



MACo 93rd ANNUAL CONFERENCE

ONE VOTE MARGINS & TIE VOTES

MACo members led the Association by close margins of one vote or tie votes during the 93rd Annual Conference held in Big Sky from September 22-25. Close votes occurred for 1) the addition of a new MACo position for information technology, which was to be a joint venture with the Information Services Division of the State Department of Administration; 2) the election of the second vice president; 3) the election of an at-large delegate for the Joint Powers Insurance Authority (JPIA) Board of Trustees and 4) a proposal for areas annexed by municipalities to include the annexed area into the municipal fire service area.

Forty-six resolutions were reviewed for approval and seventeen were presented for reaffirmation. Eleven of these resolutions were segregated for debate.

Board of Directors Resolution 2002-1, to Establish a Local Government Information Technology Coordinator, rated a high priority from the Resolutions Committee. The proposal had been several years in development and required a two-year commitment for dues increases and an agreement with the State Department of Administration's Information Technology Services Division (ISTD). Tony Herbert, ISTD, explained that the Division was an enterprise fund and not dependent on general fund budgeting. The vote went through a voice vote, a hand tally and finally a roll call vote (26 for and 26 against). The motion to pass the resolution was defeated by the tie vote.

Resolution 2002-45, to Alter Fire Service Boundaries upon Municipal Annexation, drew confusion during the debate. Jean Curtiss, Missoula County, noted that cities, by law, cannot contract with volunteer departments and suggested that this needs to be changed first. Bill Kennedy, Yellowstone County, said that when the boundaries change, we have folks who pay for two fire districts and also pointed out that there already is a petition process for changing district boundaries. The motion to pass the resolution failed with a 22-23 vote.

The two contested elections were decided by one vote. The MACo Second Vice Presidency favored Bill Kennedy, Yellowstone County, over John Prinkki, Carbon County, with a 27 to 26 vote. The at-large delegate to the JPIA Board of Trustees was also decided by one vote when Ted Coffman, Madison County, was elected from a three-way ballot which also included Don McDowell, Powder River County, and Mary Sexton, Teton County.

Five MACo Bylaw amendments were proposed. Four of the five were passed by the conference delegates, but the amendment to prevent two officers from being elected from the same county was defeated. Jennifer Smith Mitchell, Gallatin County, felt that no county could have two commissioners gone from the county on MACo business. Victor Miller, Blaine County, said, "I have problem in restricting my right and my responsibility to check on candidates and make my choice for myself."

SELECTIONS FROM VIC'S SPEECH



MACo is a very stable organization. We have our fragile coalitions and occasional spats, but MACo is effective because of our stability.

Number One Goal—Getting our legislative “marching orders” ready. Between our passing of resolutions at the Conference and the committee work later in this calendar year, we should have that established.

Number Two Goal—Continuing the concept of health insurance pool, whether this involves working with the State of Montana on being included in their group or the creation of a MACo pool. The concept needs to stay in the limelight.

Number Three Goal—Marketing what we do. We are local government. Cities are too. Those counties with reservations have a third layer with tribal government. These three elements combine to provide the services at the level where everybody sees them, yet I am firmly convinced that the general citizen does not understand that nor do they necessarily have the time to comprehend. I will work with both the Montana League of Cities and Towns and with the Montana / Wyoming Tribal Council Association, so that they understand that MACo exists and that we are willing to be partners.

My challenge to each of you is that you will reach out and make one presentation somewhere in your county explaining county government and local government. I hope you will seriously consider reaching out to the youth in our communities. We cannot expect young people to be excited about current affairs and community involvement if we are not willing to involve them and to be mentors.

Three years ago, I stood before you and told you that “our diversity is our unity”. I have not forgotten that. This is indeed what makes us, as an organization, strong and stable.

THANK YOU TO CONFERENCE SPONSORS AND EXHIBITORS

BOTH SPONSORS AND EXHIBITORS

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Yellowstone Club, Big Sky

EXHIBITORS

Browning Ferris Industries of Montana, Inc. (BFI), Missoula
Cutthroat Communications, Inc., Bozeman
Employee Benefit Management Systems
DES / GIS Working Group, Helena
Entranco, Inc., Helena
ESRI, Clinton
First Call Computer Solutions, Missoula
Kadmas, Lee & Jackson-Bulberry Systems, Billings
Montana Contractors Association-Concrete Division, Helena
Montana Department of Commerce-TSEP
Montana 9-1-1 Program, Helena
Montana Pollution Prevention Program, Bozeman
Montana Pre-stressed Concrete, Helena
MSU-Local Technical Assistance Program
Montana Weed Association
National Association of Counties (NACo), Washington DC
Nationwide Retirement Solutions, Idaho Falls, ID
Taxpayers Against I-145; Helena
United Micro Data, Idaho Falls, ID
VALIC Financial Advisors, Great Falls



**2002-2003
MACo BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- President**
Victor Miller, Blaine County
First Vice President
Carol Brooker, Sanders County
Second Vice President
Bill Kennedy, Yellowstone County
Fiscal Officer
Dan Watson, Rosebud County
Urban Representative
Howard Gipe, Flathead County
Past President
Dean Harmon, Roosevelt County

**2002-2003
MACo EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- Dan Watson, Fiscal Officer
Rosebud County
Howard Gipe, Urban Representative
Flathead County
Carol Brooker, First Vice President
Sanders County
Victor Miller, President
Blaine County
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Yellowstone County
Dean Harmon, Past President
Roosevelt County



**OUTGOING
2001-2002 MACo EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

- Mike Murray, Urban Representative
Lewis and Clark County
Dan Watson, Fiscal Officer
Rosebud County
Carol Brooker, 2nd Vice President
Sanders County
Dean Harmon, President
Roosevelt County
Victor Miller, First Vice President
Blaine County
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- District 1**
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District 2
Todd Devlin, Prairie County
District 3
William Duffield, Fallon County
District 4
Doug Kaercher, Hill County
District 5
Arnold Gettel, Teton County
District 6
Joy Schanz, Golden Valley Co.
District 7
John Prinkki, Carbon County
District 8
Elaine Mann, Broadwater County
District 9
C. Bernie Lucas, Meagher Co.
District 10
Paddy Trusler, Lake County
District 11
Alan Thompson, Ravalli County
District 12
Thomas Hatch, Powell County

- Attorneys**
Leo Gallagher, Lewis/Clark Co.
Clerks and Recorders
Cheryl Hansen, Roosevelt Co.
Clerks of District Courts
Marilyn Hollister, Rosebud County
Coroners
Tim Wong, Cascade County
Justices of Peace
Gary Olsen, Broadwater County
Superintendents of Schools
Dottie Donovan, Beaverhead Co.
Sheriffs
Chuck Maxwell, Yellowstone Co.
Treasurers
Susan Miller, Jefferson County

**Conference photos
SUNDAY BANQUET**



**MONDAY-NACo VP
Karen Miller, Missouri**



**TUESDAY
Barbara Fairchild & Roy Morris**



**WEDNESDAY
Dean's Farewell**



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

October 1-3	State Fire Marshals; MACo; 7:00 am
October 2-4	MT Association of Planners; Whitefish
October 3-4	Legislative Finance Committee; Capitol #102
October 4	JPIA Agents Meeting; Billings
October 8	BOS Joint Workforce Board (WIB); Great Falls
October 10	CEP Joint Workforce Councils; Great Falls
October 11	District Court Council; Livestock Building
October 16	Growth Policy Forum; MACo; 9:30 am
October 24	State Drought Committee; Capitol 317; 9:30 am
October 29	Council of County Officials; MACo; 10:00

Jail Inspection Training

October 2	Lake County Health Department	1:00 to 4:00 pm.
October 3	Toole County Sheriff's Office	1:00 to 4:00 pm
October 4	Cascade County Jail Facility	9:00 am to Noon
October 9	Hill County Jail Facility	1:00 to 4:00 pm
October 10	Fergus Co. Law Enforcement Center	1:00 to 4:00
October 15	Park County Courthouse	1:00 to 4:00 pm
October 16	Custer Co. Holiday Inn, Miles City	1:00 to 4:00 pm
October 17	Roosevelt Co. Law Enforcement Center	1:00 to 4:00
October 22	Jefferson County Courtroom	1:00 to 4:00 pm
October 25	Powell County Sheriff's Office	1:00 to 4:00 pm

Local Government Accounting Training

Accrual / Cash Flow Reporting

October 22	Glasgow	Cottonwood Inn; 9:00 am
October 23	Glendive	Glendive Medical Center; 9:00 am
October 24	Billings	Holiday Inn Grand; 9:00 am
October 29	Great Falls	Town House Inn; 9:00 am
October 30	Missoula	Ruby's Inn; 9:00 am
October 31	Butte	Holiday Inn Express; 9:00 am

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 5	Election Day
November 15	District Court Council
November 19-21	MACo Board Retreat; MACo Conf. Room
December 3-5	Joint JPA/JPIA Trustees Retreat
December 9-11	Elected Officials Conference; Colonial Hotel
December 12	BOS Council of Commissioners; MACo
January 6	58th LEGISLATIVE SESSION BEGINS
January 14-16	Loss Control Conference; Colonial Hotel
January 29-30	BOS Joint Workforce Council; Helena
February 5-7	County Superintendents of Schools; Helena
February 18-21	Midwinter / DES Conference; Colonial Hotel
February 18-20	Annual Safety Congress; Great Falls
March 31-April 3	County Road Supervisors; Fairmont
April	GASB Training-Management & Analysis
May 14-15	BOS Joint Workforce Council; Great Falls
June	GASB Training-Reports; Supplementary Info.

INFORMATION REMINDERS

- Please send us your 2002-2003 Compensation Board Recommendations, including your health insurance levy. We have responses from 26 counties and we want to complete the information for next year's Compensation Boards.
- Don't forget to send a copy of the 2002-2003 Annual Budget that you submitted to the Department of Administration. The budgets are used to prepare information and testimony for the upcoming legislative session.

Montana Local Government GIS Coalition (MLGGC)

Submitted by Gretchen Baldus, Coordinator

All Montana counties, cities, towns and tribes are invited to the MLGGC meeting October 17th in Room 152 of the State Capitol. The group meets quarterly to exchange ideas on various GIS (Geographic Information System) issues, to share techniques and to establish standards, among many other functions. Current topics are the MARLS petition on GPS usage, critical infrastructure mapping, addressing standards, and the Montana Cadastral Mapping Project status. To ensure full communication and coordination with the GIS community in Montana, a portion of each meeting is combined with the Interagency Technical Working Group (ITWG).

Most meetings also incorporate a short workshop or seminar on various GIS applications for local governments. Upcoming seminars include a Budgeting and Finance seminar on implementing GIS and a workshop on using "Feature Analyst," ESRI's ArcView new software. Over 40 potential workshops are also under consideration (e.g. "Data Access Policy Seminar", "GIS for Economic Development", "Rural and Urban Growth and Community Planning with GIS", etc.).

Agendas, schedules, registration and other information is on the MLGGC website: <http://giac.montana.edu/mlggc.html>. Questions? Contact Gretchen at 994-6921 or

MOSQUITO DISTRICTS

Any advice?

Yellowstone County is contemplating a mosquito control district, especially since the West Nile Virus is here. James Kraft, Emergency and General Services, asks for help and advice from counties which have districts already operating:

- How large is your district? (geography, population, etc.)
- What is the funding source? (levy, fee, etc.)
- Who staffs the service?
- How is control work done? (contracts, aerial, trucks, etc.)
- Spraying? How often and when? What insecticide is used and where is it purchased?
- What are the pros and cons of having the district?

Please contact Mr. Kraft with your comments and ideas: James Kraft, Yellowstone County

PO Box 35004
Billings, MT 59107

Phone 256-2775

Email jkraft@co.yellowstone.mt.us

SAFETY RAY SEZ KNOW THE LAWS ON JAIL OPERATIONS



Over the past month, during district meetings and by mail, I have been telling you about the Jail Inspection Training Program. This important training is the result of the Joint Powers Insurance Authority (JPIA) trustees recognizing the need and directing me to put a program together.

Operating a jail is one of the services counties are required provide and this service is considered a high-risk liability exposure. Section 7-32-2204, MCA, is quite clear on what the roles and responsibilities county commissioners have for operating jails. However, there are no guidelines or instructions for commissioners to follow in meeting the mandates. For example, Montana does not have mandatory jail standards.

This lack of training becomes an issue. It is up to you to know the laws in Montana about your roles and responsibilities in operating a jail, and it is up to you to comply with those laws. But, commissioners have not received any formal training on jail operations and they need help in order to comply with the law.

The materials for this training are from the U. S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections and our Jail Inspection Guidelines. We have developed a power point presentation. From this combination of sources, the training participants will have a good handle on their roles and responsibilities in operating a jail.

I hope you will see the value of this information and plan to attend one of the sessions.

October 2	Lake County Health Department	1:00 to 4:00 pm.
October 3	Toole County Sheriff's Office	1:00 to 4:00 pm
October 4	Cascade County Jail Facility	9:00 am to Noon
October 9	Hill County Jail Facility	1:00 to 4:00 pm
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GOVERNING MONTANA AT THE GRASS ROOTS

Local Government Structure, Process and Politics

The first book on Montana's local governments has been written by Ken Weaver, immediate past director of MSU's Local Government Center. According to his preface, the book describes "the forms, structures and powers of Montana's local governments, the roles and responsibilities of local officials and the finance and politics of governing Montana's 56 counties and 129 municipalities."

The first part of book reviews federal and state government and Montana's political system. The second part delves into the forms of county and municipal governments, special districts, services, finances and self-government powers. The third and final part presents roles and responsibilities of elected officials and also the politics of making policy and decisions. Appended at the end are the "United States Constitution" and the "Constitution of the State of Montana."

Weaver wrote, "Not the least of the challenges of governing at the grassroots in Montana is the nearly complete absence of reference materials that might aid local officials in understanding what Montana local government is and what is expected of it. As a result, most county commissioners, elected county department heads, municipal mayors and council members must learn how to do their job by the seat of their pants." This book was designed to provide a single source of information.

The book is available from:
Local Government Center
MSU

Bozeman, MT 59717

Claim form orders and email orders are also accepted (upojm@montana.edu). The cost is \$25.00 plus \$3 for shipping.



COUNTY NEWS

MISSOULA COUNTY Clerk and Recorder Kathleen (KD) Breuer resigned after 14 years of service. Breuer served on the MACo Board of Directors for three years (1998-2001). Shirley Faust was appointed to complete the final two years of the term.

ROOSEVELT COUNTY received a \$1,000 incentive award for being the first county to record 1,000 miles of roads for the GPS / GIS project.

In RAVALLI COUNTY a homeowner who moved a county road without permits or meeting road standards will pay to correct the problems.

BROADWATER COUNTY is at last receiving money from Canyon Ferry Reservoir development. The Broadwater County Trust expects to have \$3 Million available for development and safety improvements on the south end of the Reservoir. The source of funds are from the sales of 265 cabin sites, formerly leased by BLM and now being sold into private ownership.

MISSOULA and DAWSON COUNTIES have signed lay-off notices and are severely cutting local correctional facilities budgets to reflect the decrease in per diem rate paid by the State to house State prisoners.

In GALLATIN COUNTY, the non-profit corporation that has run the Montana State Winter Fair for 54 years has closed the event. Financial problems, including a recent embezzling, were cited.

WIBAUX COUNTY Library funding is being **shifted from the county general fund to it's own budget.** Because it was in the general fund, there is no base level funding on which to determine the new budget. In addition the County is in a lawsuit for library renovation, which has no known final costs since there were never any formal specifications drawn up.

GALLATIN COUNTY has imposed a one-year ban on coal bed methane drilling in a recently created zone on Bozeman Pass. The ban is in response to a controversy with J.M. Huber Corporation and landowners.

Hospitals in DANIELS, PHILLIPS, ROOSEVELT, SHERIDAN, SWEET GRASS, and VALLEY COUNTIES, which are members of Eastern Montana Telemedicine Network, received the **American Telemedicine Association President's Award** for outstanding contribution in the field of telemedicine. The prestigious award is given nationally to one telemedicine network annually.

TETON COUNTY Nursing Home Is facing the problem of empty beds. Occupancy rates dropped from 86% in 1999 to 67% in 2002. Trends toward home health care and assisted living, along with there being two nursing homes in the County, may be some of the causes for the drop.

CASCADE COUNTY moved the clerk and recorder's and treasurer's offices to Executive Plaza Building as part of the plan to provide space for an additional district court judge to arrive in January.

CASCADE COUNTY met with nine of **Great Falls' neighborhood councils** to discuss management of the county fairgrounds. The current contract with the city ends in 2003.

BALLOT ISSUES

STILLWATER COUNTY is considering a straw poll to ask if a vote should be held to levy funds to renovate the courthouse.

MISSOULA COUNTY approved a regional park at Fort Missoula and will place a four mill levy on the November ballot for its development.

YELLOWSTONE COUNTY is asking a countywide levy of 4.75 mills for health programs.

TETON COUNTY will place a new 3.3 mill tax levy on the ballot to fund ambulance replacements.

JEFFERSON COUNTY has approved two ballot requests. One is for 2 mills for weed control; the other is to create a recreation district with **"not more than \$20"** for annual assessments.

MACo NOMINEES HONORED

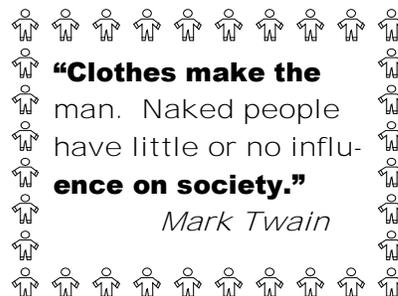
MACo nominated the Tax Policy and Research Staff for the 2002 Governor's Award for Excellence in Performance. Although the Staff did not receive the award, the members were honored in a special ceremony on September 17 at the Capitol.

In the nomination letter, Gordon Morris wrote:

"I worked closely with Tax Policy and Research Staff on HB124 and on the transition to state assumption of District Courts. These efforts required many hours of work beyond the 40 hours that you would customarily assume state employees work. They were tireless in their dedication to "getting it right the first time." I cannot think of any previous project that required careful planning and study resulting in a product that we can all be proud of.

They all deserve recognition for their service to the State and to counties throughout Montana:

Judy Paynter
Ed Caplis
Larry Finch
Shane Byrne
Dallas Reese
Brad Simshaw
Dan Dodds
Ryan Jose



WORKING WITH THE PRESS DOESN'T HAVE TO BE A MEDIA CIRCUS

Selections from an article by Heather Todd, "County" Volume 14, No. 3
Texas Association of Counties

The key to knowing what to say, how to say it and when to keep quiet during an interview is practice and training until it becomes second nature. Even if a county official knows what they want to say, there are several verbal and non-verbal dos and don'ts that should be followed during an interview.

The number one rule when dealing with the press—never lie. The key is to always tell the truth, but skillfully. Other important dos and don'ts during an interview are:

- Always take your time before answering. Don't feel pressured to come up with an immediate response.
- Don't speculate. If you don't know the answer, then say so or direct them to another county official.
- Don't look up when pausing or thinking. Interviewees should look down at the podium or at their hands because it gives a more thoughtful pose.
- During a press conference with several people in the room, make eye contact with everyone, not just the person who asked the question.

Even during a controversy, county officials should look at a press interview not as a burden, but as an opportunity to get the county's message or story out to the public.

Don't give an interview if you're not ready, no matter what kind of deadline the interviewer tries to impose. County officials can exercise some control over the interview by deciding when and where the interview will take place.

Use "verbal bridges" to allow response to a question while moving the interview in a new direction. For example, "I am not the best person to ask about that," give contact information for another county employee, and say, "but I do know about....." and move onto the subject you want to talk about.

Finally, always feel comfortable asking a question back to a reporter. Not only will this clarify what the reporter wants to know, but it will also give the a felling of being in control of the situation.

COMPARING TAX BURDEN ON \$25,000 INCOME

STATE	INCOME TAX	PROPERTY TAX	SALES TAX	AUTO TAX	TOTAL TAXES	RANK IN U.S.
COLORADO	\$ 0	\$ 391	\$ 530	\$ 491	\$ 1,412	45
IDAHO	197	430	529	235	1,391	46
MONTANA	457	738	26	383	1,604	38
NEVADA	0	622	526	340	1,487	44
NORTH DAKOTA	143	959	440	212	1,753	34
OREGON	925	716	0	199	1,840	33
SOUTH DAKOTA	0	1,054	758	153	1,965	25
UTAH	458	443	892	267	2,060	16
WASHINGTON	0	1,039	720	449	2,207	11
WYOMING	0	382	583	327	1,292	49
U.S. MEDIAN	\$ 434	\$ 831	\$ 581	\$ 294	\$ 2,024	

COOPERATING AGENCY INVITATIONS FROM B.L.M.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will be inviting individual counties to partner in a cooperating agency relationship as BLM land use plans are developed. A local BLM Field Manager will contact affected counties in writing prior to initiating any major planning or National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process to provide them the opportunity to request cooperating agency status.

Local governments must meet the Council on Environmental Quality requirements for cooperating agency status, such as jurisdiction by law over some aspect of a proposed project or have special expertise. Cooperating agencies will participate in the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement. In instances where county governments cannot commit the staff or resources required of a cooperating agency, there will be other means to be involved in the process.

Five Montana projects are in the preliminary stages.

<u>Field Office/Project</u>	<u>Notice of Intent</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Lewistown Missouri River Breaks	after Oct. 2002	Jerry Majerus 538-7461
Butte Headwaters South	after Oct. 2003	Ruth Miller 533-7600
Miles City Powder River	after Oct. 2004	Kathy Bockness 232-7001
Lewistown Headwater North	after Oct. 2005	Jerry Majerus 538-7461
Billings Revision	after Oct. 2006	David Jaynes 896-5013



REDUCING TRAVEL BUDGETS

(You know your county is in deep financial trouble if you were to send out a memo like this.)

TRANSPORTATION

Hitchhiking in lieu of commercial transport is the preferred choice. Luminescent safety vests will be issued to all employees prior to departure on any trips for county business. Bus transportation will be used whenever hitchhiking is not possible.

LODGING

All employees are encouraged to stay with relatives, friends or mere acquaintances while on county business. If weather permits, public areas such as parks, roadside rests and parking lots could be used for camping. Bridges and tunnels may provide shelter in periods of inclement weather.

MEALS

Expenditures for meals will be limited to the absolute minimum. It should be noted that certain grocery chains often provide free samples of promotional items. Entire meals can often be consumed in this manner. Travelers should also become familiar with indigenous roots, berries and other protein sources available at their destination. If restaurants must be utilized, travelers should seek establishments offering "all you can eat" salad bars. This will be especially cost effective to employees traveling together, as a single plate can be used to feed the entire group. Employees are also encouraged to bring their own food while on county business.

HOSTING

Extravagances such as hosting constituents while traveling is strictly discouraged. If it is absolutely necessary, the constituent should be encouraged to "pick up the tab." Such action should serve to convince people that the county is concerned about spending money on services, not social frivolities. The hospitality provided to our constituents who visit our county facilities should also be cost effective. In lieu of meals, picnic benches will be placed in parking lots near the dumpsters available for picking through, and green garden hoses will be made available so that liquid refreshments can be provided to our guests.

from "LTAP Matters"
Montana Local Technical Assistance Program newsletter
July, August, September 2002, Vol. 20, No. 3

Attorney General

LETTER OF ADVICE (Not a Formal Opinion)

Question: Should a Clerk and Recorder refuse to record a document that is not notarized in strict conformance with 1-5-416 MCA?

Held: You contend documents which are stamped with the words "Notary Public" rather than "Notarial Seal" or which are dated "'02" rather than with the four-digit year have not been properly acknowledged. Although a notary public may not strictly observe these requirements of 1-5-416 MCA, your complaint elevates form over substance. The deficiencies you note do not preclude instruments from being recorded. (1-5-602 (1) and 1-5-609 MCA)

Requested by:

Thomas J. Esch, Flathead County Attorney

MOTEL REIMBURSEMENT RATES

The current in-state room rate of \$35 per night plus tax will be applicable from October 16 through May 14.

The Department of Administration has designated all the cities in the State of Montana as "high cost" during the peak tourist months beginning May 15 through October 15. During that time, officials and employees should ask for the state per diem room rate, and if that is not available, they have the option to expend up to the federal per diem room rate which is currently \$55 per night plus tax for all cities with the exception of Big Sky, West Yellowstone and Polson/Kalispell. Please refer to the Federal Lodging Rate Guidelines for these cities. The high cost city list previously provided is no longer in effect.

**1-0340.20 IN-STATE TRAVEL
LODGING REIMBURSEMENT RATES IN GENERAL**

Except as provided in sections 1-0340.25, the maximum lodging reimbursement rate for in-state travel is the actual cost of lodging, not to exceed \$35 per night, plus the applicable taxes on the allowable rate.

**1-0340.25 IN-STATE TRAVEL
LODGING REIMBURSEMENT RATES AT ACTUAL COST
SUBJECT TO FEDERAL PER DIEM CAP**

Except as provided for in section 1-0340.30, you are eligible to be reimbursed your actual out-of-pocket lodging expenses, **not to exceed the federal per diem room rate for the location involved** (generally \$55), plus the taxes on the allowable cost, for any location in Montana if your lodging occurs on or after May 15 but before October 15.

MONTANA WORKERS And GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT

The average Montana worker...

- Has a high school diploma (or equivalent) or some college, no degree
- Is a full-time employee of a for-profit company
- Works in the services sector (such as teacher, child care worker, nurse), the wholesale/retail trade sector (such as salesperson, cashier) or public administration sector (such as office clerk, secretary, fire fighter, correctional officer)
- Earns average of \$25,000 a year
- Is married with a working spouse and one child living at home
- Lives within 18 minutes of the workplace and does not carpool or take public transport.

Montana Federal, State and local government employment positions have decreased:

1970	20.5% of Montana labor force
1980	19.0% of Montana labor force
1990	18.4 % of Montana labor force
2000	15.3 % of Montana labor force.

"Profile of Montana Worker 2002"

MT Department of Labor and Industry, August 28,2002

Montana Prevailing Wage Rates

Prevailing wage rates are required by Montana's Little Davis-Bacon Act. These wage rates apply to public works contracts entered into for construction services (heavy, highway and building) or non-construction services by the state, county, municipality, school district, or political subdivision in which the total cost of the contract is \$25,000. It requires that bidders for such projects pay a set rate of compensation, including employee benefits, and that at least 50 percent of the workers on the jobs be bona fide Montana residents. Counties are advised to inform bidders of these requirements.

The schedule of rates for building construction, heavy and highway construction, and non-construction are available at

<http://rad.dli.state.mt.us/pw>

NACo INFORMATION

RURAL ACTION CAUCUS HEALTH

Bill Kennedy, Yellowstone Co.

I traveled to Baton Rouge two days in advance of the NACo convention to meet with the Rural Action Caucus. NACo 1st VP Karen Miller, Missouri, is our liaison with the NACo Board. It was a planning meeting to structure our rural priorities. The number one priority is to gain nationwide recognition of the many needs of rural counties, especially in the west. Two years ago, two priorities were set as electronic communication capabilities (digital divide) and rural health care. Our lobbying has paid off with congressional recognition of less populated rural counties.

The Rural Action Caucus will be moving ahead with the legislative initiatives involving direct flow of federal dollars to local communities for infrastructure, roads and rural community programs. National drought relief and terrorism dollars to local communities are their top priorities. In February, the Rural Action Caucus will finalize their legislative agenda for 2003.

In New Orleans, the convention went well. The Health Steering Committee agenda consisted of a wide range of health issues. A national concern is prescription drugs and this was a top priority from rural and urban counties. Health Resolutions that passed are as follows:

- Low DSH States Reimbursements to rural hospitals
- Increase of Federal Medical Assistance Percentages, HIFA Waiver & Services
- Health Care for Legal Immigrants
- Faith Based Initiatives
- Preserving & Strengthening CHIP (Children's Health Insurance)
- Federal Funding of Public Health Threats & Emergencies
- Homeland Security & Public Health

MONTANAN CHOSEN TO LEAD NACo STEERING COMMITTEE

Bill Kennedy, Yellowstone County, has been appointed to head the NACo Health Steering Committee.

NACo has only eleven steering committees nationwide, so his appointment highlights his dedication to health services issues at the Montana level and at the national level.

The NACo Health Steering Committee includes four vice-chairs and five subcommittees. Each subcommittee has a chair and vice-chair. In addition there are 32 members chosen from a variety of states. In all, Kennedy will lead close to 50 members through a variety of complicated and sometimes controversial issues.



KENNEDY MODERATING A WORKSHOP AT RECENT NACo CONFERENCE: "Welfare Reform Update"
L - R Bill Kennedy, Yellowstone County; Patty Guiberson, Butte-Silver Bow; Janet Bush, Missoula; Joan Brenner, Dawson/Wibaux/Fallon and Carter Counties.

SHOW ME THE MONEY

A new report, "Show Me the Money", compiles strategies of state and local governments around the nation to cope with budget crunches. The 20-page report was written by William Eggers of the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research and is available online at:

www.manhattan-institute.org/state_budget_report.pdf.

The strategies in the report have been tested and proven by local governments around the nation.

RURAL ASSISTANCE

The Midwest Assistance Program (MAP) is a private, non-profit organization providing technical assistance and training on water, wastewater, solid waste and housing issues to small, rural communities in the nine states of Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, **Montana**, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming. Small, rural communities and other entities, such as mobile home parks, water and sewer districts and unincorporated areas, are beneficiaries of MAP's technical assistance and training.

Montana has four MAP offices, each with a rural development specialist:

Whitefish, Bill Leonard
bleonard@cyberport.net

Florence, Judy Sass
jsass4322@aol.com

Helena, Paul Torok
midwestassistance@qwest.net

Laurel, Dustin White
dawhite@nemontel.net

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