

Scotland County Monthly



MARCH 2008

A newsletter for Scotland County employees

Routine vehicle maintenance plan will bring about long-term savings

A vehicle maintenance program, which will become effective July 1, is expected to save the County money and lengthen the usability of County vehicles.

The program includes the complete, scheduled replacement of filters and fluids of County vehicles on a routine basis as recommended by the manufacturer.

County Engineer Jim Blackwell developed the program, which is similar to one used for the maintenance and care of the heavy equipment at the landfill.

Blackwell explained how the program would work. "County vehicles would normally have filter and fluid replacements every 3,000 to 5,000 miles or every 200 hours."

He added, "Maintenance will be conducted at the shop at the County landfill at the Patterson Road and Old Maxton Road intersection."

Heavy Equipment Mechanic Charles Osteen will oversee the maintenance program.

Blackwell said no additional staff would be required since it takes only 30 minutes to change the filter and fluids on one vehicle. Blackwell anticipates routine maintenance will be conducted on three to five vehicles a day. "Vehicles are a lot easier to do than heavy equipment," he explained.

Ensure enrollment. Email jblackwell@scotlandcounty.org with a list of your department's vehicle makes and models.

Blackwell said after a vehicle is serviced a sticker will be placed next to the odometer so the driver will know when to schedule the next maintenance.

Blackwell said the savings will come from purchasing fluids and filters in bulk, which is 50 percent less than what might be paid at retail.

"As for long-term savings, vehicles will be maintained better and on a more routine basis so they will last longer," Blackwell explained. "Less repairs would be required as it deals in particular with the transmission, the rear end and the engine."

Blackwell said when the heavy equipment maintenance program started the cost of repairs for each piece of equipment was documented. "At the end of each fiscal year we could see how much it cost to maintain each piece of heavy equipment."

"From that data it was decided whether to replace that piece of equipment, do some heavy overhaul or be satisfied if the equipment is performing well."

For vehicles to be placed on this routine maintenance schedule, Blackwell will compile a list of vehicle makes and models so the appropriate filters and oil can be purchased on State contract prices and kept in inventory.

"Any vehicle needing more than a change of fluids and filter will be identified and taken to a private shop if necessary," Blackwell said.

Meeting begins with fanfare



Left to right, Scotland Band members Sean Campbell, Elizabeth Priode, Kristen Locklear and Catherine Munly play the National Anthem at the March 10 Commissioners meeting as part of Music in Our Schools Month. Justin Hammonds directs the band.

Voluntary agricultural districts protect farmers

Farmers now have the option to protect themselves from complaints that might occur from neighboring residential developments now that a Voluntary Agricultural Districts Ordinance was approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Soil and Water Conservation District Director Amy Richburg explained how the ordinance will benefit farmers and developments.

Q. The Soil and Water Conservation Board requested and received approval from the Board of Commissioners for a Voluntary Agricultural District Ordinance. Why was the ordinance requested?

A. People moving into an agricultural area will know that there are odors that will be out there and tractors might be running late at night when a storm is coming up. Farmers will be spreading fertilizers and defoliations. This will protect farmers from any lawsuits and will keep the complaints down for the farmers.

Q. What is the buffer?

A. A farmer must have 10 acres to qualify. Farmers can come together to qualify if their total acreage is less than 10.

Q. Will be signs posted in these districts?

A. Yes. Signs will indicate that it is a Voluntary Agricultural District. There will be images of a field, a tractor and a barn.

Q. Do other counties have a similar ordinance?

see Voluntary, page 4

EMStatistics

EMS Report for February:

Responded to 371 Medical/Trauma calls

Treated 12 total traffic accident patients

Administered 101 wellness/blood pressure checks

Sold 16 blue address signs

911 Report Highlights:

347 EMS

286 Sheriff's Department

251 Laurinburg Police Department

36 Fire Department

556 hang-up calls

95 wrong numbers

50 open line calls

1,071 cellular calls

1,844 total calls to 911

Top five complaints for EMS

Response

62 breathing problems

56 sick person (specific diagnosis)

33 falls/back injuries (traumatic)

31 transfer/interfacility/palliative

care

27 chest pain

Weather Observations

(EMS Recordings)

Temp (high) 78 on 2/6

Temp (low) 23 on 2/28

Wind (mph) 28 on 2/10

Rainfall (inches) 1.47 on 2/18

Compiled by Tommy Hatcher

Elections set for Primary

The Elections Office has distributed the following schedule of important dates to remember leading up to the Primary Election.

Friday, April 11— Voter registration deadline for May 6 Primary Election. Forms must be postmarked or delivered in person by 5 p.m.

Thursday, April 17 — One-Stop absentee voting begins.

Tuesday, April 29 — Last day to request absentee ballots in writing.

Saturday, May 3 — One-Stop absentee voting ends.

Monday, May 5 — Mailed absentee ballots must be in Elections Office by 5 p.m.

Tuesday, My 6 — Primary Election

Nichols named accountant

Charles Nichols was appointed Accountant effective March 3. Nichols, along with Deputy Finance Officer Nancy Bostick, will provide the payroll, purchasing and budget development support to County Manager Kevin Patterson, who will continue as Finance Officer.

Nichols, a lifelong resident of Scotland County, previously worked as Office Manager for the 11 area Nic's Pic Kwik stores. Nichols in 2005 earned a BS in accounting with a finance concentration from NC State University. He currently is enrolled in the MBA program at UNC-Pembroke.



Charles Nichols

Industrial Hygienist releases building report

by Tiffany Flowers, Risk Manager

Is there mold in the County Complex?

Many of you have asked this question after experiencing illness such as upper respiratory infections, allergies, sinusitis, headaches, fatigue and eye irritations. Many of you assert that you never experienced these conditions until you started working in the County Complex.

As a result of your reports, a Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH) from the NC Department of Health and Human Services inspected the Complex for mold and other health hazards January 9.

Industrial Hygienists are scientist and engineers committed to the anticipation, recognition, evaluation, prevention, and control of those environmental factors or stresses arising in or from the workplace which may cause sickness, impaired health and well being, or significant discomfort among workers or among citizens of the community.

Many of you suspect there may be some mold growth in the building as a result of several roof leaks. The Industrial Hygienist did not find any significant amounts of mold or any other biological contaminants as a result of the inspection.

However, the IH did find that the building has a poorly designed Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning System (HVAC) due to the age of the building at 30 years and the design of the HVAC system, which has not been updated for the current number of offices and the type of operations that now occupy the building.

People are continuously exposed to a variety of biological, chemical, and physical agents, alone or in combination that are routinely found in normal indoor environments. When normal indoor pollutants are combined with a poor HVAC system the result is poor indoor air quality.

County Manager Kevin Patterson, having been made aware of the indoor air quality issues, will present an improvement plan to the HVAC system at the April 7 Board of Commissioners meeting.

In the meantime, the Industrial Hygienist's report includes some recommendations that you can followed to improve indoor air quality within your office.

Do not spray perfumes, body sprays, air fresheners, scented cleaners or any

see Recommendations, page 4

SCATS preps 14-passenger van for service

Text and photo by Roylin Hammond, EMS

Scotland County Area Transit System (SCATS) recently accepted delivery of a new 2008 Ford 14-passenger center isle van.

The vehicle replaces a 2000 model Dodge 15-passenger center isle van with 200,000 miles.

The 2008 van was funded at 90 percent by NCDOT and at 10 percent by Scotland County.

The vehicle will be put into service as soon as permanent license tags are obtained and SCATS lettering can be applied to the side of the van.

Later this year, SCATS will receive a new Lift-Van funded in the same 90 percent/10 percent manner.



News of Note

Healthy Carolinians "Step into Spring"

The Health Department and Healthy Carolinians are planning some activities to coincide with April as Public Health Month and April 7 to 13 as National Public Health Week in North Carolina. You'll hear public service announcements as part of Public Health Week. An informational/educational session on Pandemic and Disaster Awareness is scheduled for April 7 from 6:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. at Scotland Place. Dr. Keith Henderson of NC PHRST3 Team will be the guest speaker. The agency also will make an information table and bulletin board available for community inspection April. Healthy Carolinians "Lunch & Learn" Program continues the last Monday of each Month at noon in the health education room. Great Ex-STEP-tations Walking Program "Step Into Spring" begins April 1 and concludes with a Community walk April 20 during Sunday in the Park Day. Call Kathie Cox, 277-2440, to register.

Bright future seen in cattle farming

With Scotland County livestock sales exceeding \$51 million in 2007, five of 21 new and aspiring cattle farmers participated in a 16-hour program designed to help them get a start in the business. Cooperative Extension Livestock Agent Randy Wood said an intermediate program is planned to help further instruction for farmers interested in getting started in the beef industry. The initial session focused on cattle health programs, breeding and genetics, nutrition and beef quality assurance.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

In recognition of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month the Child Protective Services unit will be involved in several programs including participation in Sunday in the Park. CPS will provide weekly newspaper articles on the topics of co-sleeping with infants, fire safety, the CPS intake process and commonly asked questions in CPS. The unit plans to distribute information to the school system about child abuse awareness month and will host a Fun Day May 3 at DSS. Blue ribbons that signify Child Abuse Prevention month will be distributed in April.

Chick project successfully hatches

Scotland County 4-H recently teamed up with Laurel Hill Primary and South Scotland Schools to provide 4-H embryology to 19 classes and 493 students. Of the 285 eggs distributed, 217 successfully hatched.

the Birthday list for April

2 Glenn Chatman (Public Works); **4** Buffie Hunt (EMS) and Faye Connelly (Public Works); **6** Shekesha McPhatter (DSS); **9** Melissa Nelson (EMS); **12** Betty Smith (Health) and Michael Alford (Parks and Recreation); **14** Jimmy King (Parks and Recreation), Lekeisha Patterson and Ethena Locklear (DSS), William Edge (Sheriff) and Kisse Phy (EMS); **15** Melinda Salley (Health); **16** Erica Hall (Health), Jerry Johnson (Elections), Tammy Cole (DSS) and Alan Stewart (Parks and Recreation); **18** April Snead (DSS); **19** Robert McRae (Transportation) and Charles Osteen (Public Works); **20** Sandra McNeil (DSS); **21** Patricia Campbell (Public Buildings); **22** James Britt (Sheriff) and Madeline Peele and Yolanda Alford (DSS); **24** Charles Watson (EMS); **25** Sandra Miller (Jail); **27** Tina Oxendine (Health); **28** Sharon English (Cooperative Extension) and Sandy McCrimmon; **29** Debra Sandlin (EMS).

Local news channel picks up on story about tax rate drop



News 14 Carolina Reporter Ilin Chen prepares to interview County Manager Kevin Patterson

The recent announcement by the Board of Commissioners that it intends to lower the tax rate next fiscal year attracted the attention of one local news station.

Fayetteville-based News 14 Channel sent reporter Ilin Chen to interview County Manager Kevin Patterson about the planned decrease in the tax rate from \$1.06 to \$1.02.

Patterson explained that with the passage of a plan to phase out the responsibility by counties for its share of Medicaid will result in enough savings to allow the Commissioners to decrease the tax rate by four cents.

The State-approved phaseout will take place over a three-year period.

Patterson added that in the next few years, the Commissioners anticipate bringing the tax rate to under \$1.00 per \$100 valuation.

He explained that rather than move the savings to the Fund Balance, it is better to put the dollars back in the pockets of the taxpayer.

Chen also interviewed a local realtor for the story who explained that it goes a long way in the minds of taxpayers and potential home buyers to know the Board is interested in transferring the savings to its citizens.

Spec building made ready for future occupancy

Risk Manager Tiffany Flowers looks around the spec building at Laurinburg-Maxton Airbase.

Built to today's industrial standards, community leaders hope the 44,000-square-foot structure will attract an occupant that will make a significant capital investment and creation of new full-time jobs.



Although the spec building has been available for tours by interested parties, a ribbon-cutting March 26 officially places it on the market.

New heating and air system installed at EMS

Text and photo by Roylin Hammond, EMS



A new heating and air conditioning system was recently installed at EMS.

The building, built in 1988, was constructed with two water-to-air heating and cooling units located in the attic of the building.

Several years ago, the larger of the two units failed and was replaced.

Now, after 20 years of service, the second unit has also failed and replacement was necessary.

The new unit is expected to be much more efficient and as a result is expected to reduce the electrical cost to heat and cool the facility.

EMS staff members are most appreciative of the efforts of the Building and Grounds staff and their HVAC vendor in providing a smooth installation of the new system.

Pictured are two of the vendor's staff testing the new unit prior to placing it in service.

Introductions & transitions

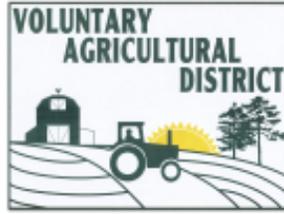
Welcome to those individuals who joined Scotland County departments since January 16, 2008: **Adam Liles**, Health; **Nicole Robinson**, Health; and **Leroy Graham**, part-time with Transportation. **Tim Martin**, Administration, was appointed Deputy Clerk in addition to his duties as a Finance Technician.

Post Scripts

Celebrating anniversaries of employment at EMS are **Morrison Locky**, eight years; **Michael McQueen**, seven years; and **Brad Lawson**, one year. ✂ We wish **Gracie Rettig**, Transportation, a speedy recovery. ✂ EMS welcomed back **Sandy Locky**, who had been recovering from surgery. ✂ Best wishes to **Dee McNeill**, Health, on her retirement after 29 years of service to the County.

Commissioners approve ordinance for voluntary agricultural districts

continued from page 1



Signs similar to this will be posted in voluntary agricultural districts

A. Scotland County became number 60 in the State of North Carolina with approval of this ordinance. Robeson and Richmond counties are getting ready to start theirs.

Q. Now that the ordinance has been approved, how will it be publicized?

A. We plan to publicize this through the radio and with newspaper articles. We'll also distribute brochures and fliers.

Q. Is there a fee to participate in a Voluntary Agricultural District?

A. It's one-time fee of \$54 for the sign and the pole and \$14 for the Register of Deeds to record it on the deed. When real estate agents look at the deed, they will know when they are selling a piece of property that it is in an agricultural district zone.

Q. What does the word 'voluntary' mean for a farmer?

A. If a farmer decides five years down the road after they've enrolled in it that they want to sell their property, they can withdraw from the program and the sign will be taken down. This is voluntary because farmers will not have to participate if they choose not to.

Recommendations help improve air quality in your work space

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other aerosols within the workplace. These products emit chemicals and fine particles in the air that may cause irritation or trigger asthma attacks.

Report all leaks, not only to the roof but wherever, immediately.

Report any flooded carpet or carpet that has been soiled repeatedly.

The IH reported that some employees had tape over air supply vents. **Air supply vents should not be blocked.** Blocking air supply vents may cause system imbalances in other locations.

If you would like further information, copies of the report have been given to your department's safety officer. You may also contact the Risk Manager with any further questions or concerns at 277-2024.

Decorate your office with a plant! Certain plants, including philodendron, spider plants, golden pothos, peace lilies, bamboo palms, mums and English ivy remove dangerous toxins from the air, according to research conducted by NASA and other institutions. If you do have a reaction to air pollutants, crack a window, or ask a supervisor if you can take a break and go outside for a few minutes.

Individuals vary in their sensitivity and vulnerability to poor indoor environments. What causes one person have a reaction, may not bother others. So be considerate of others.

Health Tip

Here's a way to keep up with your favorite TV show and get healthy at the same time: Sit on an exercise ball while you watch the tube. Research shows that lounging for long periods of time may actually switch off back muscles, setting people up for low-back pain down the road. But sitting on an exercise ball engages those muscles. **Source: RealAge.com**