



Issue 30

County Administration Newsletter

Vision & Stewardship

September 2016

Administration

Two years ago, the County started the Leadership through Effective and Efficient Designs (LEED's) program. The LEED's program is intended to incentivize non-supervisory employees to think about the processes of their work. Thinking about their tasks in the context of not only their department, but also the organization, will lead to new processes for the delivery of services. Non-supervisory staff, in teams of two or more, were encouraged to provide proposals on how to make their work more effective or efficient. While the program has limited guidelines, the proposals

needed to prove that if there was a cost to implement the idea, it would be net-neutral within two years after implementing. The employee performance amount for the winning idea for 2016 is \$3000.



This year, the County received two LEED's proposals and the winning proposal was to purchase a For the Record (FTR)

courtroom recording system. Submitted by Mary Hinrichs, Jacqueline Baasch, LuAnn Wood, Jennifer Faber, and Ruth Reding, the FTR system would replace the court reporter for the Family Court and small claims hearings. The proposal was also vetted and supported by the Clerk of Court, Trudy Schmidt. The proposed savings to the County over the next five years is projected to be more than \$25,000.

Thank you to those who submitted proposals, and congratulations to the 2016 winners!

-Nate

Emergency Management

The project is almost complete! Work started at Hertel the week of September 19 to install a communications shelter at the site and antennas on the St. Croix Chippewa water tower. This site is a critical link to the overall effectiveness of the system as it will tie in the Barronett tower via microwave to the Hertel tower, and provides greatly improved communication capabilities in the southeast part of the County.

The core of the nine tower system is linked via fiber optic cable. Fiber optic connections are much more capable and reliable than microwave connections. The project delays created an opportunity to improve the system by cooperating with SirenTel and their expanding fiber network in NW Wisconsin. As public safety communications nationwide transition to a broadband based system, Burnett County will be in

an excellent position to take advantage of the network and offer the public more options for accessing emergency services.

Upon completion of the work at Hertel, a ribbon cutting ceremony will be held to acknowledge the cooperative efforts of Burnett County staff, the St. Croix Chippewa Tribe, SirenTel and the consultants and contractors who have adapted to the challenges of this project.

Health & Human Services

Did you know that September 5th -11th was recognized as National Suicide Prevention Week? And that September 10th was World Suicide Prevention Day?

The Burnett County Behavioral Health Department would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that help is available, and that asking family, friends, and loved ones about suicidal thoughts/ depression - although difficult— is strongly encouraged. Giving a suicidal person the opportunity to express feelings can provide relief and release of negative feelings, and may prevent a suicide attempt.

Suicide remains a significant public health problem in Wisconsin, and nationwide. In 2014, (the most recent year for which full data is available) 42,773 suicides were reported, making suicide the 10th leading cause of death for Americans. In that year, someone in the country died by suicide every 12.3 minutes, with 1 of every 21 Americans being a survivor of suicide loss. In Wisconsin there were 769 suicides reported in 2014 and is the 11th leading cause of death.

If a situation arises where you are planning to speak with someone regarding thoughts of

suicide/ depression here are some suggestions:



When talking to a suicidal person

Do:

- **Be yourself.** Let the person know you care, that he/she is not alone. The right words are often unimportant. If you are concerned, your voice and manner will show it.
- **Listen.** Let the suicidal person unload despair, ventilate anger. No matter how negative the conversation seems, the fact that it exists is a positive sign.
- **Be sympathetic, non-judgmental, patient, calm, accepting.** Your friend or family member is doing the right thing by talking about his/her feelings.
- **Offer hope.** Reassure the person that help is available and that the suicidal feelings are temporary. Let the person know that his or her life is important to you.
- **Ask.** if the person says things like, "I'm so depressed, I can't go on," ask the question: "Are you having thoughts of suicide?" You are not putting ideas in their head, you are

showing that you are concerned, that you take them seriously, and that it's OK for them to share their pain with you.

But don't:

- **Argue with the suicidal person.** Avoid saying things like: "You have so much to live for," "Your suicide will hurt your family," or "Look on the bright side."
- **Act shocked, lecture on the value of life, or say that suicide is wrong.**
- **Promise confidentiality.** Refuse to be sworn to secrecy. A life is at stake and you may need to speak to a mental health professional in order to keep the suicidal person safe. If you promise to keep your discussions secret, you may have to break your word.
- **Offer ways to fix their problems, or give advice, or make them feel like they have to justify their suicidal feelings.** It is not about how bad the problem is, but how badly it's hurting your friend or loved one.
- **Blame yourself.** You can't "fix" someone's depression. Your loved one's happiness, or lack thereof, is not your responsibility. (Adapted from: *Metanoia.org*)

(Continued on Page 3)

(Continued from Page 2)

HelpGuide.org suggests that if a friend or family member tells you that he or she is thinking about death or suicide, and suicide attempt seems imminent, call a local crisis center

(Burnett County 1-888-636-6655), dial 911, or take the person to an emergency room. Furthermore, it is reported that despite the desire for the pain to stop, most suicidal people are deeply conflicted about ending

their own lives. They wish there was an alternative to committing suicide, but they just can't see one. This only reinforces the need to be proactive, talk with those around you, and offer assistance in getting badly needed help.

Common Misconceptions About Suicide

FALSE: People who talk about suicide won't really do it.

Almost everyone who commits or attempts suicide has given some clue or warning. Do not ignore suicide threats. Statements like "you'll be sorry when I'm dead," "I can't see any way out," – no matter how casually or jokingly said, may indicate serious suicidal feelings.

FALSE: Anyone who tries to kill him/herself must be crazy.

Most suicidal people are not psychotic or insane. They must be upset, grief-stricken, depressed or despairing, but extreme distress and emotional pain are not necessarily signs of mental illness.

FALSE: If a person is determined to kill him/herself, nothing is going to stop them.

Even the most severely depressed person has mixed feelings about death, wavering until the very last moment between wanting to live and wanting to die. Most suicidal people do not want death; they want the pain to stop. The impulse to end it all, however overpowering, does not last forever.

FALSE: People who commit suicide are people who were unwilling to seek help.

Studies of suicide victims have shown that more than half had sought medical help in the six months prior to their deaths.

FALSE: Talking about suicide may give someone the idea.

You don't give a suicidal person morbid ideas by talking about suicide. The opposite is true – bringing up the subject of suicide and discussing it openly is one of the most helpful things you can do.

Source: *SAVE – Suicide Awareness Voices of Education*

If you suspect someone is struggling with depression, or may be contemplating suicide, please speak with them. Encourage them to seek help and remind them that help is available.

Burnett County Crisis Line: **1-888-636-6655**

National Suicide Prevention Helpline:

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Burnett County Health and Human Services:
715-349-7600

World Suicide Prevention Day
September 10, 2015
#Tomorrow15 / #WSPD15



911 for those in immediate crisis

Land and Water Conservation

When a falling raindrop hits bare soil and explodes, it dislodges unprotected soil particles and begins the process of soil erosion. Cover crops and plant residue not only armor the soil from erosion, but they also increase soil organic matter, improve soil structure, and increase soil nutrient supply—improving soil health. Cover crops promote biological activity in the soil which in turn promotes nutrient cycling and the formation of organic matter.

Many soils have very little structure often due to over tilling, low organic matter, and compaction, resulting in the inability for the soil to readily absorb water.

A good first step to improving soil health is to make cover crops an integral part of a cropping system. Cover crops can be managed to improve soil health. They help develop an

environment that sustains and nourishes plants, soil microbes and beneficial insects. Planting several cover crops together in a mixture can increase their impact on soil health. Each cover crop provides its own set of benefits, so it's important to choose the right cover crop mixture to meet management goals. The impact of planting cover crops is of benefit to smaller vegetable gardens as well as larger agricultural fields.

Cover crops are typically planted in late summer or fall shortly after harvest. Examples of cover crops include clovers and other legumes, rye, wheat, oats, barley, radishes and triticale.

Remember - biodiversity increases the success of most agricultural systems. Using cover crops and increasing diversity within crop rotations improves soil health, soil function, re-

duces costs, and increases profitability. Diversity above ground improves diversity below ground, which helps create healthy productive soils.

Here are four basic principles to improve soil health:

- **Keep the soil covered as much as possible**
- **Keep plants growing throughout most of the year to feed the soil**
- **Manage soils more by disturbing them less**
- **Use plant diversity to increase diversity in the soil**

The LWCD is continually working with producers on soil health and cover crop plantings, in addition to offering cost sharing for select nutrient management practices. For more information please contact the Burnett County Land & Water Conservation Department at 715.349.2186 or

lwcd@burnettcounty.org

Zoning/Land Information

Some new GIS layers have been added to our County GIS Website <http://burnettcowi.wgxtreme.com/>. Those layers are: the 2 ft contours from the 2015 LiDAR project, all the parcels in the Shoreline Incentive Program (SIP), and a layer which shows slopes greater than 20%. These layers are located in the Land Management Layers folder.

