

Stay Off the Water!

The Cannon River may look safe and inviting, but Rice County Sheriff Troy Dunn warns that under the surface, uprooted trees, branches, and debris still lurk from the tornadoes last fall. Everything that landed in the water during the September storm could cause injuries to the river's recreational users – and make river rescues difficult.

Once the water level decreases, and more of these potential dangers can be seen and dealt with, Dunn hopes the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources can say that the Cannon River will be safe to use. "I would recommend and advise no recreational boating, which includes canoeing, kayaking, tubing, or other watercraft use," he said.

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Hands-Free Minnesota Law What You Need to Know

The new Hands-Free Minnesota Law goes into effect on August 1, 2019. Even though we're still a few weeks away, now is the time to start the transition and learn about – and obey – this new law.

What is hands-free? No, it's not driving with no hands. It's about how you use your cell phone in your vehicle. Here are some FAQs from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety.

What can I do under the new law? The new law allows a driver to use their cell phone to make calls, text, listen to music or podcasts, and get directions, but only by voice commands or single-touch activation without holding the phone. So what does this mean for you? It means you can still use your cell phone but only in a hands-free capacity. You can use voice commands or single-touch activation (this includes making calls, listening to music or podcasts, and texting, but only if your phone or vehicle supports voice texting). Remember, hands-free is not necessarily distraction-free.

What can't I do with my phone under the new law? You may not hold your phone in your hand. Also, a driver may not use their phone at any time for video calling, video live-streaming, Snapchat, gaming, looking at video or photos stored on the phone, using non-



**HANDS-FREE
MINNESOTA LAW**
HandsFreeMN.org

navigation apps, reading texts, and scrolling or typing on the phone while in the traffic lane and moving.

Can I ever hold my phone? Yes. The only time you can legally hold your phone is to call for emergency assistance, such as a crash or medical emergency, if there is an immediate threat to life and safety, or when in an authorized emergency vehicle while performing official duties.

Can I use a GPS navigation device? Yes. Only GPS navigation devices or systems that are used only for that specific purpose can legally be used. If you're using your phone as a GPS, you still must follow the hands-free rules with one-touch or voice programming. If yours does not have that, set up your GPS app before you move and put it into a cradle.

Can I use my headphones/earbuds? Only if you use a single headphone or earbud, because wearing them in both ears has been illegal for some time.

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Public Health – Services to Support Healthy Living

The mission of Rice County Public Health is to protect, promote, and improve the health of individuals and families in the community. In Minnesota, public health responsibilities are shared between the state (MN Department of Health) and local governments as delineated legislatively according to Minnesota Statute 145A. Rice County Public Health is one of 51 locally governed community health boards in Minnesota working to protect and improve health.

To accomplish this task, it takes a staff of 50 nurses, dietitians, social workers, health educators, family health paraprofessionals, home health aides, and office support. The management team includes Public Health

supervisors Sara Colter, Susan Prieve, Laura Burkhartzmeyer, Amy Ernste Caron, and Rice County Public Health Director Deb Purfeerst, with Dr. Donald Lum serving as Rice County community health medical consultant.

Meeting people where they are at is integral to the work of public health. This includes both community work and home visiting services. In 2018, this included over 23,000 home visits to people in Rice County.

Work within the department is divided into four different program areas: Clinic and Community Services, Family Child Health, Home Care, and Long Term Care.

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Did You Know?

Recycle Correctly – Avoid Wish-cycling

We are all probably guilty of this. You stand at the single-sort recycling container with something in your hand, like a pizza box or a beverage container. You're not entirely sure if you should recycle it, but you **think** you can. You'd rather err on the side of caution rather than waste, so you put it in the bin, figuring that the recycling facility will sort it out. *Right? Wrong.*

Tossing questionable items in the recycling bin and hoping they will be recycled is being called **wish-cycling**. It's well-intentioned but ultimately harmful behavior. It might seem like a great idea, but tossing unrecyclable items into your container ends up costing time and money, and often creates far more waste.

Unrecyclable items cause issues for recycling sorters and machines. When things like plastic bags, shredded paper, or bottle caps get mixed with proper recycling items, they can jam the machinery, causing the facility to shut down while workers fix the clogged areas. When greasy food-related items (like pizza boxes or used paper plates or napkins) get processed, the oils can contaminate an entire batch of recycling, causing all the correct recyclables to be ruined, and be thrown away.

Instead of wish-cycling, familiarize yourself with your city's current recycling guidelines, and recycle the right way.

These are items that we do not want in our single-sort recycling containers:

- No garbage
- Do not bag recyclables
- No plastic bags or plastic wrap
- No food or liquid – empty all containers
- No clothing or linens
- No hoses, wires, chains, or electronics
- No batteries of any kind

Hands-Free Minnesota Law Soon Goes Into Effect

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Is it against the new law to hold a phone in a hijab or other type of headscarf or wrap? Having a cell phone tucked into a headscarf or head wrap is not against the hands-free cell phone law. The phone must be securely situated to remain hands-free and must not block the driver's vision in any way. What would be against the new law is if the driver removed the phone and held it in their hand while they were a part of traffic.

If my teen is under 18 years old and has a driver's permit or provisional driver's license, can they use their phone in hands-free mode? The new hands-free law does not change anything for teens under 18 with a driver's permit or provisional driver's license: they cannot make or answer calls while driving (hand-held or hands-free). They can use their phone in hands-free mode in the following situations:

- Using their phone as a GPS device, but only in hands-free or voice-activated mode. They must set their destination before driving. They cannot hold their phone at any time.
- Listening to music or podcasts in hands-free or voice-activated mode is OK, but hand-held scrolling through playlists or channels is not allowed under the law.
- Calling 911 in an emergency situation. If there's an immediate threat to life and safety, they can use the phone in either hand-held or hands-free mode.

Why aren't other distractions, such as in-car screens, eating, grooming, pets, passengers, or reading a book, covered under the law? Many possible distractions when driving exist, but cell phone use presents a unique and complex challenge and is addressed

by the hands-free law. A driver is still expected to avoid other distractions and drive with due care under other Minnesota traffic laws.

What are the penalties? If you are cited for a violation of this law, you can face some significant fines. The first ticket is \$50 plus court fees and the second and later tickets are \$275 plus court fees. (After all of the assessments and surcharges, you would be looking at around \$150 for the first ticket and over \$300 for any subsequent ticket.) Yes, lawmakers are trying to deter you from violating these laws and are sending a strong message not to do it.

Will this make the roads safer? Yes, in two ways. In 12 of 15 states with hands-free laws, traffic fatalities have decreased by an average of 15 percent [Source: National Safety Council and Insurance Federation based on National Highway Traffic Safety Administration data]. This law will also help law enforcement keep Minnesotans safe. Because drivers aren't allowed to have a phone in their hand, it will be easier for law enforcement to see violations and take more effective action. Through public awareness and education, the goal is for Minnesotans to comply with the new law without enforcement action.

The Final Word

"The bottom line is that you need to drive attentively and responsibly," says Rice County Sheriff Troy Dunn. "Minimize the distractions and make driving safe. If you can silence your phone and put it in your purse, glove box, or center console when driving, that would be the safest way to avoid that distraction. But if you are going to use it, do it the right way, the safe way, and the legal way. You have a lot of people who want you home safe. Don't let a distraction change so many lives forever. Be Safe!"

Lithium-ion Batteries – Avoid a Potential Fire Hazard

Lithium-ion batteries are used in many everyday items because they provide more energy than other types of batteries and they are rechargeable. They power our smartphones, laptops, watches, and rechargeable power tools, yet many people rarely think about how to dispose of them.

You are able to throw out single-use, non-rechargeable, non-hazardous dry cell batteries in the trash, but lithium-ion batteries must be handled differently. Throwing these batteries in the trash or recycling bin can lead to major

fires on garbage trucks, recycling trucks, and at landfills and recycling centers. They are a growing fire hazard because they can spark under pressure and heat.

You are urged to properly dispose of electronics at designated recycling centers or hazardous waste collection sites. Both lead and rechargeable batteries may be recycled at the recycling center located at the Rice County Solid Waste facility. For more information, visit www.co.rice.mn.us/faq.aspx?qid=124



2019 Rice County Fair – Entertainment Highlights

Grandstand

- Wed., July 17 Enduro Auto Races – 6 p.m.
- Thurs., July 18 Barnes PRCA Rodeo – 7 p.m.
- Fri., July 19 Midwest All-Star Wrestling – 6:30 p.m.
- Sat., July 20 NTPA Truck & Tractor Pull – 7 p.m.
- Sun., July 21 Kids' Power Wheels – 4 p.m.
Demolition Derby (follows Power Wheels)



Beer Garden Entertainment (Live Music: 8 p.m.–midnight; no cover charge)

- Thurs., July 18 Devon Worley Band
- Fri., July 19 The Chad Johnson Project
- Sat., July 20 Mister Peabody

Cannon Stage (Free Entertainment)

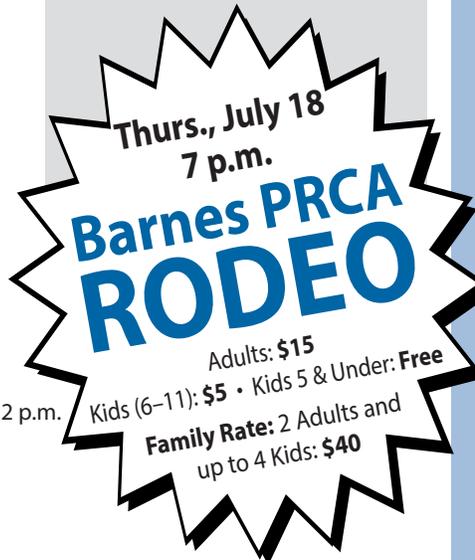
- Wed., July 17 Electric Fusion – Noon
Brodini Family Comedy/Magic Show – 4 p.m. and 7 p.m.
Tuey the Juggler – 5:30 p.m. and 8 p.m.
Electric Fusion – 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.
- Thurs., July 18 Electric Fusion – 10 a.m., 3 p.m., 7 p.m. and 9 p.m.
Tuey the Juggler – 2 p.m., 6 p.m. and 8 p.m.
- Fri., July 19 Electric Fusion – Noon and 8 p.m.
Kids Day Program – 12:30 p.m.
Tuey the Juggler – 1:30 p.m., 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.
Brodini Family Comedy/Magic Show – 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.
- Sat., July 20 Electric Fusion – 11 a.m.
Tuey the Juggler – 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.
Brodini Family Comedy/Magic Show – 6 p.m.
- Sun., July 21 Electric Fusion – Noon
Open Mike with Electric Fusion – 1 p.m.
Brodini Family Comedy/Magic Show – 3 p.m.

Sellner Stage (Free Entertainment)

- Tues., July 16 Rice County Fair Ambassador Coronation – 7 p.m.
Faribault Community Band – 8:15 p.m.
- Wed., July 17 Tuey the Juggler – 3 p.m.
Jolly P's – 6:30 p.m.
Brodini Family Comedy/Magic Show – 9 p.m.
- Thurs., July 18 Lyndon Peterson – 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.
Brodini Family Comedy/Magic Show – 3:30 p.m.
The Whitesidewalls – 7–10 p.m.
- Fri., July 19 Charlie Sticha Band – 1–5 p.m.
Electric Fusion – 5:30 p.m.
Bob and the Beachcombers – 7–9 p.m.
- Sat., July 20 Brodini Family Comedy/Magic Show – 11:30 a.m. and 2 p.m.
"No Time For Fame" – 1–4 p.m.
Tuey the Juggler – 3:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.
La Raza de Mexico – 8:30 p.m.–12 a.m.
- Sun., July 21 Non-Denominational Church Service – 10 a.m.
"Switched at Birth" Gospel Band – 12–3 p.m.
4-H Fashion Review – 3 p.m. / 4-H Parade of Champions – 4 p.m.

Ride Specials & Schedule

- Wed., July 17 – Open at 1 p.m.**
Arm Bands – \$25 per person
(unlimited rides 1 p.m.–closing)
- Thurs., July 18 – Open at Noon**
Arm Bands – \$25 per person
(unlimited rides 1 p.m.–closing)
- Fri., July 19 – Open at Noon – Kids Day**
Arm Bands – \$20 per person before 4 p.m.
\$25 per person after 4 p.m.
(unlimited rides 12 p.m.–closing)
- Sat., July 20 – Open at Noon**
Arm Bands – \$25 per person
(unlimited rides 3 p.m.–closing)
- Sun., July 21 – Open at 1 p.m.**
Arm Bands – \$25 per person
(unlimited rides 1–9 p.m.)



Enjoy the 2019 Rice County Fair

It's time for the Rice County Fair – some of the most exciting days of the summer! Every year, members of the Fair Board work hard to bring events and exhibits to the fair.

You will be able to see more than 100 commercial exhibits, lots of animals and exciting entertainment all week long. This list is a preview of some of the great entertainment on tap this year. Be sure to visit our website and check the full schedule published just prior to the fair.

Admission to the Rice County Fair is free! Parking on the grounds has increased to \$7 a day, but a weekly parking pass is available for \$20. (You can purchase a pass at the Fair Office – call in advance at 507-332-2470.)

Remember: Pets, bikes, skateboards, inline skates or roller skates are NOT allowed on the fairgrounds. Please help ensure the safety of all our visitors.

Smoking Policy
The Rice County Fairgrounds are smoke free except in designated areas. **This includes regular cigarettes and e-cigs.**

There are designated areas for tobacco use on the grounds. These areas are noted in the premium book.

Dog Policy
No dogs are allowed on the fairgrounds during the week of the Rice County Fair. (Service dogs or service dogs in training are allowed.) This is for the safety of all visitors.

What's New

Construction Update

The Rice County Government Services Building construction project, which began last fall, continues to proceed as scheduled. The new addition is now enclosed and the exterior will be complete by the end of August, though landscaping and parking lot updates will occur later. This will complete the first phase of the project.

The next phase will begin by moving the Social Services reception area and interview rooms back to the lower level, into their permanent homes in the new addition. Signs will be posted when that move takes place toward the end of August. At that time, the remaining Social Services staff will move upstairs, using the new addition's training room as a temporary space while the existing department space is remodeled.

Additional work in the lower level will remodel the Public Health department to provide a more customer-friendly lobby. The current service counter will be combined with WIC (Women, Infants and Children) for better efficiency. The Housing Office will then move downstairs, next to Public Health.

Project Timeline

The remodeling of the lower level, starting with Social Services (with an anticipated completion date of December 2019/January 2020), continues with the Public Health area (anticipated completion date of April/May 2020). Finally, remodeling of the upper level will conclude the entire project with a completion date of July/August 2020.

Visit us at the 2019 Rice County Fair!

Visit this year's Rice County Fair, where these county departments will be on hand.

Environmental Services will host a booth in the Commercial Exhibit Building. Learn about Rice County's permitting process, recycling options, and aquatic invasive species. Ask questions, play a game, win prizes!

A recycling Mobile Learning Center will also be on site for people to go through and watch videos of what happens to our recycling.

The Sheriff's Office will be present in their Mobile Incident Command bus. Staff will be available to answer questions and provide public safety and first aid to those in need.

Rice County Safe Roads Coalition will be at the Fair with information on the new hands-free cell phone law and how to go hands free. Visit them at the Sheriff's Command Center on Friday evening, July 19, 6–9 p.m.,

to use the distracted-driving simulator, have a root beer, and register for prizes!

Rice County Public Health will host a booth display next to Rice County Environmental Services. Stop by to learn more about Rice County Public Health services and to register for drawings.

In addition, Rice County Public Health hosts a lactation space for the convenience of breastfeeding women during the fair. It is located in the Straight River Room of the Commercial Exhibit Building on the south side of the fairgrounds. Women are welcome to feed their babies anywhere on the fairgrounds, however, this is a quiet space where mothers of young children can go to nurse, feed, change, or rest with their babies. The lactation space is available during regular building hours throughout the duration of the fair.

New, Expanded Watershed Wildlife Management Areas

The Trust for Public Land, Great River Greening, and the Cannon River Watershed Partnership recently announced the protection of nearly 280 acres in additional wildlife management areas (WMAs) to be managed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). This newly protected public land is available for people to get outside and explore in the Cannon River Watershed, and offers exceptional hunting, fishing, hiking, and bird-watching opportunities.

Additions to Warsaw WMA near Dennison and Factor WMA, south of Lake Volney, further protect these habitat complexes while adding much needed public access points. The creation of Trout Lily WMA, located just northeast of Faribault, and Gray Fox WMA, west of Shields Lake, establish new areas where people can get outside and enjoy the beautiful landscape of this area. In total, The Trust for Public Land has now created seven new WMAs, and considerably expanded three others, totaling over 2,000 protected acres as part of its ongoing Cannon River program. These protected places include wetlands, prairies, Big Woods forest, and provide key habitat for wildlife, and offer quality hunting opportunities for waterfowl, deer, pheasant, and turkeys within an hour of the Twin Cities.

Managed by the DNR, wildlife management areas are the backbone of wildlife management efforts in Minnesota, while also are an important part of the state's outdoor recre-

ation system. They are established to protect lands and waters that have a high potential for wildlife production, public hunting, trapping, fishing, and other compatible recreational uses.

"These land protection projects are representative of the great work The Trust for Public Land is doing as a part of our work to protect Minnesota's rivers," said Susan Schmidt, the Minnesota state director for The Trust for Public Land. "By working closely with local partners, like Cannon River Watershed Partnership, we're able to protect land that not only provides unique recreation opportunities for Minnesotans, but also protects habitat for wildlife."

These acquisitions were completed as part of the Cannon River Watershed Habitat Complex program, a partnership between The Trust for Public Land, the Cannon River Watershed Partnership, and Great River Greening. In this partnership, The Trust for Public Land acquires and protects land, Cannon River Watershed Partnership coordinates outreach for the project, and Great River Greening restores and enhances land. The program gets its funding primarily from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

Acquisition funding is currently available for the permanent protection of high habitat value lands within the watershed. To learn more about the program, contact Alan Kraus, Cannon River Watershed Partnership conservation program manager, at alan@crwp.net or 507-786-3913.



Public Health – Services to Support Healthy Living

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Clinic and Community: This work includes community health assessment and improvement planning, public health emergency preparedness, community health education, disease prevention and control activities, and community health improvement activities incorporating policy, systems, and environmental change. Clinical services include WIC, immunizations, refugee health, family planning and STI testing and treatment, Mantoux testing and tuberculosis followup, disease prevention and control activities, in addition to information and referral services.

Family Child Health: This work involves health promotion services in both community and home settings, including utilization of an evidence-based family home visiting model (Healthy Families of America). Additional activities include management of a developmental tracking program, Follow Along, for children up to age 3, car seat education and distribution, a parenting newsletter in Spanish and English distributed to all Rice County families with children up to age 3, healthy homes environmental assessments, child and teen checkup outreach services, and community

support groups for families with young children held in conjunction with local ECFE and hospital partners.

Home Care: Rice County Public Health is licensed as a Medicare-certified, comprehensive home care agency, and provides skilled nursing visits, home health aide services, and physical therapy visits. Payments accepted include private insurances, Medicare, VA, and Medical Assistance.

Long Term Care: Long term care staff, including nurses and social workers, are available to support those 65 and older in their efforts to remain living as independently and safely as possible in the community. This includes information and referral, assessment and screening for waiver programs, in addition to care coordination for those on UCare and Blue Plus programs.

Contact Us

For more information about any of these services, please contact Rice County Public Health at 507-332-6111, visit the website at www.co.rice.mn.us/256/Public-Health, or the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/RiceCountyPublicHealth.

Community Health Improvement Planning & Prioritization

On June 10, Rice County Public Health staff worked with 40 people from multiple community agencies to prioritize the top health-related issues faced by residents. Participants gained an understanding of the department's assessment and planning process, and were then engaged in small group discussions related to a wide range of health-related issues from pregnancy and birth outcomes to motor vehicle safety, from rates of chronic illness to residents' experience with domestic violence and sexual assault.

The department, which has been featured by Human Impact Partners as a smaller public health agency that is concretely advancing health equity, is working to shift the conversation from personal behaviors to a more balanced approach that accounts for other factors that influence residents' opportunities to be healthy. For this reason, the conversation didn't just focus on health behaviors that lead to poor health outcomes, such as poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, and chronic illness, but included data about achievement gaps in education, poverty, barriers to transportation,

disparities in homeownership, and the lack of affordable housing. Where possible, the group examined data by race or income to better understand who in our county is being held back from being their own best healthy self.

Participants were guided through a series of votes that resulted in a prioritized list of the current health needs of Rice County. The top ten rank order results were:

1. Housing
2. Education
3. Access to Care
4. Income and employment
5. Transportation
6. Nutrition and anemia
7. Weight status
8. Mental health
9. Domestic violence and sexual violence
10. Chronic illness

The next steps for the health department are to work with partners to select a few of the top health issues and to develop a community health improvement action plan. The complete 2019 Rice County Community Health Assessment report will be posted on the website later this year.

County Profile



Steve Underdahl
District 4 Commissioner

In January, Steve Underdahl was sworn in as the newest Rice County Commissioner, taking over from Steve Bauer the District 4 seat, which represents Faribault precincts 1 and 4, and Wells Township.

A Faribault graduate, he attended the University of Minnesota and Mankato State University, where he earned a B.S. in business administration. Underdahl has over two decades of experience in city government, spending time on the Faribault Planning Commission and 14 years on the City Council, as well as being past chair of the Chamber of Commerce, past chair of Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation, a Faribault EDA member, and past president of First English Lutheran Church.

Underdahl, who is a contractor, says he's been pleased with the cooperation he's seen recently between cities and the county. He hopes to see more going forward, especially when it comes to issues that can affect the region, such as economic development and transportation. He also wants to ensure that the county balances growth with existing land uses.

He and his wife, Julie, have two adult children, Brett and Jill, who live in Faribault, and a grandson, Carson. He enjoys camping and hunting with family in northern Minnesota, and winter vacations in warm climates with Julie. He also enjoys spending time in his woodworking shop.

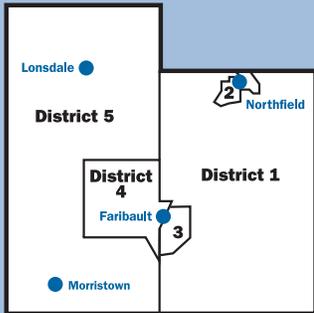


Rice County Report

Rice County Government Services Building
320 Third Street NW
Faribault, MN 55021

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(as of January 1, 2019)

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District 4

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District 5

Jeff Docken
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Phone Numbers

General Information 507-332-6100

Toll-Free Numbers (do not dial "1" or area code)

From Northfield 645-9576
From Lonsdale 744-5185

Rice County Standing Meetings

Board of Commissioners

Meets the first and third Tuesdays of each month as a Committee of the Whole/Work Session, 8:30 a.m., Commissioners' Room, Rice County Government Services Building.

Meets the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month as a Regular Board, 8:30 a.m., Commissioners' Room, Rice County Government Services Building.

Board of Adjustment

Meets the first Thursday of the month; 7:00 p.m., Commissioners' Room, Rice County Government Services Building.

Planning Commission

Meets the first Thursday of the month, immediately following the Board of Adjustment meeting, Commissioners' Room, Rice County Government Services Building.

Community Corrections Advisory Board

Meets the third Thursday of March, June, September and December, 3:30 p.m., Rice County Government Services Building.

Community Health Services

Citizens' Advisory Committee

Meets the fourth Wednesday every other month (January, March, May, July, September, November), 6:30-8:00 p.m.; call 507-332-6111 for location.

Rice County Emergency Preparedness

Advisory Council

Meets quarterly, 7:00-9:00 p.m.; call 507-332-6119 for meeting date and location.

Mental Health Advisory Council

Meets the fourth Wednesday of January, February, March, April, September and October, 12:00 p.m. (noon), Friendship House, located at 310 First Avenue NW, #1, Faribault.

Rice County Departments

Administrator Sara Folsted
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