



2019 | Issue 2 | Fall



Photo Credit: Justin Eiler

### Fall Issue Snapshot:

- Renville County Enhanced Rehabilitation Court.....Page 2
- Does the Census Matter?.....Page 3
- New GIS Hub.....Page 4
- Restorative Justice.....Page 4
- Meet Judge Stratton.....Page 5
- Radon Test Kits for Sale.....Page 5
- Improving Soil Health.....Page 6
- One Watershed, One Plan.....Page 6
- New Boat Purchased.....Page 6
- Escrow Agreements Required for Sale/Transfer of Property.....Page 7
- New Website Launched.....Page 7
- HRA/EDA Blight Program.....Page 8
- Senior LinkAge Line®.....Page 9
- 2019 Kandiyohi-Renville Community Health Assessment.....Pages 10-11
- Renville County Parks Open for Winter Activities.....Page 12
- Child Care Providers Wanted.....Page 12

### Renville County Jail: A Unique Approach

By Ned Wohlman, Jail Administrator

**R**enville County Jail (RCJ) is not just an ordinary jail. Part of our mission is to make Renville County a safer place to live.

**We believe that two key areas where the jail can make an impact is in education and chemical dependency treatment.** RCJ is also a good example that rehabilitation programming doesn't have to be expensive to be effective.

We are unique in having a licensed chemical dependency treatment program within the walls of the facility. This is run by New Beginnings of Waverly, a Meridian company. Our philosophy is that we do our level best to give people the tools needed to succeed before they leave the jail. RCJ does not pay anything for this service to be offered in our facility.



*Renville County Jail Public Entrance*

Renville County Jail has a file full of letters from former inmates who were greatly helped by receiving treatment while in jail. This helped put their lives back on track, helped restore their families, and helped provide a support network. One individual shared, *"I came here thinking my life was over, and I left believing in myself again. Thank you Renville County Jail!"* All this at no cost to the jail.

The second area helping us fulfill our mission is by offering General Education Development (GED) classes and testing.

Continued from Page One...

## Renville County Jail: A Unique Approach



Actual file of letters  
received from  
former inmates

Many jails larger than us do not offer GED in their programming lineup. In most cases, even the jails that do offer GED do not offer GED testing inside the jail. As you may have guessed by now, we do!

Since we began offering GED classes inside the jail, we have had 85 GED graduates and even four actual high school diplomas earned while in RCJ. People who have been awarded their GED, on average, will earn an additional \$250,000 over a lifetime of employment.

Renville County Jail offers GED classes four or five days a week. The southwest region Adult Basic Education program (ABE) funds the GED teacher 100%. The entire GED program is offered at virtually at no cost to the jail.

Chemical dependency treatment and GED are just two of the areas in which the Renville County Jail works with inmates in preparation for release. Healthcare, employment possibilities and life skills of various kinds are available inside the jail. Our staff works hard to assess the areas of need for each inmate.

The Renville County Jail staff is committed to assisting inmates better themselves while they are in jail. We don't simply "lock up" people. Inmates are not allowed to just sit around. We do our best to have a positive impact on their lives.

Sooner or later, inmates here will be released, and we have a choice. We can either treat inmates like many facilities do and release inmates who would be angry, resentful and without much hope, or we can release inmates with healing self-worth, hope for tomorrow and the tools to succeed in their fight against addiction.

**Which one would you like to be your neighbor?**

**To learn more about programs at the RCJ, contact Ned Wohlman, Renville County Jail Administrator at 320-523-3778 or [nedw@renvillecountymn.com](mailto:nedw@renvillecountymn.com) or Elliot Johnson, Program Director at 320-523-3808 or [elliottj@renvillecountymn.com](mailto:elliottj@renvillecountymn.com).**

## CLOTHING DONATIONS APPRECIATED!

The Renville County Jail is looking for men's and women's clothing for inmates. They are in need of street clothes as well as nicer clothing that could be worn during jury trials.

Often inmates are released directly to treatment centers and only have the clothing they came in with. Please bring donations to the public entrance of the jail, located on the east side of the Government Services Building.

## Renville County Enhanced Rehabilitation Court Celebrates First Graduate



Renville County Enhanced Rehabilitation Court stakeholders gather around Chad Pugh in support and celebration of his graduation from the program. (L to R): Assistant County Attorney Paul Overbee, Judge Laurence Stratton, Court Services Administrative Assistant Jorden Minkel, Jail Administrator Ned Wohlman, Assistant Jail Administrator Melissa Swyter, Patrol Deputy Andrew Hussman, graduate Chad Pugh, Social Services Supervisor Renea Weigel, Social Worker Sheree Hable, Probation Officer Kali Steffel, New Beginnings Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor Mia Weber-Berg, Public Defender Curtis Reese, and Jail Program Director Elliot Johnson.

**R**enville County's Enhanced Rehabilitation Court (ERC) was initially rolled out in September 2017 and recently celebrated its first graduate, Chad Pugh. The program, similar to drug court, includes a broader toolbox for promoting rehabilitation.

Chad Pugh was on probation for Felony 5<sup>th</sup> Degree Drugs. After his third probation violation, he entered into the ERC Program in March 2018, with the choice of either participating in ERC or going to prison.

While in ERC, Pugh obtained a valid Driver's License for the first time in 10 years, obtained and maintained full-time employment, saved enough money to buy a new vehicle, reconnected with family (*whom he now resides with in Wisconsin*), and was the leader of AA in Willmar. **Best of all, Pugh graduated 595 days sober!**

Today, four other participants are enrolled in the program and it was this group who first provided progress updates to Judge Stratton. When Pugh appear before the judge, after the other four participants provided their progress updates, he did so surrounded by family members and a gallery of deeply engaged community stakeholders, law enforcement, social workers and corrections officers, all present in a supportive capacity.

Pugh shared, "Without you, none of this would've been possible. I can guarantee I would not be here. I am forever in your debt. I will always pay it forward. You guys changed my life forever." Ned Wohlman, Renville County Jail Administrator stated, "You are a shining example of what we all envisioned the Enhanced Rehabilitation Court to be able to help you with."

**To learn more about the Enhanced Rehabilitation Court Program, contact Kali Steffel, Corrections Agent at 320-523-3637 or [Kali.Steffel@state.mn.us](mailto:Kali.Steffel@state.mn.us).**

Information Contribution Source:

Scott Tedrick, Renville County Register Editor



## Does the Census Matter for Renville County and Minnesota? Yes!!



**T**he Census determines so much for the nation, the state of Minnesota and, yes, Renville County. Not only is the Census used as the basis for funding; it is also used by private companies, and all levels of government, to make important

decisions that affect everyone for 10 years. **Minnesota received approximately 15 billion dollars through 55 federal spending programs guided by data derived from the 2010 Census.** That money will end up being spent on schools, hospitals, roads, public works, and other programs that matter to everyone.

The point of the Census is to count everyone, and it's a process the Census Bureau has already been working on for over a year! You can even join that effort by becoming a Census Worker. The Census Bureau will be hiring local help, because we know our area better than anyone. Go to [2020census.gov/jobs](https://2020census.gov/jobs) to apply.

Census workers are already out collecting information to ensure everyone will receive a notice to participate in the Census. Additionally, Census Workers take a lifetime oath to protect personal information because, security is not only a number one priority, it is the law that Census information is protected.

The Census itself will collect basic information about the people living in your home, counting every person that lives there on April 1, 2020. **The 1<sup>st</sup> of April next year will be Census Day.** (That's right, they are taking over April Fools!) Beginning in mid-March people will begin to receive notice to complete the 2020 Census. So, what should you know about the Census and why it's important?

### Did you know the Census...

- **is in the Constitution and counts everyone in the country every 10 years**
- **counts everyone ONCE and only ONCE, in the right place**
- **reapportions the House of Representatives (and Minnesota could LOSE its 8<sup>th</sup> seat)**
- **allows states to redraw their congressional and state legislative districts**
- **determines the distribution of 675 BILLION dollars in federal funds and grants and that 675 BILLION dollars supports states, counties and communities**
- **is used by businesses to decide where to build**
- **can decide where homes are built by real estate developers**
- **by law, cannot be used against you and is COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL**
- **will be ONLINE in 2020, for the first time, for you to respond**

And did you know that you can help us? Join the Renville County Census Complete Count Committee! We are looking for leaders in the community from all disciplines and anyone willing to help us spread the word about the 2020 Census.

**Contact Renville County Administrator, and Committee Facilitator, Lisa Herges at 320-523-3754 or 320-522-2920 or [lisah@renvillecountymn.com](mailto:lisah@renvillecountymn.com) to learn more.**

*"Find our Page and Like or Share our Committee posts on Facebook by typing @RenvilleCountyCensus"*

United States  
**Census  
2020**



**If our Values are your Values, Consider a Career with Renville County!**

**Caring About Quality | Efficiency and Stewardship  
Encouraging Community Input  
Respectful to Needs | Ethical Workforce**

**All regular job openings are posted on our website at [www.renvillecountymn.com](http://www.renvillecountymn.com). Select Career Opportunities. Sign up for notifications of job openings under Menu - Job Categories!**

## New Renville County GIS Hub and More to Come!

**R**enville County's Geographic Information Science (GIS) is expanding its online presence and working to keep adding resources for its internal staff and the public at large. GIS is the practice of putting information, and data, into spatial form. A representation of the real world on a map with the information behind such as; an address point with a mailing address, a street with its name or a parcel with a parcel number.

Through our GIS vendor, ProWest & Associates, Renville County was able to update the way we showcase our GIS data. Our new Hub site, <https://hub-rentvilleco.hub.arcgis.com/>, will allow the county to grow into future GIS solutions and better display and explain our county GIS applications to you.

Currently the Tax Parcel Viewer, the county's number one visited GIS app, is the feature on the page. As you scroll, all of our solutions are linked with a description of what that app does; including the new 'Address Request' app to submit new address points for the county's E911 system. Below is where anyone can download GIS data, or any of our maps, available on the 'GIS/Maps' page on the Renville County website. At the bottom of the Hub Site is where you send feedback to the Renville County GIS Specialist.

**To find the new site, click 'GIS/Maps' on the Renville County home page and then select the image!**

Renville County is excited to launch an upgrade to our LINK application, from ProWest, later this year. The 'Mobile LINK' site will be re-tooled to the new 'Public LINK' site that will hold all county data and aerial imagery. Stay tuned!



**If you have questions about Renville County GIS, please contact Alex Lange, GIS Specialist at 320-523-3811 or [alexl@rentvillecountymn.com](mailto:alexl@rentvillecountymn.com).**

*All county data is a "best representation" of real world data. It is subject to change and is not survey grade.*

## Renville County Restorative Justice

By Andrew Peltz, Restorative Justice Coordinator



**R**estorative Justice is a fundamental change in approach when working to repair the damages caused from crimes or wrongdoings within a community. This philosophy sees crimes as a violation of both the law and the relationships that were impacted by the incident.

A circle is a structured process based upon Native American and Aboriginal traditions used for organizing effective group communication, building relationships, accountability, problem solving, and healthy decision making. People come together and meet in a literal circle where everyone is given an opportunity to share their perspective and work together in finding solutions.

Criminal justice concentrates on what law was broke, who broke it, and what punishment is needed. Restorative Justice looks at who was harmed, who was affected, and whose obligation it is to make things right.

In a traditional system, when a case closes, the accountability and support from involved professionals also ends. However, with the circle process, support from participating community members goes further and becomes an ongoing friendly face in the community.

Andrew Peltz, Restorative Justice Coordinator, said he heard it best from a youth who was asked by a volunteer, "If you could go back and teach your old schools anything, what would it be?" The youth said that he "knows there's a place for psychiatric tests and different things, but at the end of the day there is a great need for human connection and more relationships." Peltz said this is exactly what this program aims to provide.

As a group, the circle works with the family or individual to determine what they can do to repair the harm they have caused by the offenses or circumstances that brought them to circle. This can include, but is not limited to, things such as community service, restitution, apology letters, or meeting in circle with the victim to have a restorative dialog regarding what happened. Generally, circle will be held every other week, and last about two hours.

**If you are interested in volunteering to support families in your community, or have any questions, please call Andrew Peltz at 320-522-1573 or email [andrewp@rentvillecountymn.com](mailto:andrewp@rentvillecountymn.com).**



*Information Contribution Source: Johanna Jutz,  
Fairfax Standard Gazette Staff Writer*

## Meet Judge Laurence J. Stratton, Eighth Judicial District



Judge Laurence J. Stratton

County made him feel like he won anyways.

Last November was a hectic time for Laurence Stratton, Renville County Assistant Attorney. He was in the midst of an election for County Attorney and going through a lengthy process to interview for another post to serve Renville County. In the end, he did not win on election night, but becoming Governor Dayton's last appointed judge as the Eighth District Court Judge for Renville

Born in Little Falls, but growing up in northwest Wisconsin, Judge Stratton did not always see the law in his future. After graduating with his Bachelor's from Augsburg University in Minnesota, it was only then that he decided to become a lawyer and attend Mitchell Hamline School of Law. When asked why he choose the law above anything he could have done, Stratton shared, *"It just fits my skills!"* When he is not in chambers at the courthouse, he enjoys time with his wife and his three kids (age's four to 12), spending time outdoors and reading. He also enjoys being an Ambulance and Fire Department volunteer in Olivia.

Most people probably think they know what a judge really does, but managing court filings, hearing motions and knowing the "who, what, where, when and why" of every case in Renville County are not the only things that Judge Stratton has on his plate.

Stratton reminds us that not all the work comes from the bench. *"I need to be clear and detailed while making the best decisions possible for the people in front of me. Those decisions come from the research and thought that I give cases when I am not on the bench."* he stated.

When asked about what motivates him when he gets to the office, Stratton pointed to meeting challenges daily, serving the community, and helping citizens resolve disputes. Simply liking the job is great motivation, but he also added this, *"I need my cold brew coffee!"* (Don't we all!) Learning different aspects of law, such as family or property, outside of the criminal law that he had been working in and learning the policies in place for betterment of the people are the most rewarding parts of his job.

When asked about the difference between working for Renville County as an attorney and in Renville County as its judge, he paused in reflection and responded, *"That is a tricky question. This is a different branch of government, Judicial versus Executive. With that you have different Constitutional requirements; it is still law, but its law with a 'twist' on it. You become less of an advocate, as a judge, and much more of a problem solver than anything else."*

To emphasize the difference between the two branches and the laws behind this, Stratton noted a specific example. *"You have to remain fair and impartial at all times, so I can no longer give legal advice to anyone."* Another big difference was how he was appointed; applying, interviewing with a selection committee, being chosen as one of three finalists and then re-interviewing with the committee and (at the time) Governor Dayton was very intense – an interview process he will never forget.

Judge Stratton went the distance in the process and is where he wants to be. *"This is a wonderful advancement for me, and an amazing opportunity to serve Renville County as its District Court Judge now and in the future."*

When asked if he had a favorite quote he responded, *"I really don't have one. I just try to focus on the positive things in life, every single day."*

### Protect Your Family, Test Your Home

Radon is a radioactive gas that comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water and gets into the air you breathe. Radon can be found all over the U.S. It can get into any type of building – homes, offices, and schools—and result in a high indoor radon level.

You can't see, smell or taste radon, but it could be present at a dangerous level in your home. Exposure to radon is a preventable health risk and testing radon levels in your home can help prevent unnecessary exposure. If a high radon level is detected in your home, you can take steps to fix the problem to protect yourself and your family.



**Rn**  
radon

### Radon Test Kits Available at Renville County Public Health

Radon Test Kits can be picked up from Public Health Monday - Friday between 8:00am and 4:30pm at 105 South 5th Street, Suite 119H in Olivia, MN. The kits cost \$3.00 each.

**Questions? Call the Public Health Office at 320-523-2570.**



# Improving Soil Health Through Cover Crops

By Holly Hatlewick, Renville SWCD District Administrator



A cool and wet spring delayed planting, which prevented several thousand acres in Renville County from being planted into corn, soybeans, or beets this growing season.

Leaving cropland bare without a crop for the growing season can cause soil erosion from wind and water. When there's no plant growth in an area for an extended period, populations of "good fungi," called active arbuscular mycorrhizae (AM), are dramatically reduced because they need actively growing roots to survive. AM fungi assist in the uptake of phosphorus, zinc, and other nutrients with limited mobility in the soil. Having no plants growing in a field the previous year can reduce crop yield.

During the 2019 cropping season, many farms utilized cover crops on acres they couldn't plant a cash crop on. Cover crops are planted to manage soil erosion, soil fertility, soil quality, water, weeds, pests, diseases, and to increase biodiversity.

Cover crops are best utilized as a mix of multiple species such as oats, rape, and red clover. Each plant has a different and unique root structure, along with plant shape and structure. Oats will protect the soil from erosion, scavenge available excess nutrients in the soil, and suppress weed growth. Rape is a brassica that has a plant mass greater than 65% water, so once it dies, the plant mass rapidly breaks down. Rape has a deep fibrous root that can help break up soil compaction and scavenge available excess soil nutrients. Red clover, a legume, is another good specie to use because of its ability to produce a symbiotic nitrogen-fixing bacterium called root nodules. These nodules break down and become crop-available nitrogen. Oats, rape, and red clover are all annuals, so they will die over winter. The residue left over will provide winter/early spring wind and water soil erosion protection and require minimal management in the spring.

Renville County no-till farmer 2019 full season cover crops, consisting of Buckwheat, Cabbage, Red Clover, Vetch, Sunn Hemp, Sunflower, Sudangrass, Rapeseed, Flax, and Sorghum Sudan. Planting July 12, 2019, by a floater spreader with P and K and lightly incorporated with a Salford 570 RTS. His goal; nitrogen fixation over winter to produce Nitrogen for his 2020 no-till corn crop.

To learn more about cover crops, contact the Renville County Soil and Water Conservation District at 320-523-1550 x 3 or the Hawk Creek Watershed Project at 320-523-3666.

## Sheriff's Office Purchases Boat to be used for:

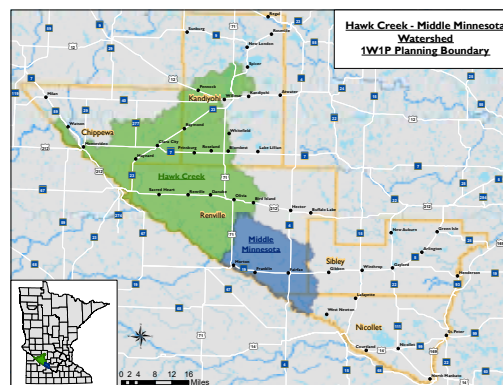
- Search and Rescue
- Safety Education
- Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Education



For more information, or if you have interest in hosting an educational event, contact Chief Deputy Jason Mathwig, Renville County Sheriff's Office at 320-523-3772 or [jasonm@renvillecountymn.com](mailto:jasonm@renvillecountymn.com).

## One Watershed, One Plan

The Hawk Creek – Middle Minnesota Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan partners (Chippewa, Kandiyohi, and Renville Counties and Soil and Water Conservation Districts) are pleased to begin development of a Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan through the One Watershed, One Plan program for the Hawk Creek – Middle Minnesota Watershed.



One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) is a program that supports partnerships of local government units in developing a prioritized, targeted, and measurable implementation plan designed to help gain more conservation on the landscape. Key principles include comprehensive water planning at the major watershed scale and aligning local plans and citizen input with state strategies.

To learn more about this project, visit [www.kcmn.us/1W1P](http://www.kcmn.us/1W1P) or email [OneWatershed.OnePlan@kcmn.us](mailto:OneWatershed.OnePlan@kcmn.us).

Project funding provided by the MN Board of Water and Soil Resources through a grant from the Clean Water Land & Legacy Fund.



## ATTENTION BUYERS AND SELLERS!

### Escrow Agreements are Required for the Sale and Transfer of Property

**A**s a buyer or a seller, you need to be aware that Renville County requires an escrow agreement, between the buyer and the seller, to ensure that money is set aside at the time of a property sale or transfer to be used to upgrade a noncompliant septic system.



#### What is an escrow agreement?

An escrow agreement is a contract between the buyer and the seller that sets aside an amount of money, deposited in an escrow account, which is held by a real estate closer, licensed attorney, or federal or state chartered financial institution and can only be released when a new certified septic system has been installed.

#### Why are escrow agreements required for failing septic systems?

Escrow agreements are required to ensure that failing septic systems are upgraded within 10 to 12 months after they are found to be noncompliant.

#### When is an escrow agreement required?

**Escrow agreements are required whenever there is a sale or transfer of property where there are buildings that have a septic system that is failing, as determined by a licensed inspector, and during the winter months when a compliance inspection cannot be completed due to frozen soils. An application for septic loan funds does not satisfy the escrow agreement requirement.**

#### Who is responsible to place the funds in an escrow account?

It is the responsibility of the buyer or the seller to set aside the funds in an escrow account to ensure the construction of a compliant septic system.

#### How much money needs to be set side aside in an escrow account?

Currently, the escrow agreement requires escrow funds to be set aside in the amount of 150% of the written cost estimate to construct a certified septic system. The cost estimate must be determined by a licensed installation business or a certified installer. If a cost estimate cannot be completed due to frozen soil conditions, the amount to be escrowed is estimated at 150% of the annual average cost of a mound septic system as determined by Renville County Environmental Services. *The amount required to be escrowed is subject to change. Please contact Renville County Environmental Services for the exact amount.*

#### When are the escrow funds released?

Once the new certified septic system is installed and inspected by Renville County Environmental Services, a letter and certificate of compliance will be sent to the escrow holder to release the escrow funds to the buyer or the seller.

**For more information about the escrow requirements or to obtain more information about upgrading septic systems, please contact Renville County Environmental Services at 320-523-3768.**

## Renville County Launches New Website

Renville County launched a new website in 2019 that is designed to be citizen-centered and responsive.



The new home page features links that will take users to portals where they can get information on departments, see career opportunities, learn about boards and commissions, access meetings and subscribe to get updates from the county.

**You are invited to check out the new website at [www.renvillecountymn.com](http://www.renvillecountymn.com)**

## Snow on Road Notice

The Renville County Highway Department would like to remind all county residents that it is unlawful to deposit snow or ice, in any fashion, onto a public roadway or right of way.

Minnesota Statutes 160.2715 and 169.42 prohibit the plowing, blowing, shoveling, and placing of snow from sidewalks, driveways, and parking lots onto public roadways. This can include the ditch and right-of-way area.

Violations of these statutes are a misdemeanor.

Piles of snow left on or near the road can freeze into a solid mass creating a hazardous situation for vehicles and snowplows. Accidents and damages caused by snow placed in the roadway may result in liability to the property owner.



## Renville County HRA/EDA Provides Community Impact Fund Grants to Renville County Communities



**Playground Committee members accepting grant for new City of Danube playground.**

awarded \$1,000 that will be put toward replacement of the city park playground equipment and a community club house addition.

The City of Fairfax was awarded \$550 to implement a downtown light pole banner project in partnership with the GFW School District. Students will provide the artwork for the banners that the city will display.

The City of Hector was awarded \$1,000 to assist with their city scape revitalization project, which will replace worn and outdated street signs.

K&M Manufacturing (City of Renville) was awarded \$1,000 to put toward site clean-up and parking lot creation at their main facility.

Community Impact Funds Grants are awarded two times each year. Deadlines for application are April 10 and October 10, and matching funds are a grant requirement. Visit [www.renville.com](http://www.renville.com) for a full list of guidelines and application.

### Renville County HRA/EDA Hosting Monthly Lunch and Learns

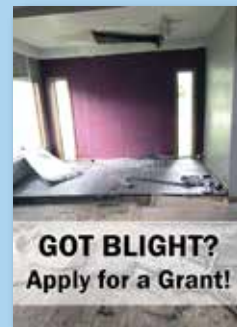


The Renville County HRA/EDA is hosting monthly, business focused, Lunch and Learn events with educational presentations.

Lunch and Learns will take place the second Wednesday of each month. The location will change to a different Renville County community each month. Lunch is provided, and the events are free to attend! Follow "Renville County Housing & Economic Development" on Facebook to find out event topics and locations or click on the "News" link at [www.renville.com](http://www.renville.com).

## Grant Program to Assist with Cleanup of Blighted Property Begins in Renville County

The Renville County HRA/EDA has recently created a grant program for property owners and local units of government to assist with demolition and cleanup of blighted properties located within Renville County. The next round of funding is expected to be given out in the Spring of 2020.



Grants of up to \$5,000 are available to assist with the proper cleanup of blighted structures that pose a risk to health and safety. Grants require a 1:1 cash match and are reimbursed upon submission of paid receipts for costs incurred.

To be eligible for this grant, demolition may not begin on the property until the grant is awarded, and demolition must be completed within 90 days of the grant's awarding. Other conditions do apply.

**For a full listing of grant rules, guidelines and an application, please visit [www.renville.com](http://www.renville.com) or email [eda@renvillecountymn.com](mailto:eda@renvillecountymn.com).**

## Renville County Housing and Redevelopment Authority Provides Rental Assistance



The Renville County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) is committed to providing our residents with safe and affordable housing. If you or someone you know has low or moderate income and is looking for help with the cost of rent, the Renville County HRA may be able to help.

**Renville County offers two different programs:**  
**Housing Choice Vouchers** (often referred to as Section 8) allow housing clients to rent from a private landlord and a portion of the rent is paid directly to the landlord.

**Public Housing** refers to living in a unit operated by the Housing Authority and is located only in the communities of Franklin and Sacred Heart. Often times there is a waiting list for both programs.

**For more information, contact the Renville County HRA, located in the Redwood Area Development Corporation Office, at 507-637-4004 or visit [www.renville.com](http://www.renville.com).**



## Senior LinkAge Line® - The Free Call That Does It All!

The Senior LinkAge Line® is a free service of the state of Minnesota that connects older Minnesotans and their families with the help they need.

The Senior LinkAge Line® can help you simplify complex issues and decisions you face every day as a senior, Baby Boomer, Medicare beneficiary, caregiver or someone trying to reduce prescription drug costs.

With a single call to 1-800-333-2433, you will get assistance with looking at your situation to determine what service might be helpful.

The Senior LinkAge Line® provides actual assistance to help you get the information and personalized help you need to make good decisions. This includes providing face-to-face help to you in your home and community.

### The Senior LinkAge Line® has expertise in the areas of:

- Medicare
- Prescription Drug Expense assistance for Minnesotans of all ages
- Health Insurance Counseling
- Forms assistance, including help applying for Medical Assistance and Medicare options
- Long-term Care Insurance, including the Long-term Care Partnership
- Long-term Care Planning Options
- Caregiver planning and support
- Grandparents raising Grandchildren



Brought to you by the Minnesota Board on Aging  
and Area Agencies on Aging

### Senior LinkAge Line® can connect you with:

- Financial Assistance
- Home Care
- Housekeeping and Chore Services
- Indian Elder Program
- Legal Assistance
- Long-term Care Ombudsman
- Meal Delivery and Nutrition
- Transitional Consultation
- Transportation
- AND many other services to help you remain independent in your community

The Senior LinkAge Line® provides you with information, assistance and connection to services to help you make good decisions.

**Senior LinkAge Line®: 1-800-333-2433**  
**Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays.**

Information Source: Minnesota Board of Aging  
[www.mnaging.org/advisor/SLL.htm](http://www.mnaging.org/advisor/SLL.htm)

## November is Military Family Appreciation Month

# THANK YOU!

**Renville County  
Veterans Services:  
320-523-3763**



CCT's mission is to provide safe, reliable, cost-effective transportation to all residents of Kandiyohi, Renville and Meeker Counties.

### SERVICES INCLUDE:

#### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

- Demand Response Rides (Dial-a-Ride)
- Fixed Flexible Route
- Same Day Service
- Saturday and Sunday Service

**Learn More:**  
[www.cctbus.org](http://www.cctbus.org)  
**320-523-3589**

#### VOLUNTEER TRANSPORTATION

- Senior Volunteer Program
- Non Emergency Medical Transportation

#### CCT CARRIAGE TRANSPORTATION

- Transporting groups from long term care facilities, senior living residences, group homes, etc.



# 2019 Kandiyohi-Renville Community Health Assessment

## Purpose

A thorough Community Health Assessment is a customary practice and core function of public health. Every Minnesota Community Health Board

(CHB) must submit its Ten Most Important Community Health Issues to the Minnesota Department of Health every 5 years.

## Partners

- Local policy makers
- Hospital and clinics, other health care and long term care providers
- Human Services, service organizations and agencies
- City and county government
- Schools
- Foundations, churches and civic groups
- Health plans
- Community members

## Preparation

The Kandiyohi-Renville Community Health Assessment was prepared under a KaRe to Achieve leadership team and the Kandiyohi-Renville CHB, using data from MDH, CDC, student and PACT for Families surveys, SW Regional Adult Health Survey, U.S. Census, and local hospital and clinics.

The Health Assessment was written in sections with a lens of social determinants of health and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs):

- People
- Opportunity
- Nature
- Belonging

## Process

### Phase 1: Initial Planning Meetings

The KaRe to Achieve Leadership group worked over a year to compile, find gaps in and critique data. Additional data was gathered from surveys to targeted populations and a Health Equity Data Analysis (HEDA) study.

### Phase 2: Other Analysis

The Public Health Advisory Committee compiled a “Strength and Assets” and “Forces of Change” analysis of our communities.

### Phase 3: Other Community Input

Both Kandiyohi and Renville Counties hosted community conversation meetings with over 110 community members to share findings of the Community Health Assessment and Health Equity Data Analysis. The community groups selected top health issues and priorities for each county.

### Phase 4: Identify Top Ten Issues

The Public Health Advisory Committee and the Kandiyohi-Renville CHB reviewed the top priorities identified by the community groups and made the final selection based on specific criteria: size of the problem, if some groups were affected more than others, community support, and if there were solutions and resources available to impact the problem.

## Plan

The Kandiyohi-Renville CHB identified Mental Health as an issue to address for both counties in the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Community groups from Kandiyohi County selected ATOD and Renville County selected ACEs as additional issues to address with local partners.

## Top Ten Health Issues 2019

### **1** Priority: Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

2/3 of children in Kandiyohi and Renville Counties have experienced at least one ACE and 1 in 8 have experienced 4 or more ACEs. Research shows that the adversity experienced as children can affect us into adulthood. The adversity we experience as a child can affect how our stress response functions, leading to long-term changes in our brains and bodies and leading to health problems and unhealthy coping. Early identification, support and understanding can build resiliency in children and adults who experienced early trauma.

### **2** Priority: Aging Population / Chronic Diseases

By 2035, the projected over 60-year-old population in Kandiyohi County is expected to be 31% of the total population while for Renville County, the projection is over 34%. The projected state average will be 26%. This shift in demographics will slow the work force growth and increase the demand for government and other support services. Even though aging brings with it cumulative effects of chronic diseases, there are also prevention opportunities to improve or maintain health in this population.

## 2019 Top Ten Health Issues (Continued)

### 3 Priority: Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drugs (ATOD)

Vaping usage with teens has skyrocketed and methamphetamine has made a comeback. While the rates for binge drinking and cigarette smoking in teenagers has shown a decline, there is still concern about teenage use and adult abuse. Marketing continues to target new users. Smoking remains the leading cause of death in the nation and state, thus efforts need to continue to reduce smoking rates across all populations.

### 4 Priority: Child Care Access

There are about 200 licensed child care providers in our counties. Despite these numbers, access to quality child care is difficult to find, with limited spots for infants. Without adequate and affordable day care access, families are finding barriers to employment. Income is one of the strongest and most consistent predictors of health and disease. Also, studies show that children who receive quality child care enter school with better math, language, and social skills.

### 5 Priority: Health Care Access and Cost

Residents of Kandiyohi and Renville Counties see healthcare as an important problem facing our counties. National polls repeatedly also show this as a concern. This includes total cost of health insurance and co-pays, prescription drugs, choosing care, and government benefits like Medicare and Medical Assistance. Dental and mental health access were also noted specifically.

### 6 Priority: Housing

33% of homes in Kandiyohi County and 57% in Renville were built before 1960. Many apartments and homes are aging and in need of repairs. Aspects of housing quality include air quality, home safety, space per individual and presence of mold, asbestos, or lead. Poor-quality housing is associated with various health issues, including chronic disease and injury and poor mental health. Low income families are more likely to live in poor-quality housing that can affect health.

### 7 Priority: Movement/ Lack of Physical Activity

Only 25% of male teens and 17% of female teens get recommended amount of physical activity each day. People of all ages from early childhood to elders are less active than recommended for optimal physical and mental health. When less physically active, individuals are more likely to develop heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and increased risk of a stroke. A unique barrier for residents are our extended winters. Regular movement can produce long term health benefits including adequate sleep, more energy, stronger muscles and bones, and less depression.

### 8 Priority: Mental Health (Illness and Well-being)

Mental illness and well-being were ranked number one over all issues for both counties, as it is tied to and affected by almost every other priority issue identified. 28% of adults in Kandiyohi and Renville Counties stated that their mental health was not good for 1-9 days of the month. Between 26-30% of our high school students felt sad or hopeless for 2 weeks or more in the past year. Mental and emotional health struggles can place significant strains on relationships, affect the ability to learn, work and be physically active, and can lead to self-harm. There is a growing interest and need for building community, family and individual mental well-being and resilience.

### 9 Priority: Obesity / Overweight

41.9% of Kandiyohi County adults are overweight and 26.3% are obese; while 36.2% of Renville County adults are overweight and 35.9% are obese. Nearly 60% of pregnant WIC participants in both counties are overweight or obese, along with about 30% of WIC children age 2-5. Obesity leads to long-term health complications (heart disease, diabetes, depression, arthritis, some cancers, etc.) Preventing obesity in children helps adolescents maintain a healthy weight into adulthood.

### 10 Priority: Transportation

Living in a rural area, it is recognized that having reliable transportation is a necessity for quality of life. Most people own cars to get to work, school, appointments, entertainment, and shopping. CCT is the only public transit system covering 1,849 square miles in our counties, with gap areas of limited availability. Public transit has higher costs per ride in rural areas, due to long travel distances and low population densities. For some, longer commute times and lack of transportation options are barriers to employment.





County Directory:	Phone:
Administration	320-523-3710
Assessor	320-523-3645
Attorney	320-523-2661
Auditor/Treasurer	320-523-2071
Court Administrator	320-523-3680
Court Services/Probation	320-523-3663
Economic Development Authority	320-523-3656
Emergency Management	320-523-3838
Environmental Services	320-523-3768
Extension	320-523-3713
Water Management	320-523-3760
HRA (Housing Programs)	507-637-4004
Human Services	320-523-2202 or 800-363-2533
Landfill/Solid Waste	320-523-1144
License	320-523-3612
Parks and Recreation	320-523-3747
Public Health Services	320-523-2570
Public Works	320-523-3759
Recorder	320-523-3669
RRRSA / Solid Waste / Household Hazardous Waste	320-523-8002 or 507-637-1800
Restorative Justice	320-523-3871
Sheriff	320-523-1161
Veterans Services	320-523-3763

## Renville County Parks will be open for Winter Recreational Activities!

You are welcome to enter any of the county parks by foot to enjoy Winter recreational activities such as hiking, snow tubing, snow shoeing, cross country skiing, bird watching, fishing and more! Snowmobiling is allowed on signed trails specifically designated for such use within each park. *Services such as restrooms and trash pickup are not available during these months.*



Archery deer hunting is allowed, by permit only, in Skalbekken, Vicksburg, Beaver Falls, Birch Coulee, Mack Lake and Anderson Lake County Parks from November 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>.



**Renville**  
COUNTY  
**PARKS**

**THANK YOU FOR  
A GREAT SUMMER!**

Parks will be closed to motorized vehicles from November 1<sup>st</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup>.

Questions? Call the Parks Department at 320-523-3747 or email [ParksDept@renvillecountymn.com](mailto:ParksDept@renvillecountymn.com)



### Drivers Exams

Written drivers exams in Renville County are given from 10:00am - 11:00am every Wednesday in the Lower Level of the Courthouse.

Drivers test appointments can be made by calling the Willmar exam station at 320-231-1735 and requesting an appointment in Olivia.

#### Renville County Board of Commissioners:

**Bob Fox**, District 2, **Greg Snow**, District 4, **Rick Schmidt**, District 5  
**Doug Erickson**, District 3, **Randy Kramer**, District 1

### Child Care Providers

## WANTED

Build a CAREER  
and stay at HOME!



If you enjoy working with children, and would like to start your own business, then Family Child Care may be for you!

Think you might be interested in becoming a provider? Contact Teri with Renville County Human Services at 320-523-3519 for more information.

- 12 -

**Courthouse**  
500 East DePue  
Olivia, MN 56277

**Government Services Center**  
105 South 5th Street  
Olivia, MN 56277

**Hospital**  
100 Healthy Way  
Olivia, MN 56277  
320-523-1261

**Landfill**  
32877 Co Rd 4  
Olivia, MN 56277

**RRRSA**  
921 West Bridge Street  
Redwood Falls, MN 56283



**Renville**  
COUNTY

Service · Stewardship · Shared Responsibility

105 South 5th Street  
Olivia, MN 56277

Phone: 320-523-3710

Email: [lisah@renvillecountymn.com](mailto:lisah@renvillecountymn.com)

Web: [www.renvillecountymn.com](http://www.renvillecountymn.com)

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