



*Working together for
Montana's municipalities.*



89TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE SUCCESS!

Thank you to the members, speakers, sponsors, and exhibitors who made the 89th Annual Montana League of Cities and Towns Conference a success!

Conference Stats

- ▶ 381 total attendees
- ▶ 1,842 education hours
- ▶ 3,656 messages sent in the Whova platform
- ▶ 11 members attended who haven't attended the conference in the last five years

Accessing Recordings

Conference registrants have access to recordings of all sessions until April 2021! It's as easy as 1,2,3!

1. Sign into Whova either through the mobile app or using Google Chrome on your computer,
2. Click "Agenda" and select the session you'd like to view, and
3. Click the blue "Watch recording" button.

CLEs and Clerk Credits

CLEs - The League automatically tracked which sessions attorneys attended. Those have been reported to the Montana Bar Association. Attorneys are welcome to watch CLE eligible recordings and self-report those to the Montana Bar Association.

Clerk Experience Credits - The MSU Local Government Center worked with IIMC to allow attendance of the League conference to count for experience points.

1. No quizzes necessary
2. Earn 1 EXPERIENCE point for each day you attend the virtual conference
3. Submit proof of your attendance - your invoice and a copy of your customized schedule - directly to IIMC.

For more information and detailed instructions, see this webpage: <http://msulocalgov.org/offering/experiencepointsmllctconference.html> ■

FALL 2020

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LAW ENFORCEMENT RISK MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES

Officer Resilience

The MMIA, Montana Chiefs of Police Association (MACOP), and the Montana Law Enforcement Academy (MLEA) joined together to submit a grant proposal to the Federal Department of Justice (DOJ) to bring a curriculum to Montana for teaching resilience to law enforcement officers. Law enforcement has seen an increase in the scope of their duties and the demand for their services. Although the law enforcement occupation has always included high stress and dangerous situations, the frequency in which officers are exposed to trauma is on the rise. This program will help officers learn to manage occupational stress which can reduce harm to themselves, their family, and their colleagues.

Because of these issues, officer wellness was identified as a top concern among law enforcement administrators during the 2018 Law Enforcement Strategic Summit hosted by the MMIA, the League, MACo, and MLEA. Many agencies have taken positive steps to meet this challenge including implementing critical incident stress management policies, chaplain ride-alongs, and encouraging the use of employee assistance programs (EAPs). Despite these positive steps, the agencies recognize more action is necessary to influence the culture and bring about sustainable change. This resilience program, which is being funded by the Federal DOJ Valor Initiative grant, is a key first step.

The resilience curriculum was developed in the early 90s by the University of Pennsylvania, Positive Psychology Center, and has successfully been used with law enforcement, the military, schools, and other industries. The program includes a set of 21 empirically-validated skills that build cognitive and emotional fitness, strength of character, and strong relationships. The skills included in the program target resilience competencies of: self-awareness, self-regulation, mental agility, strengths of character, connection, and optimism. The University of Pennsylvania has also successfully created a train-the-trainer model, where participants are taught how to teach the resilience skills to others. This model allows law enforcement to train their staff in-house on resilience. If awarded, the grant will allow for representatives from municipal law enforcement to complete the resilience course as well as to complete a Train-the-Trainer course.

Securing the Resilience Train-the-Trainer Program for Montana Law Enforcement is the first step towards

positively influencing the culture within the agencies and sustaining change for Montana officers. We are eager to bring the Resilience Train-the-



Trainer Program to Montana and will keep the MMIA membership updated as to the status of the grant award. For questions, please contact Britani Laughery at blaughery@mmia.net or 406-495-7004.

Policy Pilot with Lexipol Services

The MMIA has been a strong supporter of law enforcement risk management initiatives since its inception. Over the years we have embarked on different initiatives such as the development of model policies, co-funding a risk management law enforcement trainer at the MLEA, and providing funding for outside trainers for the MACOP conference. As risk changes, our risk management efforts need to be evaluated for their effectiveness. During this evaluation, a review of the model policy program was completed. Although the model policy program addressed 27 high risk areas in law enforcement, the resources to fully review and update the policies on a continual basis were not there. In looking at alternatives to help MMIA members to keep policies current and officers sufficiently trained on policy, MMIA has identified Lexipol as a possible solution. Lexipol is the creation of former law enforcement officers and attorneys as a service for developing comprehensive, continuously updated policies for public safety agencies. They also offer online training.

At the October 6, 2020 Board of Directors' Meeting, the MMIA will propose a pilot of the Lexipol services with members that represent small, medium, and large agencies to identify whether or not Lexipol is a viable alternative for all MMIA members with law enforcement agencies. Based on the evaluation of the members participating in the pilot program, MMIA will make a proposal to the Board of Directors for the next fiscal year of whether or not to pursue this resource for the entire membership. For questions, please contact Britani Laughery at blaughery@mmia.net or 406-495-7004. ■

MONTANA'S CITIES AND TOWNS: GREAT PLACES FOR ALL AGES

BY AARP Montana

AARP Montana is honored to partner with the League to help cities and towns prepare for demographic changes and enhance the lives of our citizens. We are improving older adults' quality of life by developing safe, accessible, and vibrant environments, often called livable communities. Livable communities' policies address issues such as land use, housing, transportation, and broadband - all of which facilitate aging in place. We aim to stem population decline, keep our younger generations home, and increase the quality of life for all of Montana.

Changing Demographics

Today, Montana has the fifth largest percentage of people aged 65 and older in the United States. Our population is forecasted to continue to age substantially in the coming years, triggering local and state officials to initiate community-based solutions that meet the needs of our legacy citizens. Together, with the insight, guidance, and leadership of the League, AARP Montana is supporting investments in rural areas to allow older Montanans to age at home, surrounded by friends and family while reducing the financial burdens associated with aging.



COVID-19 Responses

Among the nation's communities and local leaders on the frontlines of the global coronavirus pandemic are the more than 450 towns, cities, counties, and states enrolled in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities. Local Montana leaders are in a unique position to enhance the lives of citizens by building on a framework of public policy that decreases social isolation, builds civic engagement, and customizes solutions for individual communities.

Public policy decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic have required elected officials to seek opportunities to enhance social inclusion and ensure community and health services are accessible and affordable.

Benefits of Livability

Communities that have already joined the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities have relied upon a strong foundation to combat hardships associated with COVID-19. Innovative solutions include partnering with local restaurants for regular meal deliveries to homebound adults, virtual book clubs and opportunities to engage in healthy activities, and helplines to coordinate emergency transportation for medical appointments and shopping for necessities. Montana communities are already moving forward with solutions to the pandemic; however, the infrastructure of ready and willing volunteers and engaged community leaders expedites implementation and allows for an agile foundation that can respond quickly to changing needs.

Join the Network

Community leaders are focused on maintaining policies that support public health and support a growing economy. Joining the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities does not detract from the concentrated fight against COVID-19; instead, AARP offers a framework that strengthens local responses and community coordination. Reach out today to discuss how this statewide effort can advance the quality of life in your community.

Link for more info:

<https://bit.ly/2FYojNm> ■

COMMUNITY AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR (AED) PROGRAMS

According to the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS), cardiovascular disease is responsible for most adult deaths in Montana. However, cardiovascular mortality rates have declined for both the US and Montana over the past two decades as strategies to educate and prepare the public, emergency responders, and dispatchers about cardiac event response have been successful. A key strategy of Montana's plan is the development of Public Access Automated External Defibrillator (AED) programs.

What are the requirements to have a Public Access AED program?

Based on the American Heart Association's guidelines for Public Access AED, Montana requires entities to register their programs and to meet important guidelines related to education and training, medical oversight, AED maintenance, and record-keeping. The full requirements can be viewed at:

<https://bit.ly/3iQ1V7H>

The American Heart Association's guidelines can be viewed at: <https://bit.ly/2ZYPO0q>.

How do you register an AED program with Montana DPHHS?

Contact Montana DPHHS at 406-444-3895 to setup an online account where you will complete the registration process and be able to submit data for each incident an AED is used.

What are the benefits of registration?

Registration helps entities be successful by assuring the entity is integrated with dispatch and EMS response, people are trained to use the AED, the AEDs are maintained and in working order, and that medical oversight is in place to assure patients receive the best care possible. Additional benefits for registered entities include liability protections and immunity from civil liability as provided by Montana law to:

- ▶ An individual who provides emergency care or treatment by using an AED;
- ▶ An individual providing cardiopulmonary resuscitation to an individual upon whom an AED is or may be used;
- ▶ A person providing medical oversight of the AED program;
- ▶ The entity responsible for the AED program; and
- ▶ An individual providing training to others on the use of an AED.

Are there templates available for an AED program, inspection checklist and incident report?

Yes, contact the MMIA Risk Management Team at riskmgmt@mmia.net or call 406-443-0907. ■



WINTER WATER SERVICE TERMINATION



It is the time of year many Montana residents head south in search of warmer weather. This means more requests for water service termination. Frequently, snowbirds assume the water service termination falls solely on the municipality. They figure if the city terminates the water service as requested, they are protected and no problems will occur. Should a problem arise, however, you are usually the first to be blamed and asked to the municipality for any damages.

Many times, these assumptions result in frozen pipes and flooded property. Usually the result turns into a significant water damage claim against the municipality,

which can include mold issues due to discovery of the problem several months down the road. The restoration costs of the water damage can run tens of thousands of dollars to the property owner and sometimes the municipality, should the property owner prevail on a claim.

Now is a good time to review your policies and procedures as to how you manage snowbirds and water service termination and reactivation requests. Your best plan of executing a water service request is to document the request and transfer the responsibility of verifying its

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LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD – DORIS PINKERTON

It is with great pleasure that the Montana Municipal Clerk-Treasurer and Finance Officers Association (MMCTFOA) announces Doris Pinkerton as the recipient of the 2020 Lifetime Achievement Award. Doris has served the City of Forsyth, Montana since 1997, and currently holds the position of Clerk-Treasurer for this community. As well, Doris has served on the Montana League of Cities and Towns (MLCT) Board of Directors since 2016 and on the Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority (MMIA) Board of Directors since 2006.

Doris goes above and beyond in many arenas serving the MMCTFOA in the capacity of the Audit Committee, the Education Committee, as a presenter of the curriculum for the Clerk's Institute, and as a mentor. She attends clerk conferences in both fall and spring and helps many fellow clerks through her contributions to the MMCTFOA

listserv. Nominations for Doris to receive this award were many, and there is no higher honor than being recognized by peers in one's professional association. Doris demonstrates her commitment to community and the profession consistently and generously.



It is more and more difficult to fulfill the duties of the position Doris holds with the ever-changing responsibilities mandated by other agencies. Doris is incredibly deserving of this award for her dedication to community and for her years of service to the profession and this association. — Congratulations, Doris! ■



Child Abuse Prevention for Municipal Operations Webinar

Did you know?

One in four girls and one in six boys is sexually abused before age 18.

Know your risk, we can help.

Join us for a webinar on how to use these valuable resources.

WATCH ONLINE NOW AT:

www.mmia.net/riskmanagement/cap/

What's at Stake?

Tragically, children suffer abuse while in the care of organizations where they should be protected. This abuse has serious costs. It can scar the victim for life and destroy trust in the organization.

These cases are highly public and have a reputational cost to the organization that may exist for decades. In addition, financial costs of abuse cases are staggering. The average national payout for jury verdicts in child abuse cases from 2013 – 2018 was \$7.24 million. In Montana, a \$9 million settlement was recently reached in a school district child abuse case.

Municipalities must work to reduce the risk of child abuse from occurring on our watch. We need to understand how perpetrators operate within organizations to gain access, privacy, and control with children so we can prevent it from happening.

Where are the risks?

Municipalities need to assess their exposure to risk for child abuse. Areas of concern include, but are not limited to: pools, libraries, parks and recreation programs, law enforcement, and municipal sponsored special events.

What should we do?

MMIA has partnered with industry leading Praesidium Inc. to help our members address the risk of child abuse in municipal operations with two powerful resources.

Know Your Score! Online Self-Assessment

Because abuse prevention efforts take an ongoing commitment, the Know Your Score! system is designed to help organizations maintain the highest standards today, and over time. The online self-assessment tool:

- ▶ Helps you identify your current prevention practices;
- ▶ Allows you to quickly learn the strength of your policies and practices designed to keep those in your care safe from abuse;
- ▶ Provides custom action plans identifying next steps;
- ▶ Provides cost/benefit analysis tools; and,
- ▶ Provides sample resources to address potential abuse prevention gaps.

Online Training – Armatus Learn to Protect System

The Armatus Learn to Protect system offers online training for:

- ▶ Staff directly involved in providing services to youth;
- ▶ Those who supervise others directly involved with youth;
- ▶ Those who manage or oversee youth programs.

Participants will learn how offenders operate, how to recognize warning signs, when and how to intervene to interrupt interactions that may foretell of abuse, how to prevent youth-to-youth abuse, mandated reporting requirements, and how to manage high-risk situations in their programs.

Winter Water Service - Continued

completion back onto the property owner. It is crucial in defending these claims there is documentation the property owner verified service termination. The MMIA is seeing an increase in these claims and damages can be significant. Currently, MMIA is handling a claim with a cost projection of over \$50,000 for damages. The following are some suggestions to take into consideration.

Get it in writing! All water service termination or activation should be made in writing. This way there is no confusion as to what is being requested. Documentation must include:

- ▶ the date the request is being made,
- ▶ the location for the request,
- ▶ the date in which the turn on/off is to take place; and
- ▶ the property owner's forwarding information in order to contact the property owner should a problem be discovered in their absence.

A work order should be initiated in response to the request and the written request should remain on file.

Require someone be there for the termination/activation. As you are aware, termination or reactivation of water service takes place at the curb stop, which is usually located within the city/town right-of-way. The only control you have is turning the curb stop valve. It is very difficult to determine a successful shutoff or reactivation at the curb stop without entering the property. Now what do you do?

A representative of the property should be required, in writing, to be present at the time of the turn on/off to verify its completion. The name of the property owner/representative who is on site at the time of executing the

work order should be documented on the work order. The date and time in which the request was completed must be entered and signed off by the employee who executed the work order. File the work order so that it can be easily retrievable for reference should a problem occur.

Put the responsibility on the property owner. If a representative of the property in which service is being activated or terminated cannot be present, execute the work order, and then provide prompt written notice to the property owner verifying the date in which water service was terminated or reactivated. The notice should instruct the property owner to verify the executed request was successful. This places the responsibility on the property owner to verify the water service had been successfully completed.

Remind property owners to shut their water off inside. City water departments are encouraged by the MMIA to remind homeowners to shut off water internally at the supply valve and drainpipes accordingly to prepare for the winter months. Once water is reintroduced to the property at the homeowner's request, the water valve can be turned back on.

These suggestions might seem to impose more responsibilities onto your public works department and its employees. The intent is to transfer the risk back onto the property owner. Your customers' water service termination or reactivation requests are for the sole benefit of the property owner. A benefit in which the property owner should take responsibility and verify the activity has been completed in the best interest of their property. Thorough, accurate, and complete documentation up front benefits both you and your customer and will drastically reduce the amount of time you spend diffusing a potentially volatile situation should a problem arise. ■

Child Abuse Prevention - Continued

Online courses are 25 – 45 minutes in length and include actionable learning objectives, research-validated content, engaging graphics, frequent interactivity, a content mastery quiz, and course completion documentation. In addition to the online courses, learners are supported with a variety of tools including:

- ▶ Action Plans;
- ▶ Coaching Guides;
- ▶ Discussion Guides; and,
- ▶ Mini Minders Learning Segments.

How do we get access to these resources?

To access these resources, visit our Child Abuse Prevention webpage at www.mmia.net, and request resources through our online form. an MMIA representative will contact you with the access information. ■

Need more League/MMIA News?

If you would like to read past issues, visit the MMIA website at www.mmia.net/news-events/newsletters.



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THANK YOU TO OUR 89TH ANNUAL MONTANA LEAGUE OF CITIES AND TOWNS CONFERENCE SPONSORS

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