

NEWS from BENTON COUNTY

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Climate adaptation priority for county

In 2015 Benton County Health Services staff completed a long-term Benton County Climate Change Health Adaptation Plan. While the title includes the word 'Plan', the document is more of a comprehensive assessment of the human health and environmental impacts resulting from projected climate change within Benton County and the surrounding region.

Major impacts identified from the assessment include increased chances of:

- Extreme Weather Events (Storm, Heat, Snow/Ice, Flooding, Landslides, High Winds, etc.)
- Drought
- Wildfire/Forest Fires
- Human Health Impacts
- Habitat & Wildlife Impacts
- Governance/Operations

Following this initial planning document, Benton County established a Climate Action Committee late last year. Staff membership ranges multiple departments including Assessment, Information Technology, Records, Natural Areas and Parks, Public Works, Human Resources, and the Sheriff's Office. The committee is co-chaired by Sean McGuire, county Sustainability Coordinator, and Mac Gillespie, policy specialist based in the Healthy

Communities division of the Health Department.

"We're making sure that our effort engages with all populations within Benton County by involving all County departments in the planning process," said Gillespie. "Because we're committed to meeting the health needs of all our communities, we needed to start by gathering additional data."

The first charge for this committee was focused on internal assessment, research and establishing foundational data. For each of the major climate change impacts, the committee worked to identify: threats, triggers and responses; pre-climate change impact mitigation actions; potential budget, economic, social, environmental and human health effects; and, related County resolutions, official policies and administrative policies, codes and ordinances, departmental programs and plans, and, informal processes that guide actions.

The next charge for the committee is to establish a

mechanism to track internal resource use. The committee is working to establish a digital interface that tracks countywide resource use of electricity, fuel, water and natural gas. This

tool is slated to be launched later this year and will provide usage data from 2010 to 2017 in a graphical user interface.

"Our hope is that this tool will provide an easy-to-use method to track and analyze the county's progress towards carbon reduction," said Sean McGuire, county Sustainability Coordinator.

"The committee began with an assessment phase, and this tool will provide the information we need to work towards establishing and achieving countywide carbon reduction goals."

The third Oregon Climate Assessment Report published by the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute in January 2017 shows Oregon continuing to experience more

extreme weather events and confirmed that the health of Oregonians is threatened. In the past two years, Oregon has seen its hottest year on record and its lowest snowpack on record, followed by the heavy snows this past winter. Last year, the state had one

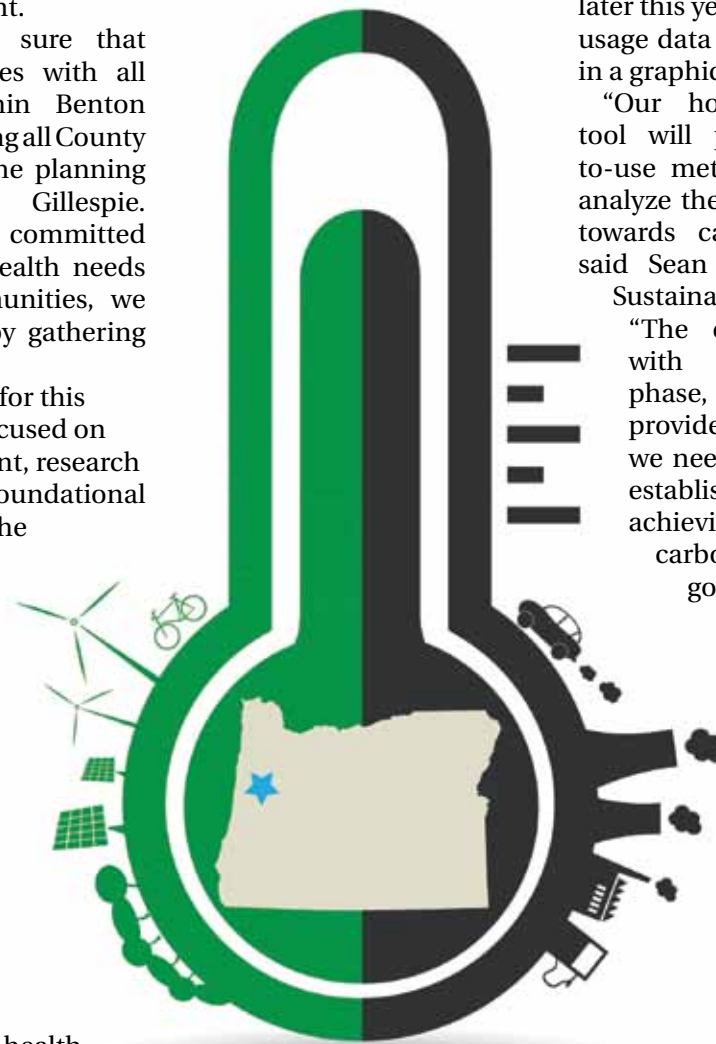
of the most severe fire seasons in modern history and most counties declared drought emergencies.

A recent assessment of Oregon's public health system found that county health departments are not currently equipped to handle these emerging environmental public health risks. The vast majority of local health departments report only partial to minimal ability to identify and prevent environmental health hazards. To help address that gap, Benton County Health Services is part of a collaborative of local and state public health departments working on modernizing the public health system to respond to 21st century threats including climate change.

County staff has begun work to mitigate impacts of extreme precipitation and flooding on vulnerable populations. For instance, storms and floods cause serious emergencies and injuries, but even months and years later people may remain displaced, experience economic hardship, or be exposed to poor indoor air quality due to toxic mold and mildew.

Drought, floods, and other climate conditions pose new risks in the form of water

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Climate adaptation Continued...

contamination, water-borne diseases, and harmful algae blooms. Health officials are concerned about drinking-water security. Around a quarter of Oregonians rely on private wells as their primary source of drinking water.

“We know to take actions to mitigate, extreme precipitation and flooding is likely to have the greatest impact on low-income individuals and families who tend to live in the most vulnerable locations,” said Charlie Fautin, Deputy Director of the Benton County Health Department.

“The greatest immediate health impact is likely to result from contamination of drinkable water, due to sewage overflow, and agricultural runoff. Individual and small community well water systems are often also susceptible to flooding events. Flood waters will easily penetrate and contaminate systems with E. coli, spilled fuel or other toxins, and other contaminants.”

Contaminated water systems could result in widespread disease outbreaks, further overburdening emergency response systems. Further, this contamination may cause water system shutdowns until flooding has decreased enough for proper cleaning and restoration. Service interruptions could last days or weeks, thus decreasing the access to clean water to areas throughout Benton County.

A video produced by the Oregon Public Health Division further discusses how Benton County is responding to climate change. Watch the video at youtu.be/xzxft3LWYkQ.

Just this past February, the Oregon Health Authority released the 2017 Climate and Health Resilience Plan that outlines a set of recommended strategies for the Oregon Public Health Division, local and tribal health jurisdictions and partners across sectors. Community members interested in taking action can learn to be “change agents” in their respective workplaces, neighborhoods and communities. The plan emphasizes the importance of strengthening

relationships and prioritizing strategies that benefit multiple partners or advance multiple goals. Some of these actions may include helping others prepare for more extreme weather events and getting involved in community decisions that affect water quality and security.

Benton County will continue to advance climate adaptation work not only through its Climate Action Committee, but through other departmental plans and initiatives.

“We know that in order to take actions to mitigate impacts from climate change, we need to approach sustainability practices from economic, environmental and social lenses,” said Annabelle Jaramillo, County Commissioner.

“We’re beginning or undergoing many planning efforts, including the Community Health Assessment and the Transportation System Plan. We are working actively to ensure our countywide plans use a systems-level approach that considers climate change and human health impacts. The health of the people that live, work and play in our county, and the natural resources that make Benton County so unique are top priority.”

The 2015 Climate Change Health Adaptation Plan identified health impacts that are most likely to occur due to climate change within Benton County over the next 40 years. Projecting changes 40 years ahead allows the county to predict and monitor trends so leadership can plan accordingly and allocate appropriate resources for the predicted changes.

Learn More

- Climate Change Collaboration in Benton County video
- tinyurl.com/yc7bcrc
- Oregon Health Authority’s Climate and Health Resilience Plan
- tinyurl.com/yc2llle4



Reem Tariq at the National Environmental Health Association annual conference.

County selected as host agency for National Environmental Public Health Internship Program

In early spring 2017, the Benton County learned it was selected by the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA) as a host agency for the National Environmental Public Health Internship Program (NEPHIP). The NEPHIP is an annual internship program for environmental health students. Thanks to funding from Centers for Disease Control Environmental Health Services Branch, the program supports 10-week environmental health student internships nationwide.

The purpose of this internship is to:

- allow students to gain a firsthand perspective on the day-to-day responsibilities of environmental health professionals;
- make invaluable connections with those working in the field; and,
- encourage students to consider careers working in local, state, or tribal

environmental health departments following graduation.

Reem Tariq was awarded the National Environmental Public Health Internship and began with the Benton County Environmental Health division in late June 2017. Coming from Johnson City, Tennessee, Tariq is in the final stages of earning her Masters of Science in Environmental Health at East Tennessee State University.

Tariq earned a degree in Genetics and Cell Biology from Washington State University in 2011.

After spending a few years teaching genetics and microbiology in India and working as a corporate photographer in Houston, Texas, a light bulb went off for her when she read *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson.

Silent Spring was written in 1962 and documents the detrimental effects on the environment because of

indiscriminate pesticide use.

"I had never thought about environmental health before and *Silent Spring* spurred my interest. I began reading more. I was digging into journal articles and became more and more interested. That's when I decided to research graduate programs," said Tariq.

"I emailed East Tennessee State University (ETSU) and asked about the research occurring in the department. I really liked the sound of it, and I decided to make the move."

At ETSU, Tariq found that many local streams and creeks were impaired due to pathogen contamination.

"The pathogen impairment is in part due to high prevalence of cattle farms in regions surrounding creeks and streams. When you have fecal deposits from cattle that can get washed into nearby surface waters, you are bound to have microbial pollution in those waters. The majority of the creeks that I'm studying are impaired, and they're impaired because of pathogen contamination."

Tariq studies the survival and decay of *E. coli* and enterococci within bovine feces and performs comparative analyses of microbial survival in freshwater microcosms. She collects samples and brings them back to the lab for microbial testing. Most of her experimentation is complete and she is in the final stages of her graduate program.

Masters of Public Health programs typically require internship experience, but her program is a Masters of Science so interning was not required. In her last year of her program, she decided that she wanted to see the work of environmental health professionals in practice.

"Few students have participated in this internship program before, so I decided to apply. It's a very competitive program, so I wasn't sure whether or not I was going to be accepted," said Tariq.

Shortly thereafter, the National Environmental Public Health Internship Program (NEPHIP) accepted Tariq and offered to locate her in Benton County, Oregon.



Benton County Environmental Health staff.

(L to R) Reem Tariq, Bill Emminger, Rob Turkisher, Marcy Dailey, Loren Emang, Scott Kruger, Robert Baker.

"I attended Washington State, so I'm familiar with the Pacific Northwest but I had never been to Oregon," said Reem. "I've loved every second of it here."

At Benton County, Reem Tariq has two focus areas, projects and field experience. Her primary project for the past 10 weeks has been researching the efficacy of food manager certification. Her project entails performing a literature review regarding the effectiveness of food manager certification and to determine whether there is a causal relationship between having a certified food manager in charge of a food establishment and the number of health violations that establishment may have received during an inspection.

"Would having a certified food manager on site in a food establishment

result in less health violations? We're hoping that is the case for Oregon. It has proven to be true in other states. For example, in Michigan, you have to have a certified food manager at every establishment."

Tariq will provide a comprehensive report that includes an executive summary, literature review and cohort study.

Additionally, she will produce another report about the potential health impacts of air quality at the Hollingsworth and Vose site located in south Corvallis, and assist in drafting a comprehensive inspection form for the OSU's Greek housing facilities.

The other half of Reem Tariq's time working at the county is spent in the field.

"I cannot stress enough the huge

difference between studying something theoretically as compared to putting it in practice," said Tariq. "My experience interning with the county has not just been 'putting it in practice.' But I have been given the opportunity to watch seasoned professionals perform this task in an exemplary way.

"This internship has been so much more than what I could have asked for."

Tariq had extensive opportunities to shadow and perform food safety inspections at restaurants and food trucks, as well as perform pool and spa inspections.

In July, she accompanied Bill Emminger, county environmental health manager, and Robert Baker, county environmental health specialist, to the National Environmental Health

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County selected as host Continued...

Association annual conference. She was a first-time attendee at this professional conference and was able to meet and network with environmental health professionals from across the country. Her experience meeting people with a wide variety of public and environmental health backgrounds gave her a lot to consider for her future after graduation.

Tariq wants to work in the regulation side of the industry for at least a year before she begins a doctoral program. She plans to apply for a position at her county's health department in east Tennessee while finishing her graduate degree, and then continue in that line of work following graduation.

"I would like my doctoral work to bridge the gap between my undergraduate and graduate studies. The application of genomic sciences in environmental health would perfectly bridge that gap. There are several applications that are relevant to environmental health – one that piques my interest is how our environment impacts our mental health and how the microbiome plays into that.

"Basically microbiome is a set of organisms that work as a community inside your gut. We see from studies now that microbiome impacts mental health, but what impacts your microbiome is your environment. It's an indirect impact, but ultimately a person's health is affected.

"So, the whole idea of microbiome having an impact on mental health is very interesting to me and I hope to explore that more."

Reem Tariq's internship will be completed at the end of this month. The county is very grateful to have had the opportunity to be a host agency and participate in this national professional development opportunity. We wish her the very best in her future endeavors and hope she visits Oregon again!



Public safety and health services levy renewal to be placed on November 2017 ballot

To continue current health and safety services, Benton County will ask voters on the November 2017 ballot to approve a five-year \$.90 per \$1,000 assessed valuation beginning 2018. This measure would renew current local option taxes, would begin in 2018 and last for five years.

The purpose of this levy renewal is twofold. First, it would continue funding the rental of 40 beds for Benton County inmates in county jails. Second, it would continue funding for public safety and health services because of the expiration of guaranteed federal forest payments.

This levy would continue the same maximum tax rate of \$.90 per \$1,000 assessed value (AV) as the previous levy. The tax would cost \$7.50 per month or \$90 per year for every \$100,000 of a

property's assessed value.

Renewal of Jail Space Rental and Corrections Levy

This levy would continue to fund rental of 40 jail beds for Benton County inmates and related services, which may include:

- Inmate placement and transportation;
- A transition program for inmates who complete their sentences and need assistance to return to the community; and,
- Video link technology, which enables judges to conduct video court appearances thereby reducing transportation costs.

Maintain Limited Public Safety and Health Services

This levy would continue health and safety services that were supported by

the previous levy including:

- Public Safety Services: 24-hour sheriff's patrol and investigation; substance abuse treatment programs for juveniles and adults; prosecution of additional street crimes and child abuse cases; counseling and outreach for juvenile offenders; juvenile detention services; and the school resource deputy program that works with students on substance abuse and other prevention activities.
- Health Services: Communicable disease outbreak prevention and investigation; high-risk maternal/child healthcare nursing and, A Community Integrated Service Team (ASCIST), which provides prevention and early intervention to children at risk of abuse, chemical dependency, delinquency, and school failure.



*Laurel Byer discusses engineering plans with Public Works colleagues.
(L to R) Laurel Byer, Fred Gomez, Jim Stouder.*

Continued collaboration between Public Works & OSU College of Engineering

This past spring, the Oregon State University College of Engineering sought out Public Works professionals to participate in their two-quarter Capstone Project Class. The class is a two-quarter Civil Engineering course designed as a senior project.

Public Works Director Josh Wheeler and County Engineer Laurel Byer helped students get started at the beginning of their projects. In the second quarter, Wheeler and Byer provided professional critique and advice on the progress of their civil

engineering design projects.

"I graduated from Oregon State in Civil Engineering and, at the time, they didn't have a course structured like this one," said Laurel Byer. "I think the Capstone Design course is a great addition that gives undergraduate students an opportunity to delve into a 'real world' problem and I was proud to be able to give the students advice based upon my experience. I would definitely participate again in the future."

County fair partners with many local organizations

The Benton County Fair & Rodeo spearheads many collaborations with local partners, especially with non-profit organizations including, Kidco Head Start, Sick Town Derby Dames, Breastfeeding Coalition of Oregon, Corvallis High School, Rotary Club of Greater Corvallis, Zonta Club of Corvallis, Kiwanis Club of Corvallis Sunrisers, C.A.R.E., Senior Dog

Rescue of Oregon, OSU Extension Program and 4-H, and, the Heart of the Valley Astronomers who taught visitors about the total solar eclipse and eye safety.

Additionally, nearly all county departments participate in preparing for the fair or participating at expo booths at the fair.

Youths experience county fair for first time

The Juvenile Department partnered with Jackson Street Youth Services to extend invitations to youth residing at the overnight shelter and join the Juvenile Department and attend the Benton County Fair and Rodeo.

"The relationship we sustain with Benton County's Juvenile Department is very meaningful to us," said Kendra Phillips-Neal, Program Director of Jackson Street Youth Services.

"We work together, around a variety of issues, to leverage resources and best serve youth and families in our communities. This collaboration to take youth out to the county fair this year is new, and we're grateful to be a part of it."

A variety of local businesses, including Hull Oaks Lumber, Philomath Community Foundation, Starker Forests Inc., Kiwanis Club of Oregon, Citizens Bank, Squirrel's Tavern, Safeway, Burger King, Crowson Bus Company, and the Benton County Fairgrounds, volunteer to provide lunch and beverages for the youths selected to attend the fair.

Multi-agency partnership to develop Crisis Intervention Training

Next month, several local agencies will participate in a multi-day crisis intervention training spearheaded by a partnership between the Benton County Health Department and the Corvallis Police Department. Organizations in the local planning workgroup include the Benton County Sheriff's Office, Philomath Police Department, Good Samaritan

Regional Medical Center, Oregon State University and National Alliance on Mental Illness—Mid Valley Chapter. Planning efforts began nearly a year ago and are in final stages.

Training topics include: mental illness and mental health systems; suicide behavior and non-suicidal self-injury; legal considerations and civil commitment; Alzheimer's disease and dementia; substance abuse and co-occurring disorders; trauma information interviewing; family perspectives; self-care; personality disorders; crisis intervention, and more.

"We are very pleased about this collaboration and intensive training program," said Mitch Anderson, Health Department Director. "The process illustrates a successful partnership between numerous local agencies that are committed to improve training around mental illness for law enforcement, so that they can better respond in the field and in high-stress or confrontational situations."

Adair Village paves Columbine Road

For the first time, Adair Village partnered with Benton County and participated in the county paving contract. This partnership enabled them to pave Columbine Road and save thousands of dollars.

"A paving overlay is intended typically to be a 2" surface that lasts about 20 years," said Josh Wheeler, Public Works Director. "Benton County is not able to perform overlay projects every year, so it was nice when Adair Village joined our contract this year and we were able to meet a need of theirs."

Three Deputies Recognized with the Life Saving Award

At this year's Benton County Sheriff Office's annual Awards Event three deputies were recognized with the Life Saving Award.

Deputy Justin Bowers received a Life Saving Award for an incident that occurred on August 30, 2016. Bowers was dispatched to a head-on vehicle crash with serious injuries to multiple people. When he arrived, the scene was very chaotic with heavy rush-hour traffic, blocked in both directions. Deputy Bowers immediately focused on a victim lying in the middle of the street with three bystanders, giving first aid and CPR. The victim was not breathing and they could not find a pulse. Deputy Bowers assisted the bystanders by giving chest compressions. After several moments while Deputy Bowers was doing chest compressions, the victim started breathing on her own. She was transported by ambulance with serious injuries and later transferred to the Intensive Care Unit. As a result of the actions of Deputy Bowers and the three bystanders, the woman recovered from her injuries.

Also receiving Life Saving Awards were Marine Deputies Randal Tugwell and Marshall Dean. These deputies were patrolling the Willamette River in June 2017, when they noticed a young woman struggling in the water. She and some friends were floating



(L to R) Deputy Randal Tugwell, Deputy Marshall Dean, Sheriff Scott Jackson

down the river in inner tubes. She was intoxicated, had fallen out of her inner tube, and could not get back in. Because she could not keep her head above water, the deputies took action. Deputy Tugwell maneuvered the boat so that Deputy Dean could reach the victim. He eventually had to jump in the river and managed to get the young

woman safely on board the marine boat. The marine deputies transported her to the Crystal Lake boat ramp where Corvallis Fire personnel met them and transported the victim to Good Samaritan Hospital. Their actions that day certainly saved the young woman's life.

Fourth Professional Engineer on Public Works staff

Benton County Public Works staff member Owen Millehrer passed his Professional Engineers exam in spring 2017. He will now apply for state licensure and join Laurel Byer, Fred Gomez and Josh Wheeler as the fourth Professional Engineer in the department.

Following a baccalaureate degree in civil engineering, individuals are required to pass two professional examinations—Fundamentals of Engineering and Professional Engineers—prior to applying for state licensure from the state.

Only 68% of those that took the exam in October 2016 passed, and those who take the exam multiple times have a 33% success rate. Annual averages stay in this range and indicate the difficulty of achieving licensure. Join us in congratulating Owen!

County receives Excellence in Financial Reporting honor

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to Benton County for its comprehensive annual financial report.

The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.

Do you want this newsletter in Spanish?

Benton County wants to make sure county news reaches all our communities. If you would like to receive an electronic version of this newsletter in Spanish, email pioinfo@co.benton.or.us with "Spanish newsletter" in the subject line. If you're interested in receiving an electronic version of this newsletter in other languages, please email pioinfo@co.benton.or.us with "Translate newsletter" in the subject line.

¿Quiere este boletín en español?

El condado de Benton quiere asegurarse que condando noticia llegar a todas nuestras comunidades. Si desea recibir una versión electrónica de este boletín en español, enviar un correo electrónico a pioinfo@co.benton.or.us con el "Boletín de noticias en español" en la línea de asunto. Si está interesado en recibir una versión electrónica de este boletín en otros idiomas, enviar un correo electrónico a pioinfo@co.benton.or.us con "Traducir boletín" en la línea de asunto.

Dental hygiene services reach senior and disabled residents in care facilities

Through a partnership with the InterCommunity Health Network Coordinated Care Organization (IHN CCO), the Community Health Centers of Benton and Linn Counties began a pilot program August 1st to provide dental hygiene services to senior and disabled residents in care facilities. The pilot will last the remainder of the calendar year.

“I think this is such an exciting pilot program. This pilot addresses objectives in a priority area of the 2015—2020 Strategic Plan for Oral Health in Benton, Lincoln and Linn counties. Linn County is bringing bilingual education to schools in collaboration with Capitol Dental’s School Based Sealant Program, and we are reaching out to senior members not accessing dental care,” said Molly Perino, Benton County Oral Health Manager.

The IHN CCO identified underserved members in nursing homes and short- and long-term care facilities, specifically targeting Medicaid users and veterans. Benton County dental hygienists will provide on-site presentations about oral hygiene care, and educate staff on how to identify dental issues and better care for their resident’s oral health.

“We haven’t had the opportunity to give presentations of this kind before,” said Perino. “We’re educating care givers, staff members and really anyone

who has contact with patients. I believe strongly in the benefits of proactively incorporating education into our prevention and systems of care.”

Another aspect of the pilot project is to provide on-site dental screenings to every person in the facility. A dental hygienist will perform an assessment, determine needs, and provide referrals to a dentist as needed. The IHN CCO will be involved in the screening process by providing a health care guide.

“The health care guide fills in the other pieces during the screening. They ensure each individual’s health needs are being met—for example, primary care, mental health, behavioral health—and if a need exists, they will connect the person to services,” said Perino.

The third piece of the pilot is providing residents with services. Routine cleanings, periodontal treatment, silver diamine fluoride treatment, fluoride, and soft relines for those residents who are denture wearers will be some of the services available on-site.

“The goal of this pilot program is to identify patients in need and schedule regular appointments, making accessing care easy by bringing services right to them. Our long-term goal is to continue to meet this need beyond the end date of the pilot program.”



2nd Annual Volunteer Appreciation Night

The Benton County Board of Commissioners is hosting the 2nd annual Volunteer Appreciation Night to thank its many volunteers for their years of service. The event is also geared towards recruiting new community members to serve on the county's advisory committees and boards.

The volunteer appreciation and recruitment event will take place on September 21, 2017 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in Guerber Hall at the Benton County Fairgrounds, 110 SW 53rd St., Corvallis, Oregon.

Participation on county boards and commissions involves citizens directly in local government in an

impactful way and provides the Board of Commissioners with timely input on important issues. Currently the county has 24 advisory boards, commissions and committees, and members may serve up to two consecutive terms.

The volunteer appreciation and recruitment event will showcase the priorities of the volunteer boards, honor current volunteers, and recruit new members.

This event is free and open to the public, and a dinner will be provided. Find more information about committee vacancies at tinyurl.com/y9cx7s7x.



Nominations sought for county environmental awards

The Benton County Board of Commissioners and the Environmental Issues Advisory Committee requests nominations for the fifth annual Benton County Environmental Awards. Benton County presents two awards annually, an individual award and an organizational award.

To be considered for the award, individuals or organizations will have supported and advanced the environmental goals of the Benton County Sustainability Policy through their efforts. The policy mandates that the county "use, develop and protect our resources at a rate and in a manner that enables people to meet their current needs and also preserve resources for future generations." The sustainability policy is available online at tinyurl.com/y8bwqxxg2.

Nominees will have demonstrated a commitment to environmental stewardship that went beyond compliance with regulatory

requirements.

The individual award recognizes private citizens who have contributed significantly as individuals, particularly in the areas of improved air quality, water quality, energy savings, environmental health, healthy ecosystems, natural habitats and sustainable resources.

The organizational award honors non-profits, organizations or private businesses that have contributed significantly to the advancement of the county's environmental goals, particularly in the areas of improved air quality, water quality, energy savings, environmental health, healthy ecosystems, natural habitats and sustainable resources.

An individual or organization is eligible to either nominate or apply for the award. Nomination forms are available online at tinyurl.com/yaadcb9u.

All nominations must be submitted

via email to Laurie.STARHA@Co.Benton.OR.US or delivered to Benton Co. Public Works, 360 SW Avery Avenue, Corvallis, OR 97333 by September 16, 2017.

Awards will be presented at the

annual Environmental Issues Advisory Committee Fall Forum, scheduled for Wednesday, October 18, 2017 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library, 645 NW Monroe Ave, Corvallis, OR.