

FRANKLIN REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS - FAST FACTS →

April 2011



FUNDING AND SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

NIMS/ICS 300, 400, & 701 - 704. The Homeland Security Council continues to provide funds for backfill/overtime or volunteer reimbursement for hourly and volunteer first responders to maintain NIMS compliance. Funding is available for newly promoted, re-assigned, newly hired and previously vacant staff positions. Contact sbrown@frcog.org.

The FRCOG has **\$465,000 for low interest loans** available for private property owners or municipalities that want to clean-up properties contaminated by hazardous materials. Contact psloan@frcog.org.

A feasibility study assessing the potential of a **Regional Emergency Communications Center (RECC)** in Franklin County has begun, with an anticipated completion date of late August 2011. The study will assist officials in determining the most effective way to provide emergency communication services to all of Franklin County. The study is funded by a grant from Massachusetts State 911 Department. Contact sbrown@frcog.org.

PROGRAM AND PROJECT ANNOUNCEMENTS

The FRCOG Purchasing Department is continuing to develop **cooperative bids for Franklin County school districts**. A recent bid for fire alarm testing for the districts resulted an average of 42% savings over last year's testing costs. Contact bids@frcog.org for more information.

Implementation of an internet-based **online permitting** solution for the FCCIP and Regional Health Inspection Programs is nearing completion. FCCIP staff will soon contact town administrators for help arranging a simple training for personnel responsible for signing off on permit applications. When fully implemented the permitting process will be more efficient and can be handled electronically from application through final approval. Contact bdean@frcog.org.

The **2nd Region-wide Parent Survey**, conducted by the Community Coalition for Teens, will take place in late Spring. The survey targets parents of middle-and high school-age youth in Franklin County and the North Quabbin. Contact jvoas@frcog.org.

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PROGRAM AND PROJECT ANNOUNCEMENTS

The FRCOG received a **Cooperative Local Health Services Planning Grant** on behalf of 19 towns in Franklin County. The grant, for \$29,500, will fund a six-month long expedited planning process for a new regional entity to provide services to local Boards of Health. All towns are all warmly invited to attend the meetings, which take place at the Sheriff's Department and include dinner. The Planning Group has its third meeting on May 16th from 5-8 PM. At that meeting, the group will be voting on the new service model and what guarantees they want to make to current health agents whose communities join the service. All Franklin County towns will have an option to decide whether or not to join the new cooperative service in September, when a grant will be submitted for implementation funding. Contact Phoebe Walker at health@frcog.org or extension 119 for more information.



Purchasing Dog Tags through the Cooperative Bid at FRCOG saves towns money! The per tag price combining your order with 54 other towns in Western Mass. is 6 cents per tag versus the same tag on a town's typical order of 200 tags that would cost 30 cents per tag! Contact bids@frcog.org for more information.

20th Annual Youth Conference a Success!

The 20th Annual Youth Conference, sponsored by the Community Coalition for Teens, took place on April 13 at Frontier Regional School. Over 200 youth and adults participated. A group of Frontier students planned the conference.



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The FRCOG has completed town-level **broadband availability mapping** for 23 out of 26 Franklin County towns and submitted this data to the Massachusetts Broadband Institute.

CCT Staff are working with owners of area bars and restaurants to expand the **Alcohol Purchase Surveys** to on-premise licensed establishments. These surveys, proven to reduce alcohol use among youth, involve sending young-looking-of-age “mystery shoppers” to check the establishments' compliance with underage drinking laws and to promote the best practice of asking for identification from anyone who appears under the age of 30. To date, four bars and restaurants have agreed to join the initiative by signing a memorandum of understanding. CCT currently implements alcohol purchase surveys of all off-premise establishments county-wide.

During the past twelve months, four new towns signed on to the **Franklin County Alcohol Beverage Compliance Initiative**: Ashfield, Colrain, Northfield, and Sunderland. By signing the Memorandum of Understanding, the signatory towns agree to authorize and direct their respective police departments to conduct periodic, standardized compliance checks of all licensed liquor establishments pursuant to the most recent guidelines of the MABCC. CCT works with the police departments and underage “mystery shoppers” (18-20 year olds) to implement the compliance checks.

Staff is nearing completion of an update to the region's **Long Range Transportation Plan**. The Plan is a comprehensive document that provides the basis for transportation planning in the region, and is updated every 4 years. It includes a review of the existing transportation network, and makes recommendations for future transportation improvements based on needs and forecasts of population, employment, and potential funding. The Plan will be complete by August, 2011.



Traffic counts are provided free of charge to our member municipalities on a first come – first served basis. In 2010, 50 traffic counts were conducted across the county and provided municipalities with important information about vehicle volumes, travel speeds and vehicle classification. To request a count during our upcoming season, please contact Stacy Metzger, at smetzger@frcog.org.

The FRCOG, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC), and Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) have finalized a scope of work to hire a marketing professional to develop and implement a **Promotional Campaign for the Western Massachusetts Scenic Byways**. The overall goal of the project is to brand and promote the 7 Scenic Byways of Western Massachusetts as a local and

regional travel destination. It will include the development graphics and informational materials, a website, and a wayfinding sign system. It is expected that work will commence in the summer of 2011. For more information contact Maureen Mullaney at trans@frcog.org.

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Spring and Summer Highway Bids are in progress and will open May 4. We added an additional Franklin County town this year, making a total of 23 towns participating. We will bid for 16 different highway product and services contracts. Contact bids@frcog.org for more information.

To date, the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) has designated three communities in Franklin County as **Green Communities**. They are Greenfield, Montague, and New Salem. Each Town has been awarded grant funding for energy efficiency or renewable energy projects (Greenfield - \$202,066; Montague - \$154,944; New Salem - \$138,100). The next deadline to submit an application to become designated as a Green Community is **Friday, June 10, 2011**. Contact psloan@frcog.org or smetzger@frcog.org.

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments is pleased to announce that it has received a \$425,000 grant from the **Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program** sponsored by the **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**. This project is a joint effort of regional agencies and towns including Community Action, Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority, North Quabbin Community Coalition, Franklin County Community Development Corporation, and Greenfield, Montague, Orange and Deerfield. HUD reviewed 225 eligible applications submitted nationwide and 45 applications were selected to receive a grant award. The funding will allow the FRCOG and its partners to conduct a comprehensive planning process to assess the needs of the region, particularly disadvantaged populations. Municipal officials and residents are encouraged to participate in the planning process to create a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development for Franklin County. Please contact psloan@frcog.org.

The Greenfield Police Department is implementing a **regional data sharing system** that is capable of handling and sharing data between police and other law enforcement agencies such as the County Sheriff and District Attorney, as well as between Fire, EMS and EMD entities. The Franklin County Emergency Communications System (FCECS) Oversight Committee will take on oversight of the system. The Oversight Committee is drafting an agreement with local users, making necessary changes to the FCECS Operating Policies to incorporate the new system, and developing a budget that ensures the system will be sustainable and affordable going forward. Contact bdean@frcog.org.



CTC to sponsor workshop on DESE-Approved Programs for Bullying Prevention

On May 5, 2011 the Communities that Care Coalition will be sponsoring a workshop entitled “**DESE-Approved Programs for Bullying Prevention: A Review of the Eight Programs and Curricula on DESE’s List**”. The workshop is scheduled for **May 5th from 8:30am to 1:00pm** at the **Great Falls Discovery Center**. The target audience is Franklin County and North Quabbin school personnel who are involved in creating and implementing their school’s Bullying Prevention Plans, but others are welcome if space allows. Seating is limited and registration is required. Please register online at www.communitiesthatcarecoalition.org. Contact jvoas@frcog.org.

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LEGISLATION, POLICY, AND ADVOCACY

The Franklin Regional Planning Board and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments Executive Committee have submitted comments to our legislative delegation on the proposed **Comprehensive Land Use Reform and Policy Act** to update the State's Zoning and Subdivision Laws. Please contact psloan@frcog.org.

The Franklin Regional Planning Board and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments Executive Committee have submitted comments to our legislative delegation on changes to the **State's Solid Waste Law**. Please contact psloan@frcog.org.

The Massachusetts Cultural Council will be hosting two workshops for municipalities to find out more about becoming a state-designated cultural district. The two upcoming workshops are Monday, May 2nd in Pittsfield and Wednesday, May 11th in Worcester. Applications for designation will be processed on an on-going basis starting in June. For more information go to http://www.massculturalcouncil.org/applications/culturaldistricts_guidelines.asp.

The new Task Force overseeing the creation of a **regional animal control program** in Franklin County has had three meetings. Ten towns and the Sheriff's Department are participating in the Task Force, which is moving forward on the creation of a kennel at the Sheriff's Department and on creation of the legal agreement between towns and the Department. Additional towns are welcome to join the meetings or request minutes of previous ones. Contact Ted Harvey at Harvey@frcog.org or extension 107 for more information.

The Attorney General's Division of Open Government (DOG) is offering several regional educational forums on the new **Open Meeting Law** that took effect on October 1, 2010. Forums will be conducted by attorneys and staff from DOG and will provide updates on the law and guidance about compliance. Upcoming sessions will be held in Dalton on May 11th, Northampton on May 25th, and Worcester on June 1st, each starting at 6PM. More information is available from the Attorney General's website on www.mass.gov, including how to register for the forum of your choice.

The FRCOG is working with the Massachusetts Municipal Association to support a **Public Works Bill (H3386) allowing for mutual aid for general highway maintenance purposes**. The bill was filed by Representative Kulik in the current legislative session. The goal of the legislation is to provide a framework that will make it easier for municipalities to share equipment and personnel for general maintenance projects in addition to public works incidents. Contact bdean@frcog.org.



The **8th Edition of the Massachusetts State Building Code 1-2 Family Code** is now in effect. Massachusetts adopted the 2009 International Residential Code and added front-end amendments. The 8th edition will be in effect exclusively on August 4, 2011.

Emergency Preparedness staff assisted boards of health in running three drills to test their readiness to respond to a public health emergency. The first was a "call down drill," where all emergency dispensing site volunteers were contacted to see if they would be able to assemble their site within 24 hours of notification. The second was a "facility set up drill," where each emergency dispensing site was tested on how long it took to set up the equipment necessary to run an emergency clinic. Lastly, each site completed an "emergency dispensing site notification drill," where the facility designated as an emergency dispensing site (typically an elementary or high school) was contacted to see if it could be made

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MEETINGS, FORUMS, AND BID DATES

MAY

- 5/4/11 @ 1:00 p.m. - Bids for Highway Products & Services. 425 Main Street, Greenfield. Contact: bids@frcog.org.
- 5/4/11 @ 1:00 pm - CTC Youth Recognition Workgroup at Mesa Verde , 10 Fiske Ave., Greenfield, contact rstoler@frcog.org
- 5/5/11 @ 12:30 pm - CTC Community Laws and Norms Workgroup at CCT 278 Main St. Suite 411, Greenfield. Contact jfulmer@frcog.org.
- 5/5/11 @ 5:00 p.m. - FRCOG Council Meeting. GCTV Studios, 393 Main Street, Greenfield. Contact: lindad@frcog.org.
- 5/12/11 @ 8:30 am - CTC Parent Education Workgroup at CSO , 1 Arch Place, Greenfield. Contact: jvoas@frcog.org.
- 5/12/11 @ 5:00 p.m. - FRCOG Executive Committee. Greenfield Courthouse, Room 102, 425 Main Street, Greenfield. Contact: lindad@frcog.org.
- 5/16/11 @ 5:00 p.m. - Public Health Services Planning Group. 160 Elm Street, Greenfield. Contact: health@frcog.org.
- 5/26/11 @ 5:30 p.m. – CEDS Committee/EDD Board Meeting. Planning Conference Room, 1st Floor, 278 Main Street, Greenfield. Contact: psloan@frcog.org.
- 5/26/11 @ 6:00 p.m. - Franklin Regional Planning Board. Planning Conference Room, 1st Floor, 278 Main Street, Greenfield. Contact: psloan@frcog.org.

JUNE

- 6/1/11 @ 1:00 pm - CTC Youth Recognition Workgroup at Mesa Verde , 10 Fiske Ave., Greenfield. Contact: rstoler@frcog.org.
- 6/2/11 @ 8:30 am Regional School Health Task Force at Chamber of Commerce, 393 Main St., Greenfield. Contact: jvoas@frcog.org.
- 6/2/11 @ 10:00 am CTC Coordinating Council at Chamber of Commerce, 393 Main St., Greenfield. Contact: teens@frcog.org.
- 6/2/11 @ 12:30 pm - CTC Community Laws and Norms Workgroup at CCT 278 Main St. Suite 411, Greenfield. Contact: jfulmer@frcog.org.
- 6/6/11 @ 4:30 p.m. - Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition (MAPHCO) Steering Committee Meeting. 278 Main Street, Greenfield. Contact: health@frcog.org.
- 6/9/11 @ 5:00 p.m. - FRCOG Executive Committee. Greenfield Courthouse, Room 102, 425 Main Street, Greenfield. Contact: lindad@frcog.org.

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JUNE

- 6/13/11 @ 5:00 p.m. - Public Health Services Planning Group. 160 Elm Street, Greenfield. Contact: health@frcog.org.
- 6/16/11 @ 5:30 p.m. - Community Coalition for Teens Advisory Board. CCT Office, Suite 411, 278 Main Street, Greenfield. Contact: rstoler@frcog.org.
- 6/23/11 @ 5:30 p.m. - CEDS Committee/EDD Board Meeting. Greenfield Community College Downtown Center, 270 Main Street, Greenfield. Contact: psloan@frcog.org.
- 6/23/11 @ 6:00 p.m. - Franklin Regional Planning Board. Greenfield Community College Downtown Center, 270 Main Street, Greenfield. Contact: psloan@frcog.org.
- 6/29/11 @ 5:00 p.m. - Public Health Services Planning Group. 160 Elm Street, Greenfield. Contact: health@frcog.org.

JULY

- 7/11/11 @ 5:00 p.m. - Public Health Services Planning Group. 160 Elm Street, Greenfield. Contact: health@frcog.org.
- 7/14/11 @ 5:00 p.m. - FRCOG Executive Committee. Greenfield Courthouse, Room 102, 425 Main Street, Greenfield. Contact: lindsay@frcog.org.
- 7/19/11 @ 6:30 p.m. - CERT Team. Montague Public Safety Complex. 180 Turnpike Road, Turners Falls. Contact: nlots@yahoo.com.
- 7/21/11 @ 5:30 p.m. - FRCOG Council Meeting. GCTV Studios, 3rd Floor, 393 Main Street, Greenfield. Contact: lindsay@frcog.org.
- 7/27/11 @ 5:00 p.m. - Public Health Services Planning Group. 160 Elm Street, Greenfield. Contact: health@frcog.org.

AUGUST

- 8/8/11 @ 4:30 p.m. - Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition (MAPHCO) Steering Committee Meeting. 278 Main Street, Greenfield. Contact: health@frcog.org.
- 8/11/11 @ 5:00 p.m. - FRCOG Executive Committee. Greenfield Courthouse, Room 102, 425 Main Street, Greenfield. Contact: lindsay@frcog.org.
- 8/17/11 @ 6:30 p.m. - CERT Team. Montague Public Safety Complex. 180 Turnpike Road, Turners Falls. Contact: nlots@yahoo.com.
- 8/31/11 @ 5:00 p.m. - Public Health Services Planning Group. 160 Elm Street, Greenfield. Contact: health@frcog.org.

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Franklin Regional
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COME VISIT US!

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