NDOR Establishes Federal Funds Purchase Program

The passage of LB 98 has provided the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) the authority to enter into agreements for purchases of federal aid transportation funds at a discounted rate. State funds obtained must be expended for highway and bridge needs.

The Federal Funds Purchase Program (FFPP) is being established to provide a way for NDOR to purchase the federal funds currently used by Local Public Agencies in exchange for state cash. State dollars will allow local agencies to tailor projects to better meet their local needs.

Meetings to discuss details of the FFPP will be held across the state to address questions local officials may have and to visit about the possibilities. For additional information and to view meeting dates and locations, click here or visit the NDOR website at www.dor.state.ne.us.

2011 NACO Blue Cross Blue Shield Group Health Rates Set

Members of the NACO Health Insurance committee and NACO Board spend many hours examining the NACO health plan offering. Today, the NACO Board met and approved the rates for the 2011 plan year. NACO and BCBS are pleased to continue to offer a health care plan with the best in-state network for county employees across the State of Nebraska.

2011 Rate Summary (effective July 1, 2011)

Proposed Guidelines for Court-Appointed Counsel

As the result of a study by the Nebraska Supreme Court and Nebraska Bar Association's Minority and Justice Implementation Committee, the Nebraska Supreme Court is considering minimum standards for court appointed counsel in criminal and juvenile cases. Interested parties are...
invited to comment on the proposed new rules and appendix until June 1, 2011.

To view the full text of the proposed new rules and appendix and additional information regarding the comment period, click [here](#).

**Supreme Court Rule Amendments of Possible Interest**

- Neb. Ct. R. §§ 6-701 to 6-708 (Interpreters in Court) and Interpreter forms (adopted March 16, 2011)
- Acceptable Use Policy for Computer and Internet Use (approved March 10, 2011)

**Historic Preservation Survey**

The Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) of the Nebraska State Historical Society needs input from you! Please take a few moments and become a preservation partner in creating a strategic new plan for how Nebraska can best preserve and enhance its rich history and culture. Your responses will help guide the SHPO's objectives for the future as we approach Nebraska's 150th anniversary of statehood in 2017.

Historic preservation can be a tool for community development, to enhance tourism, and to accomplish comprehensive and regional planning. The Nebraska State Historical Society is asking for the input of county officials, county development offices and planners in the efforts.

Make your views known and opinions count - Take our short 10 question survey available [here](#). You can also access the survey through the Nebraska State Historical Society's newly redesigned website at [www.nebraskahistory.org](http://www.nebraskahistory.org) under the "What's New" heading.

If you have any questions about the creation of the preservation plan or would like additional information, feel free to contact:

Bob Puschendorf, Associate Director
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Nebraska State Historical Society
1500 R Street, PO Box 82554
Lincoln, NE 68501

**Walk For Your Life Challenge 2011**

As spring is beginning to make an appearance, it is time to start preparing for this year's **Walk For Your Life Challenge**, which will run from June 1 to September 30, 2011. Last year, we decided to try something different and monitor reporting based on steps rather than miles walked as in the previous two year's WFYL Challenges. The majority of participants have indicated a preference of reporting miles rather than steps, so we will once again base our reports on miles walked. To accommodate those who prefer bicycling...
Education Foundation Memorial Program

A gift to NACO's Education Foundation ensures that the children of county officials and county employees are eligible to apply for scholarships to continue their education at Nebraska's higher learning institutions. Whatever their passion - history, art, music, science, education, sports - the NACO Education Foundation will provide them an opportunity to fund their education beyond the K-12 level. Memorial gifts to NACO's Education Foundation are tax exempt and a lasting legacy in honor of your loved one's commitment to educating the children of Nebraska's county officials and employees. For more information about how to make a memorial gift, please contact Jon Edwards / 402-434-5660 ext. 227.

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The County Courthouse Awards Program is sponsored by Siemens and recognizes innovative governance by county elected officials from NACo member counties. Award winners will receive an engraved plaque that can be displayed in their county, recognition at the 2011 NACo Annual Conference and a $5000 college scholarship to present to a graduating high school senior. Awards will be given in three categories: rural, suburban, and urban. Applications must be received by April 29, 2011. For additional information and application form, click here.

**Western Interstate Region Conference**

This year's Western Interstate Region (WIR) Conference will take place May 18-20 in Chelan County/Wenatchee, Washington, and will focus on public lands and other issues critical to the western region of the United States. It provides county officials with the opportunity to hear speakers, discuss legislation, and network with other officials to exchange information on those issues. For additional information and registration, click here.

**Register Now for NACo's 76th Annual Conference and Exposition**

Plan to attend this year's event in Multnomah County/Portland, Oregon, July 15-19. Featured speaker will be Aron Ralston, the subject of the movie "127 Hours," who amputated an arm to free himself when trapped by a boulder while hiking. For additional information and registration, click here.

**NACo Web-based Education**

**Using County Health Indicators to Inform Local Policy Decisions**  
**Thursday, May 5, 2011  
1:00 PM - 2:15 PM CST**

Many health data sources and tools exist that can help identify health assets and challenges within your community. Join us as speakers demonstrate how your county can utilize community health and quality of life indicator information to help inform policy decisions and more effectively target local public health resources. Register here.

**Managing Your Message in the Digital Age of Communications**  
**Wednesday, May 18, 2011  
1:00 PM - 2:15 PM CST**

Reporters are blogging and posting stories online all day long. Your constituents - armed with smart phones - are Tweeting and posting "status updates" each day too. While technologies are changing, the rules of media relations and public communications have not. Learn basic media relations best practices and the DOs and DONTs of using social media. This webinar is especially useful for newly elected officials or those who have yet to take the plunge into social media. This is a members only webinar. You must sign in to the NACo Member Center to register.

**Improving Local and State Partnerships in Sentencing and Corrections**  
**Thursday, May 19, 2011**
Counties across the country are seeking effective and efficient ways to operate local governments. Great barriers and opportunities exist to address local justice systems' issues. This webinar will address "performance incentive funding," an innovative opportunity aimed at improving public safety and controlling corrections costs for both counties and states. Presenters will outline the potential benefits these initiatives have for counties and explore such policies that create effective partnerships between counties and states. Register here.

For more information on these, other upcoming and previous webinars, visit the NACo Web-based Education page.

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