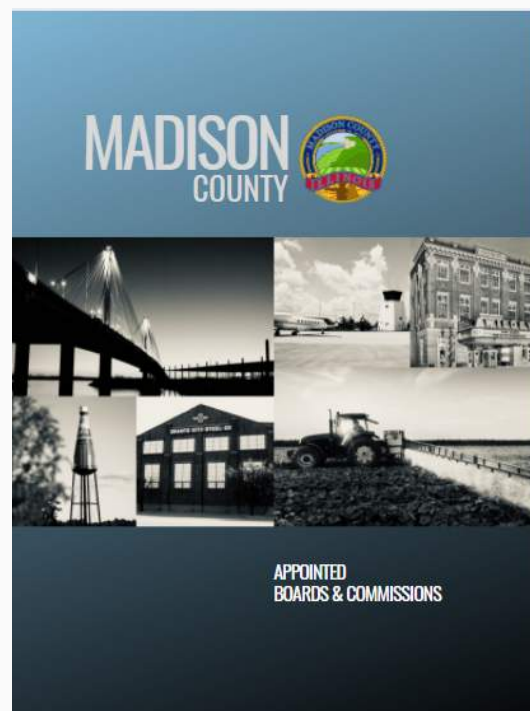
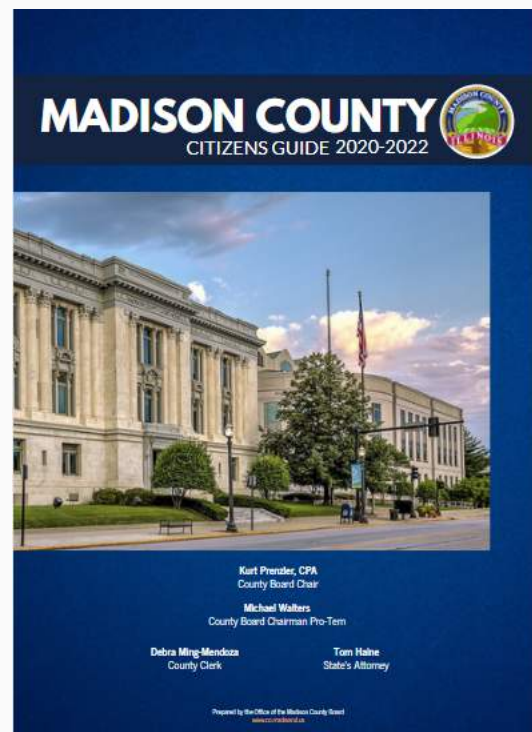


The public is invited to attend County Board meetings, which are held in the Board Room at the Madison County Administration Building, 157 N. Main St., Edwardsville, Ill.

To listen to past meetings, or read approved minutes, visit https://www.co.madison.il.us/departments/county_clerk/county_board_records/board_agendas_and_minutes.php for more information.



The Madison County Board Chair appoints individuals to more than 70 boards and commissions throughout Madison County. Click on the booklet to find out more.



Check out Madison County Government website and social media pages for the latest news and information.



Madison County Board —



618-296-4341 —



coboard@co.madison.il.us