



ACCESS Ada County

E-Newsletter

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Budgeting for Outcomes

Creating a budget is like making sausage – a lot goes into the messy process, but in the end, it’s worth the work. Since Ada County switched its

method of doling out the dollars, the Board of Ada County Commissioners and county officials want the public to become more involved to set priorities—or outcomes—for county spending.

Instead of using the previous year’s budget as a jumping off point to allocate funding to all offices, departments, and services, Ada County has adopted the “Budgeting for Outcomes” model developed by the Government Finance Officers Association. The new model relies on public input to help officials prioritize county spending. Budget experts say the model empowers citizens to participate in a budgeting process to help ensure the delivery of effective and efficient government programs.

To get meaningful public input during the development of the fiscal year 2009 budget, the Board of County Commissioners has developed an online public survey that asks county residents to prioritize funding levels for county services.

Ada County residents are invited to participate in the first of many public involvement processes by visiting Ada County’s Web site and clicking on the “[Budget Priorities Calculator](#)” link. Once there, citizens can prioritize their level of funding outcomes for the services Ada County provides. From this, the Board of Commissioners will glean a sense of citizens’ priorities that they’ll use when developing and approving the budget.

“This innovative budget model ensures we get public opinion on the future of Ada County,” said Commission Chairman Fred Tilman. “We want to make sure our budgets follow priorities of the citizens our government serves, and the Budgeting

for Outcomes model helps us do just that.”

Tilman said this public-involvement campaign also allows the county to educate residents about services Ada County is required by state law to provide. Programs like courts, elections, law enforcement, solid waste management, and many others are statutorily required services.

County leaders are excited about the new budgeting process, because it plays an important role in deciding the county’s future funding priorities while ensuring government services stay within their means, said Ada County Commissioner Rick Yzaguirre. “The input we receive from this survey, and from public testimony given at our budget hearings, will help us better manage county resources. I am confident this new process will help us develop a new county budget that accurately reflects the values of Ada County residents.”

Ada County Commissioner Paul Woods said, “In the end, the Budgeting for Outcomes approach will help Ada County residents get the services they want and need at a price they are willing to pay. We have not lost sight that this is the people’s budget, which is why we desperately need citizens to get involved in this process.”

The Budget Priorities Calculator will be available on the county’s web site through most of May, but citizens can access the results of the research tool throughout the budgeting process. Residents are invited to check the web site often for additional budget information and the schedule of important public hearing dates. To learn more about Ada County’s budget, [click here](#).

Ada County’s Budget Priorities:

- Provide an Effective and Efficient Judicial System
- Provide Excellent Public Services
- Provide Public Safety and Health Services
- Provide for Growth and Resource Management
- Ensure Government Efficiency and Financial Stability
- Ensure Regional Collaboration and Cooperation
- Support a Strong Economy

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Fred Tilman
Chair, District 3

287-7000



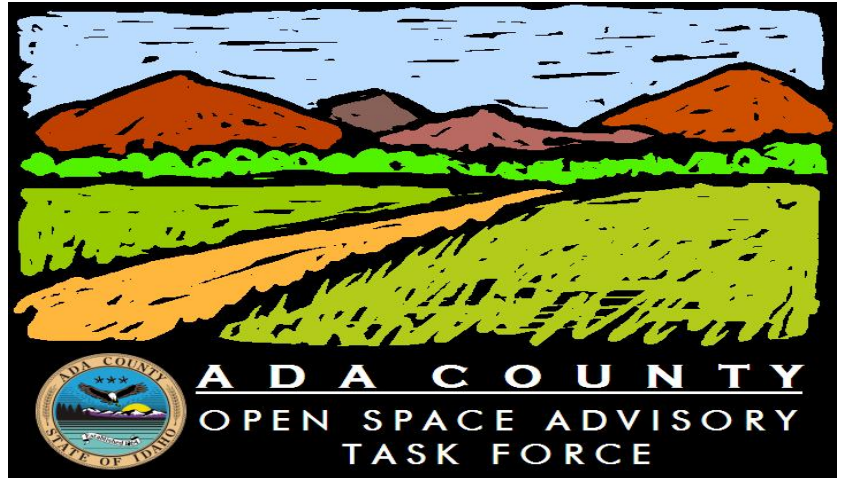
Rick Yzaguirre
District 2

bocc1@adaweb.net



Paul Woods
District 1

Preserving Open Spaces



After more than a year of carefully inventorying Ada County's natural open spaces, the Ada County Open Space Advisory Task Force has developed a list of key Ada County areas they say should be preserved as open space and made a slate of recommendations on how Ada County could feasibly secure land within those areas in the future.

The Open Space Task Force presented their findings to the Board of County Commissioners on Earth Day – an appropriate day to celebrate their achievements. The 21-member group, appointed by the Board of Commissioners, was comprised of representatives from local cities, neighborhood groups, business interests, developers, and environmental agencies. The task force met regularly over the past year to identify and develop mechanisms for preserving public open spaces in Ada County.

The Board of Ada County Commissioners formed the advisory task force in March 2007, to find ways to mitigate impacts of rapid growth in Ada County. The task force is solely advisory in nature and the findings released today are a continuation of the public process launched as part of the county's Comprehensive Plan update.

In developing its findings, the task force combined past public input and

community development plans with mapping and research.

The group targeted conservation in the areas of: the foothills, the Boise River system, land around the Hubbard Recreation Area, and a stretch of land in south Ada County. The report also outlines the need for an inter-connected system of parks, trails, open spaces and recreation areas throughout Ada County.

The maps and findings of the Open Space Advisory Task Force are a work in progress that will help guide us through the process of securing and preserving open spaces within Ada County. We understand how open space conservation plays an important role in our quality of life. I'm pleased to see the task force took their job seriously, and as a result of their hard work, we now have good information that will help us balance preservation with growth for generations to come. ~Ada County Commission Chairman Fred Tilman.

The Open Space Advisory Task Force was also charged with finding ways to secure property within the designated preservation areas. The group suggested establishing an advisory committee to help Ada County and its cities create consistent preservation

policies that remain unique to the identified five conservation areas. The task force also outlined several potential mechanisms for safeguarding these identified open spaces – like requiring developers to preserve trails and open spaces, using federal programs to acquire public lands, and entering into cooperative management agreements with local jurisdictions to jointly fund and manage open space areas. The group also suggested using federal land dollars to develop a special fund the county could use to buy development rights to property within the designated conservation areas. Another idea suggested by the task force is to use funds generated through the Tax Deed process to secure preservation areas.

The Board of County Commissioners will thoroughly review the task force's recommendations and explore ways to begin implementing those suggestions that are most feasible to Ada County taxpayers.

To read the entire Open Space Advisory Task Force report, [click here](#).



Robert McQuade
287-7200



PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS 101

Understanding the property tax system is for some as foreign as, say, calculus. The science is used regu-

larly in the real world, but the concept is hard to understand. It's an involved process that doesn't get a lot of attention until the Assessor mails out assessment notices, or when the Treasurer mails out the property tax bills.

Many hands go into property taxes. Ada County is just one of about 46 tax districts that need your property tax dollars to fund their budgets. In a nutshell, these taxing districts' budgets determine your property taxes.

A taxing district is anything from a school district or Ada County Highway District to the city or county itself. Where you live determines which districts can tax your property (if you live in Meridian, the City of Boise can't charge you property taxes to fund its budget.)

These taxing districts are legally bound to keep their budgets within a certain limit—each is capped at a 3 percent annual increase. Districts may also collect revenue from all new growth that wasn't taxed last year. If a new home was built next door to you in February of 2008, that house wasn't on the property roll for 2007, but it still will be assessed and charged property taxes using the 2007 levy rate. That's called "New Growth."

So what is the levy rate and why is it important? When the budgets are set and approved, Ada County and the Idaho State Tax Commission add up all the districts' budget requests and divide a taxing district's budget by the county's entire assessed property value. That sets the levy rate. Last year, Ada County's portion of your property taxes was your assessed value multiplied by the levy rate (0.0022). Add up all the levy rates for the districts that tax your property and voila, you've calculated your tax bill!

There are basically two ways of determining property tax dollars. Explained above is the "Budget System," mean-

ing BUDGETS are in charge. There's also the "Levy Rate-Driven System," which most people think is used to determine their taxes.

Under the "Rate-Driven System," if values increase, taxes increase and vice versa. But under a "Budget System," regardless of values, the levies will be set to attain the dollar amount needed to fund a taxing district's budget. Most commonly, if assessed values remain flat, your taxes could still go up, depending on whether the taxing districts take their allowed 3 percent increase. Conversely, if values are up, and the taxing districts' budgets stay flat, your taxes could decrease.

Ada County Assessor Robert McQuade likes the budget-driven property tax system because he says a boom market doesn't mean a windfall to taxing authorities.

"When we have rapidly rising values like we've seen in the last couple years, we know taxing authorities are still spending responsibly because their levies are capped under a budget-driven property tax system."

In a levy-driven system, McQuade said taxing districts would receive "unearned budget increases because of the increase in property values. In a budget-system, taxes are a function of budgets...leaving the budget amount, and subsequently the tax amount, up to policy makers bound to operating with just a small annual increase."

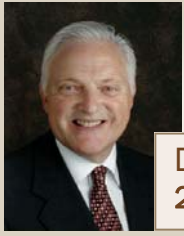
[Click here](#) to see how property taxes differ depending on where you live!

Did you know that your property assessment notices (mailed to you at the end of May) show the value of your house as of January 1, 2008—these notices reflect the market value of LAST YEAR'S sales.

Important Dates To Remember

- **May 1** is when the Ada County Assessor must notify Circuit Breaker applicants when a claim is denied or changed.
- The Assessor mails property assessment notices by Memorial Day, **May 26**.
- **June 20** is the LAST DAY taxpayers can apply for a hardship exemption for property taxes.
- **June 23** is the last day taxpayers can appeal assessed value for any property on the roll. The Board of Equalization convenes to hear appeals and decide exemptions on property.





Dave Navarro
287-6840



Ada County's new Optical Scan Ballot voting system means many new changes

Ada County's optical scan voting system is in the media spotlight this month since its debut is the May 27th Primary Election. The county needed to update antiquated technology and was able to purchase the new elections equipment with substantial help from the federal Help America Vote Act. But actually acquiring the equipment was the first of many dollar-dominoes that fell with the switch.

To start with, the county opted to retire the old aluminum voting booths. Voters would insert their punch card ballot into the tabletop portion of these voting booths, flip open the voting guide, and use a stylus to punch a hole through the ballot to cast their vote. But with the new optical scan ballots, voters use a black pen to fully darken a circle next to the initiative or candidate they're voting for. (Remember to "Make Your Mark Dark!")

Staff decided that light-weight, foldable cardboard voting booths would satisfy their needs while being easier for election workers to haul around to the county's 141 precincts. JoMeta Spencer, Ada County's elections supervisor, said the county found the cheapest distributor would have charged a



New Booths

whopping \$26.50 for just one booth. Making wise use of taxpayer dollars, the elections department continued shopping and asked Boise Cascade what they might charge for thousands of the needed booths. The local paper and wood products company returned a price of just \$2.95 per unit. By shopping locally, Ada County was able to get 2,200 of these new voting booths for pennies on the dollar. Spencer said these booths will experience wear and tear, since they are made of cardboard, but expects the original stock to last about four years.

"Considering the longevity we can expect from these new voting

booths, it's just wise business for us to buy from Boise Cascade, especially with the cost savings," she said.

The voting booths weren't the only equipment needing updating. The optical scan paper ballots are much bigger than the antiquated punch-card ballots, so the ballot box needed upgrading, too.

Again staff scoured distributors that could outfit the department



New Ballot Boxes

with proper equipment, and again they found cheaper prices from a local company. Looking at national distributors, Ada County elections staff found the cheapest price soaring at \$100 per box. But Boise-based Western Plastics promised specially designed boxes at just \$18.75. Spencer said a former Ada County elections worker, who is now attending law school, helped the plastics company develop the specially made boxes.

"This equipment is durable and a good buy for the county," Spencer said. "These boxes will certainly last a long time. I'll probably be long gone before the county needs to replace these boxes."

The results are in...(After May 27th)

Check www.adaweb.net to see the results of all Ada County elections. For statewide elections results, either visit the Idaho Association of Counties' elections result site, or stop by the Idaho Secretary of State's [web page](#).



Greg Bower
287-7700



FACES Fundraiser - raising dough

The Ada County Prosecutor's office raised approximately \$3,000 with a bake sale in March that launched

major fundraising effort for an emergency assistance fund established for victims of domestic violence.

The Ada County Prosecuting Attorney's office and its Victims Witness Unit held the bake sale all day at the Ada County Courthouse. Organizers would like to thank all Ada County employees and Courthouse visitors who made the fundraiser for the Domestic Violence Victim's Emergency Fund such a huge success!

The Ada County Prosecuting Attorney's Office would especially like to

thank Mr. Dwayne-Neal Horkami, of the Chocolate Bluebird Bakery in Nampa, who donated more than 100 loaves of fresh bread for the event. Coordinators would also like to thank the many individuals who made large donations to the fund. The



Domestic Violence Victim's Emergency Fund helps victims served by the Ada County FACES program. FACES, or the Family Advocacy Center and Education Services program, is an all-inclusive center to provide legal, social, and health services to victims of domestic violence and their families. [Click here](#) to learn more about FACES.

Ada County Prosecutor: Leading the Charge for Victims Rights

Ada County's role in providing crime victims assistance has been evolving since the victims' rights movement gained statewide attention in 1984. Since the beginning, Ada County Prosecuting Attorney Greg Bower has been integral in creating renowned services for both Idaho and Ada County. In 1984, Bower sat on the state's first Ad Hoc Committee on Victims Rights, which paved the way to the victims rights statute—a constitutional amendment ensuring victims have clear, involved rights in the criminal justice process.

The Victims Rights amendment—passed in 1994—grants victims 10 specific rights as they move through the criminal justice system including: a timely disposition, notification of any hearings, plea agreements, and release of the defendant and access to any of those hearings he or she wished to witness. But nearly a decade earlier, Bower created a department in his office that would do just that. In 1985 he started the first Victim-Witness Unit in Idaho to make sure a victim could get as much access to court proceedings involving his or her offender as possible. Ada County hired its first victim witness coordinator in 1986, and the staff has been growing since. These coordinators ensure a victim's constitutional rights are met, meaning they ensure victims are able to chose their level of involvement with the

criminal justice system and provide proper access to counselors and social service agencies. Staff also educates and accompanies a victim through court proceedings from first appearance through the sentencing hearings.

"It's almost like being a tour guide," said Ada County Victims Witness Administrator Claudia Fugate. "We're taking these victims through the entire criminal justice system. Our role encompasses a lot of facets. We don't tell victims what to do, but we educate these vulnerable individuals on what resources are available to them and step them through the stages of their case."

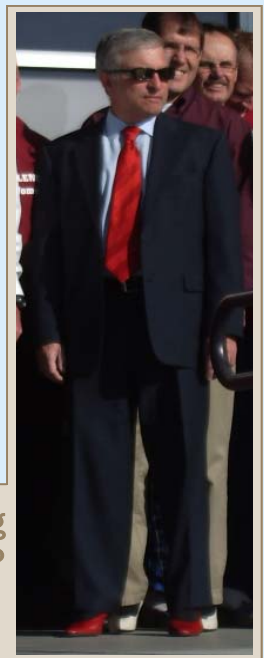
But the victims-Witness Unit is not all Bower has done to secure victims rights in Ada County. He created several unique programs for victims of domestic violence including a special unit in the Prosecutors office and the first Domestic Violence Task Force, which helped to make law enforcement protocols and reports standardized for efficiency.

Another program unique to Ada County is the Domestic Violence Case Orientation and Resource Program. Commonly called DV CORP, the program offers do-

mestic violence victims the opportunity to obtain community resource information the next working day after an offender has been arrested for domestic violence. Victims can discuss the case with a prosecutor and victim witness coordinator as soon as the next business day after an arrest has been made.

"This program is exclusive to Ada County's Prosecuting Attorney's Office," Fugate said. "It started as a pilot program in the county to let professionals meet as early with the victims as possible."

Additionally the prosecutor's Sexual Assault Unit makes sure elite prosecutors, who specialize in dealing with children and child victims, handle these cases from start to finish.



Why is Ada Co. Prosecutor Greg Bower in high-heeled shoes? Find out by [clicking here!](#)



Gary Raney
577-3000



Greener Pastures



After 34 years of service to the citizens of Ada County, Detective Sergeant Ken Smith has retired from the Ada County Sheriff's Office. Sgt. Smith - a true legend - had been with the ACSO longer than any other current employee.

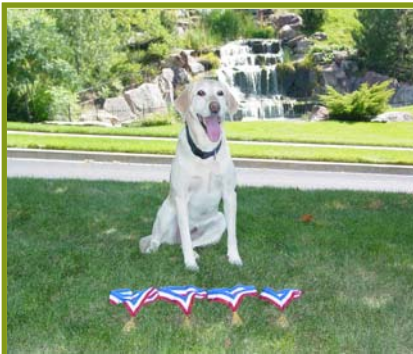
There is a lot that has happened in the three decades since Sgt. Smith began his career with the ACSO. When Ken started, the Patrol Training Program went only as far as to ask a new hire if he could "drive fast" and "shoot straight". A "yes" to both questions earned the new deputy car keys, a badge, a revolver and handcuffs. Usual calls for service came about because of a dog bite, loose cows or water right disputes, but there was an occasional homicide.

The jail - including juvenile detention - was housed in the top three floors of the old courthouse downtown. When Ken went to work as a detention deputy he **was** the night shift team. He came on at 6:00pm, got off at 6:00am and worked alone. He also backed-up dispatch when they needed relief.

Ken spent 23 years of his career as a detective investigating serious crimes from child abuse and rape to murder. Ken was the lead detective in more than 20 homicide case and helped bring justice to countless victims. He was also one of the first detectives in the state to recognize the need for Internet crime investigations and begin finding and arresting online sexual predators.

Not only did he have an exceptional career as a detective himself, he also mentored the dozens of detectives who worked with him and for him through the years - sharing his ability to investigate violent crimes and interview suspects.

In retirement, Ken looks forward to being a grandfather, a fisherman and like all great retirees from the Sheriff's Office, a returning part-time detective working Internet crimes.



Another popular Ada County Sheriff's Office employees has retired after nearly a decade of service. "Sadie", a yellow lab who has earned top honors as a drug detection dog, has decided to spend her days relaxing on the porch instead of in a patrol car.

Ada County's K-9 Unit Grows



Three drug detection dogs new dogs have joined the ASCO K-9 team. "Annie," "Shorty," and "Nina" are hitting the streets, joining two other drug detection dogs and an explosives detection dog.

The ACSO K-9 teams know no boundaries. The teams respond wherever needed, but mainly the Sheriff's K-9 units sniff in and around homes, businesses, and vehicles for several agencies including city, federal, state and counties. The K-9 unit also works closely with the Ada Metro Narcotics Task Force, and has been called into schools to search

both private and public Ada County schools.

Ada County's K-9 teams have won awards in competitions around the Northwest including top-prize finishes in drug detection, bomb detection, and team shooting contests in the Idaho Police Canine Association's annual competition.



What exactly is the Tax Deed Process?



When a person's property taxes become three years delinquent, Idaho Law requires the county to issue a Tax Deed taking ownership of the property, then if the taxes remain unpaid, sell the property at a public auction to recover unpaid taxes and other accrued charges.

Before the Tax Deed is issued, the county must notify the owner and anyone holding a recorded security interest in the property. The Treasurer's Office obtains a Title Company Litigation Guarantee for each parcel with three years unpaid taxes, publishes a list of pending tax deed properties in the local paper and mails the Notice of Pending Issue of Tax Deed to all identified parties in interest. It's a costly process and so, at the time the formal Tax Deed notification process begins, a \$500 cost recovery fee is added to each parcel with a third-year tax delinquency. This year, the Notice of Pending Issue of Tax Deed will be sent to all property owners with delinquent 2005 taxes on September 5, 2008. The \$500 fee will be added to the amount due at that time.

It's important to note, property owners have alternatives to losing a property for non-payment of taxes. The worst thing a property owner can do is give up. If you cannot pay your property taxes, call the Treasurer's Office at 287-6800. Options include:

- Incremental payments. The Treas-

urer's Office will accept partial payments on back property taxes. Interest will accrue at 1 percent per month on any delinquent amount, but so long as the taxes do not become more than three years delinquent, you are safe from Tax Deed. The key is to start early and stay ahead of the curve.

- If the property is your primary residence, check to make sure you have applied for the Homeowner's exemption. Click here for more information.

- Apply for the "Circuit Breaker" program for property tax relief. Qualifying property owners who qualify for the Circuit Breaker program can reduce their annual property tax bill by as much as \$1,320. The State of Idaho reimburses Ada County for the portion of property tax not collected from the homeowner. This year's application deadline has passed, but [click here](#) to see information for next year.

- The Property Tax Deferral program provides a safety net to assist property owners who qualify for the Circuit Breaker but are unable to pay the portion of taxes not covered under the Circuit Breaker benefit. **The 2008 Legislature increased the income limit for qualification to \$40,000.** If you meet all but the income requirement for the Circuit Breaker, you may qualify for the deferral. Click here to read more information.

- In cases of extreme financial hardship, property owners may appeal to the Board of Ada County Commissioners for a Hardship Tax Cancellation. You must complete an



Cecil Ingram
287-6800



application detailing the financial hardship and submit it to Ada County Indigent Services. Upon receipt of the completed application and financial information, the Board will review the application and may grant a full or partial tax cancellation. It takes time to complete the application and hearing process.

It is important that this application be submitted 60-90 days prior to the date of the Tax Deed Hearing.

Did You Know in recent years, tax deeds have been issued on several homes, but ALL have been redeemed prior to sale. No homes have been sold at county tax deed auction in the last 15 years!

Important Dates To Remember

- On **May 10**, the Treasurer's Office sends out reminder notices for property owners who must pay the second half of property taxes
- The annual online auction of Ada County Tax deed properties will take place **May 17-20**. Two small parcels will be sold in an attempt to recover 2004-2008 Property Taxes
- On **June 20**, the second-half property taxes are due. Property owners who miss this deadline will be charged a 2percent late fee and interest from Jan. 1. Please don't miss this deadline!
- **June 30** marks the first day of the 2005 Tax Deed Process. Property owners with unpaid 2005 will receive a letter warning of "Pending Issue." It's the first real step in the tax deed process.

FIGHT THE BITE!

Join the "Swat Team"
Against West Nile Virus

"Hope for the best, prepare for the worst."

That's the motto for Ada County's Weed, Pest, and Mosquito Department this (and every) mosquito season.

Weed & Pest's Field Operations Director Jack Bennett said the department takes four major factors into consideration when trying to predict mosquito numbers for any given year:

Ada County's 5 Top ob-NOXIOUS WEEDS



Canada Thistle isn't Ada County's most common noxious weed, but it sure is OBNOXIOUS! The "Creeping Perennial" uses its extensive root system to reproduce and spread to new areas. Its roots have been found as deep as **27 feet** below the surface!

Bicyclists and bare feet hate this obNOXIOUS weed with a passion. Puncturevine, reproduces solely by seed—those painful, annoying spiny "goat heads" that stick in your shoes or bicycle tires. Seeds from puncturevine plants can stay dormant for up to 5 years.



This little doosie here—Scotch Thistle— looks innocuous but don't let that fool you! The plants can grow 14 feet tall with leaves a foot wide. Scotch Thistle is a very prolific seed producer. That bulge underneath the flower head holds as many as 100 seeds!

Whitetop, or Hoary Cress, is most obNOXIOUS to grass. The perennial plant is so invasive it can out-compete healthy grasses for essential water and soil nutrients! Whitetop is so persistent in some areas in the Southwest Boise area that there's little else in the fields!



Poison Hemlock is the county's most common obNOXIOUS weed. The plant contains highly toxic alkaloids, and can be accidentally ingested by animals while they're grazing. The weed grows best in poorly drained soils along rivers and ditches.

If you see these obNOXIOUS weeds in your area, call the Ada County Noxious Weed Control Office: 577-4646

- **Temperature:** "So far temperatures are below those of the last two years," he said. "This will delay the mosquito season until temperatures begin to raise."
- **Precipitation:** While "Snowpack in the Boise basin is running very close to what we saw in 2006, we haven't had nearly as much rain this spring as we received that year. This should lessen runoff volume and duration compared to 2006 – resulting in fewer mosquito-breeding sites to contend with this year.
- **Bird Populations:** "We are seeing more robins...crows and magpies in Ada County which might effect the transmission of WNV from birds to mosquitoes," but Bennett said it's not a given. Bird populations can serve as possible pools for the WNV, but not necessarily. It's just one of the many tools experts use to track potential indications of the virus' presence.
- **Breeding Sites:** "Our abatement programs – or known breeding sites checked and treated on a routine basis – have increased to approximately 2520. We have one additional larvicer in the field this year to check and treat these additional sites, thus abating more mosquitoes before they hatch into adults. So we'll have fewer mosquitoes to contend with in our district. We also have added an additional fogger to our fleet and upgraded our technology to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our adulticiding abatement program. These increases in our technology, equipment, and manpower should help us take care of any problems that might arise this season.

So the expert opinion on the possible 2008 West Nile Virus Season? "Based on research of what has happened in other western states over the past years, we think there will be an increase of the number of WNV cases this season, but it should be FAR fewer than what we experienced in 2006."

To watch Ada County's new public service announcement about the very real dangers of WNV, [Click Here!](#)

Did You Know That in 2007 the Idaho Legislature added a whopping 21 new weeds to Idaho's noxious weeds list? The total of non-native, invasive plants almost doubled with that addition. Now 57 species of weeds are designated noxious by state law. These noxious weeds cost the state and Ada County millions of dollars by choking waterways, degrading habitat, destroying native plants, creating fire hazards and poisoning or injuring livestock and humans.

LEARNING THE CODE

Forty-three code enforcement officials from across the Gem State became specially certified in March after the first-ever statewide training thanks to the efforts of Ada County Development Services, the City of Meridian, and the Idaho State Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Academy.

Organizers designed the weeklong, 40-hour course for both basic and advanced code enforcement officials, police officers, and city planners involved in enforcing city or county codes. Training covered topics including legal issues, defensive driving and defense tactics, and procedural subjects like dealing with abandoned or stolen vehicles, gangs, or drug labs.

Tammy Emmons, a code enforcer with Ada County's Development Services, helped to organize the event and said feedback was all very positive. "This was the first collaborative effort of its kind in Idaho. There's a lack of structured training in Idaho, so we pushed for this academy, and it was a phenomenal event. Everyone attending was upbeat and focused, and after the event folks clamored for more training."

Just yet, Emmons said there are no specific plans for future training in

the works, but it's something everyone involved wants to see again. She said without the help of POST officials and the partnership with the City of Meridian, this and future events couldn't be possible. The Idaho State POST Academy donated its classroom space and offered dormitory lodging for out-of-towners at just \$10 a night. The 15 instructors and guest lecturers, ranging from city and county officials to state experts, also donated their time.



The top picture is a glimpse into the self-defense training. Next up shows the Code Officers who participated in all four days of the first-ever Code Enforcement Officers Training in Boise this April.

"I was shocked to learn of the lack of officer safety training that the officers had when we started," said Abram Antonucci, a code enforcement officer with the Meridian Police Department. He helped Emmons organize the event and said the training was definitely needed for a group of people whose responsibilities are so mixed since their duties vary by agency and they could deal with any sort of situation in the field. "Most officers wear many hats including animal control, planning, parks and recreation, noxious weed control, police officers, parking officers..." Antonucci said. "And I'm optimistic for what the future holds for our profession in Idaho. We are at the grassroots of code enforcement in Idaho. Where and what we want to do with our profession is in our own hands."

Profile

Ada County Code Enforcement Officer Tammy Emmons has been with Ada County 8 years this June. She says the most unique aspect of her job is "dealing with, literally, hundreds of people and realizing there are no good guys versus bad guys. Everyone is a good guy, there are some that just don't know what the codes are and need someone to explain that part to them."

As a code enforcement officer, Emmons comes in at 8 a.m., works until about 11, and is in the field every day until 5 p.m. enforcing Ada County code in unincorporated areas of the county.



"The most challenging aspect to this work is telling people who have worked hard for their house and land that there are some things they just can't do with their property without permits or permission. It goes back to the mindset of 'my home is my castle,' and who am I to dictate to them how to rule their realm?"

What's Next...

Tammy Emmons, an Ada County Code Enforcement Official, compared the fledgling group to the likes of the Idaho Planners Association—a powerhouse group that remains heavily involved in regional and state government. Emmons said forming an association will help to further training and provide an arena for networking and professional development within the code enforcement profession.



CAPITOL RACING
LES BOIS PARK

THEY'RE OFF AND RUNNING

Horse Racing is off and running at Les Bois park at the Expo Idaho fairgrounds!

This year marks the first time the Capitol Racing season will run through the Western Idaho State Fair. Capitol Racing officials say that in previous years they had to close the race track to make room for concerts and other shows. "It's going to be fun to meld racing and the fair," said Alan Horowitz, general manager for Capitol Racing.

"Each year, Capitol Racing does an incredible job of building upon their previous season's successes—and that of course means nothing but quality racing for the citizens of the Treasure Valley," said Ada County Board of Commissioners Chairman Fred Tilman.

Last year Capitol Racing saw a 25 percent increase in attendance with nearly 85,000 fans filtering into the track in 2007. In the off-season, Capitol Racing and Ada County Recreation and Event Services have been busy making improvements to the facility like improved air conditioning in the Turf Club, more TV monitors and renovations to the kitchen.

ON YOUR BIKES...GET SET...GO!

Just in time for the summer fun, the Idaho Velodrome and Cycling park in Eagle is open!

The park, built on land provided by Ada County, features a variety of bike trails and tracks, slalom and mountain cross courses, jump lines and pump tracks. Developers said they designed the tracks so all levels of riders could enjoy the park. The trails have signs showing what's coming up so you won't face unexpected surprises.

The park is located at the Eagle-Ada Sports Complex on Horseshoe Bend road. It's still under some construction, so riders should be kind and avoid areas where people are working.

Also, remember helmets are required at all times at the park.

Performers Set to Sizzle the Stage at the Western Idaho Fair!

Hang on to your hats because this year's music lineup for the Western Idaho Fair will blow you away! Gary Allan, Chicago, and Corbin Bleu are promised to thrill and entertain old and young alike.

Throughout the last decade, Country Music Star **Gary Allan** made three platinum albums and ten Top Ten hits—three of which reigned the *Billboard* Hot Country Songs charts.

Second up, **Chicago**, needs no introduction. Few of us are unfamiliar with the best-selling hot-rock band of the 80's. At the show, you'll hear traditional and new hits with the powerhouse musical finale for which Chicago is famous.

Third on the Docket, **Corbin Bleu**, is the Disney talent from "High School Musical" and the Discovery Kids Channel's "Flight 29 Down." If you know a young girl, you'll probably be familiar with the curly-haired teen heartthrob.



Mark your calendars!

This year's fair runs from August 15-24!

The Best Way to Beat the Heat

Each year over 100,000 people find a cool way to beat the summer heat by leisurely floating down the scenic Boise River. It's almost that time again. Depending on river flow, Ada County Recreation officials will open the Barber Park floaters either in June or July. Last year the float season opened June 14, but snowpack levels and subsequent river flow are significantly higher this year. Keep your eyes posted to [this web site](#) for information on the river.

Ada County has partnered with Epley's Whitewater Adventures for tube and boat rentals at Barber Park. They will keep the rental office open an hour longer this year, closing at 6 p.m. They may also be offering guided trips on the Boise River if there is interest.

Ada County's Green Page

—CONSERVING ENERGY—

The Ada County Courthouse and Administration building has once again received the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's prestigious ENERGY STAR award. It's the fourth consecutive ENERGY STAR Ada County's Courthouse has garnered, and each year Ada County's efficiency improves.

The EPA ranks a commercial building's energy conservation practices on a scale from 1-100. Buildings scoring higher than 75 points receive the ENERGY STAR award. In 2004, when Ada County's Courthouse first received the recognition, the building scored 76 points. This year, Ada County's Courthouse was awarded 84 points.

Buildings that earn the ENERGY STAR award prevent greenhouse gas emissions by meeting strict energy efficiency guidelines set by the EPA and the U.S. Department of Energy, and on average, buildings awarded the ENERGY STAR use about 35 percent less energy, while still providing quality service and comfort to occupants and visitors.

The Ada County Courthouse earned the ENERGY STAR largely as the result of excellent design and high quality operations and maintenance practices, and due to specifics including:

- A geothermal heating system
- Insulated ductwork and waterlines
- Low-E (emissivity) glass and window tinting
- Energy efficient lighting

More than 3,200 buildings have earned the ENERGY STAR since the government-backed program began in 1999. To learn more about ENERGY STAR visit www.energystar.gov

HITCH A RIDE

Finding a carpool into work each day is now a little easier—just look for a ride online!

About 20 people in the Boise area are registered with erideshare.com—a new carpooling web site that connects people headed to the same area with one another to reduce pollution and traffic congestion caused by solo travelers on their way to or from work. There's even a couple that stop by at or near the courthouse!

Log onto erideshare.com and be sure you visit the "safety" section for good tips to consider before signing up to carpool with strangers. Your information is kept private.

Consider this...burning a gallon of gas creates 18 pounds of carbon dioxide. And two people in one car instead of one person in two cars cuts that greenhouse gas emissions in half! Plus just think of how much you'll save with skyrocketing gas prices!



Another LEED Building

Ada County has received its fourth LEED® Certification (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) and it's second LEED "Silver" award for its new Weed, Pest, and Mosquito Abatement facility in Meridian.

Ada County owns three of Idaho's six LEED certified commercial buildings and four of the seven LEED projects. In 2005, the Ada County Courthouse became Idaho's first LEED certified building. The county has since earned LEED certification for its Development Services Department office remodel and for the construction of its new Barber Park headquarters facility. Ada County is seeking LEED certification for the new Paramedics station located at the county's Meridian Campus Complex—just next door to the new Weed, Pest, and Mosquito Abatement office.

LEED certification is a nationally recognized rating system used to identify building projects that are more energy efficient, environmentally friendly, and healthier for occupants. LEED-specific features for the new Weed, Pest, and Mosquito Abatement facility include:

- Energy-efficient lighting and HVAC systems
- Daylight views, reducing need for indoor lighting
- Built with low-emitting construction materials
- A detailed storm water management and treatment system

"We put our commitment to sustainable building practices in writing when we passed a 2003 resolution mandating new construction projects over 10,000 square feet be built to LEED standards, regardless of if we pursue certification for the project," said Commission Chairman Fred Tilman. "We hope to be an example for others in the area, proving we can build functional, highly productive, and cost-effective facilities with minimal impact to the environment."



A MILE IN HER SHOES

About 50 men ranging from county elected officials to volunteers got together on a brisk April morning to join a nationwide campaign to raise attention to the growing problem of domestic violence and sexual abuse. The group, *Men today, Men Tomorrow*, launched the march in downtown Boise to raise awareness to the fact that one in every five Idaho women are victims of violence.



“Sexual and Domestic violence is often that nasty little secret no one ever wants to talk about,” said Ada County Commissioner Rick Yzaguirre. “It’s time we stop trying to pretend the problem doesn’t exist. I encourage everyone to give and do what they can to help put an end to violence in our communities.”



Honoring Emergency Dispatchers

Since 1991 The second full week of April has been dedicated to honor the men and women who serve as public safety telecommunicators. In honor of "National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week," Ada County wishes to recognize the (##) employees who staff Ada County’s dispatch center. It’s a tough job. On average, a dispatcher will handle 34,166 calls a year. That’s 2,850 calls a month or **16.5 calls an hour!**

Ada County takes calls for six area fire districts, the Sheriff’s Office and its contracted cities, the Boise Police Department (including Boise State University and the Airport) the police departments for Meridian and Garden City, Paramedics, and local hospitals’ air ambulances.

The department also works closely with the Idaho State Police, the Federal Bureau of Investigations, Homeland Security, the Bureau of Land Management and surrounding counties to ensure community needs are met.

The Ada County Sheriff’s Office dispatchers also maintain a back-up dispatch center at an off-cite location and a Mobile Communications Vehicle that can be deployed for on-scene communications and as a command post for responding agencies.



Ada County’s Golden Honoree

One of the founders of Ada County’s Guardianship Monitoring Program has been selected as MetLife Foundation’s “Golden Honoree” and will receive the prestigious award during the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging awards program in Washington D.C. in May.

Eighty-two-year-old Nolene Breen is just one of 25 volunteers picked from the national contest to receive an award. According to the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging staff, about 200 award nominations come in a year, and 82-year-old Nolene Breen is one of three nominations to be named a Golden Honoree.

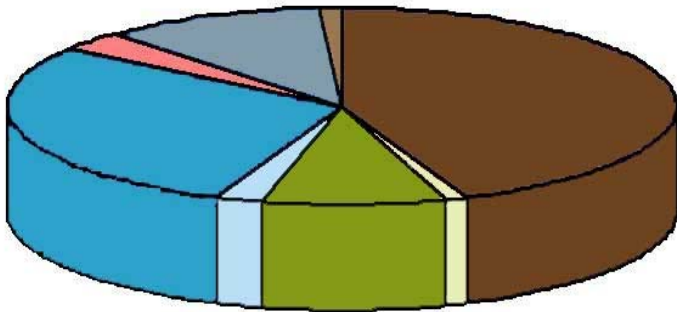
The Ada County Guardianship Monitoring Program oversees court appointed guardians and conservators who care for a ward - someone the courts declare to be incapacitated or minors. The volunteers ensure elderly adults, disabled people, and minor children receive proper care and that they are protected from physical and/or financial abuse.

“Nolene worked hand in hand with the probate court judge in developing the county’s Guardianship Monitoring Program – a program that is responsible for protecting those living under legal appointment,” said Dede Shelton, the program’s administrator. “Nolene’s role is non-traditional as a volunteer, in that she’s assisted in the development and deployment of a valuable program that acts as the eyes and ears of the court and in the end protects the most vulnerable populations of Ada County.”

- The Back Page -

Budgeting...Continued

- Taxes
- Licenses & Permits
- Intra-Governmental
- Miscellaneous
- Charge for Services
- Interest & Rents
- Use of Fund Balance
- Fines



All taxing districts' budgets can be increased by a maximum of 3 percent each year. But Ada County hasn't taken any of the allowed 3 percent increase for the past two years, leaving more than \$5 million uncollected and in taxpayers' pockets.

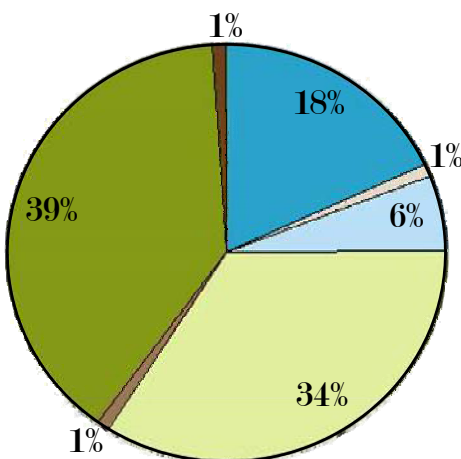
"It's our way of providing property tax relief to Ada County residents," Tilman said. "We've created budgets that can operate well within our means, and this Budgeting for Outcomes model will help us continue holding the lines on property taxes while funding services Ada County residents most want."

As you can see, Property Taxes comprise less than half - 44 percent - of Ada County's total revenues.

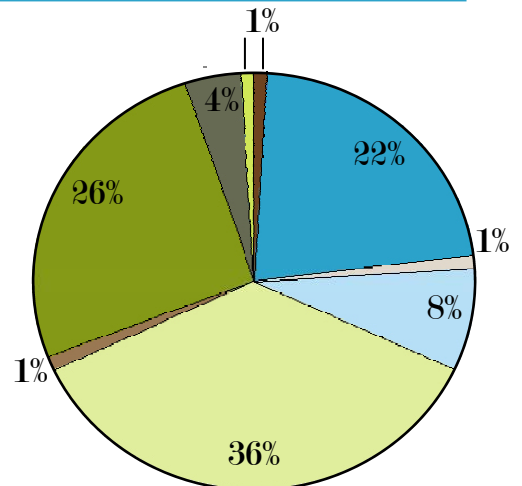
Assessments...Continued

As mentioned before on [Page 3](#), about 46 taxing districts in Ada County (including the county) that use property tax dollars to fund their budgets. A taxing district is anything from a school or cemetery district to a city or the highway district. Where you live determines which districts can tax your property. Below is an example of two similarly priced homes in Ada County. As you will see, they fall into different taxing districts, which means two very different tax bills.

North End Boise
Value: \$189,000
Property Taxes: \$1,290.00
(Has Homeowners Exemption)



Meridian
Value: \$186,000
Property Taxes: \$985.00
(Has Homeowners Exemption)



- Figures are Approximate**
- Mosquito Abatement
 - Ada County
 - Emergency Medical
 - Ada County Highway District
 - School Districts
 - Meridian Cemetery/ Northwest Boise Sewer
 - City of Boise/Meridian City
 - Special to Meridian:
 - Meridian Library
 - Western Ada Recreation