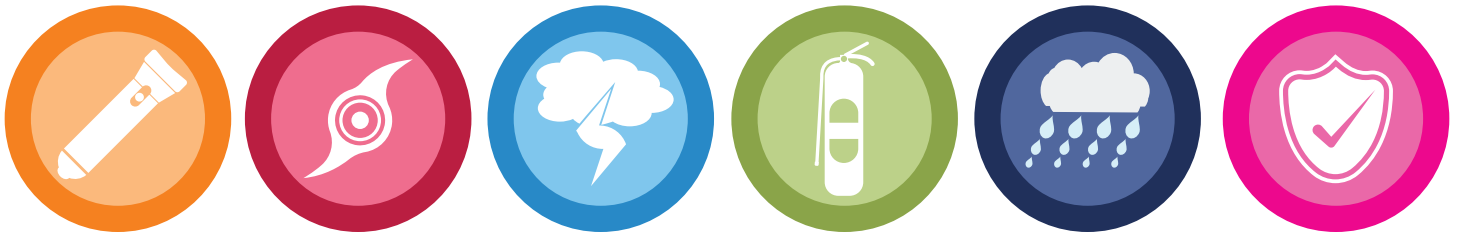




# Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration  
SEPTEMBER 2025 - Volume 32, Issue 9

## September is National Preparedness Month



Each year in September, ReadyWV encourages citizens to take steps to prepare for any type of emergency or natural disaster. Taking time to prepare before a disaster strikes helps to better protect you, your home, and your loved ones.

This year ReadyWV encourages West Virginians to focus on financial preparedness. It is a critical step in making you and your family more resilient in times of disaster. There are three main things to consider:

- **An Emergency Fund** – Consider saving money in an emergency savings account that could be used in any crisis. Keep a small amount of cash at home in a safe place. It is important to have small bills on hand because ATMs and credit cards may not work during a disaster when you need to purchase necessary supplies, fuel, or food.
- **Important Documents** – Gather and copy financial documents and critical personal, household, medical, and insurance information. Store them in a waterproof/fireproof container with your emergency kit. Or you could scan and store digital copies in a secure cloud-based service for easy access. You will need these documents when filing insurance claims or applying for disaster assistance.

- **Insurance Coverage** - Obtain property (homeowner's or renter's), health, and life insurance policies if you do not have them. Not all insurance policies are the same. Review your policy to make sure the amount and types of coverage you have meets the need for all possible hazards.

- » **Homeowner's Insurance** – review your coverage with your agent. Know what is and is not covered. Most homeowner policies do not include flood coverage.
- » **Flood Insurance** – even if you are not in a high-risk flood zone, consider getting coverage. Nearly a third of National Flood Insurance Program claims are from outside the high-risk zone.
- » **Renter's Insurance** – if you rent your home and don't have renter's insurance, consider getting it to protect your assets.

Check out the ReadyWV website  
for details on how to create an  
***Emergency Financial First Aid Kit.***

**SNEAK  
PEEK**

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## Burns-McDonnell Chosen New Officer of Surplus Organization



**Jessica Burns-McDonnell,**  
Manager of the West Virginia  
State Agency for Surplus Property

Jessica Burns-McDonnell, manager of the West Virginia State Agency for Surplus Property, is the new secretary of the National Association of State Agencies for Surplus Property (NASASP).

Jessica's dedication to innovation, transparency, and responsible stewardship of public resources makes her an outstanding choice for this national leadership role. During the next two years, she will help guide NASASP in supporting surplus property programs across the country—

sharing best practices and strengthening the impact of public asset reutilization.

West Virginia is proud to be represented on the national stage. Congratulations Jessica!

## Annual Conference Tradition Continues with Fresh Approach

More than 200 state procurement officers attended a redesigned Annual Purchasing Conference last month at The Resort at Glade Springs.

This year the Purchasing Division hosted two back-to-back conferences: Fundamentals First and Beyond the Basics. The two separate class lineups provided participants the opportunity to choose the conference that best fit their needs.

More than 100 procurement officers attended Fundamentals First, which was geared toward individuals who are newer to public purchasing, or purchase at a basic level. Conference topics included "Unlocking Value: Leveraging the State and Federal Surplus Property Programs," "Understanding Bid Limits: Central vs. Agency Authority and Responsibilities," and "Procurement Pathways: Selecting the Right Method for the Right Purchase."

The Beyond the Basics conference featured classes on "Developing Effective EOIs for Public A&E Procurements," "Public Procurement Contract Management: Strategies for Success," and "Procurement Insights from the Department of Justice." More than 100 procurement officers attended the Beyond the Basics conference, which was targeted to individuals who have been in public purchasing for some time and are considered veteran buyers, or those who might be newer but are responsible for more complex procurements.

Josh Tinnel, procurement manager for the West Virginia Office of Technology, was named this year's Procurement Officer of the Year.

"Josh consistently delivers exceptional results in his role as procurement manager," said the colleague who nominated him. "He is known for his ability to handle complex tasks with precision and professionalism, often managing multifaceted procurement projects that require in-depth analysis, coordination across departments, and strict compliance with purchasing policies. His attention to detail, proactive problem-solving, and unwavering commitment to deadlines have made him a trusted leader within the agency."

The Agency Procurement Officer of the Year award program was created in 1996 to recognize outstanding performance, dedication, and leadership in the area of procurement. The criteria used in making this selection include tenure, performance, communication skills, internal training efforts, cooperation with agency and purchasing staff, projecting a positive image, exhibiting good purchasing practices, and participation in professional purchasing organizations.

The Purchasing Division thanks all participants for making this year's split conference a success.



Julie Robinson from the W.Va. Nursery & Landscape Association donated a sugar maple tree to replace the red oak tree that recently fell on the Capitol Campus. GSD crews planted it on Aug. 13, 2025.



# Fall Foliage Forecast Now Online

The West Virginia Department of Tourism has released its annual Fall Foliage Forecast, with fall colors expected to start at the end of September/early fall and continue through mid-October/early November.

State Forester Jeremy Jones said this summer's weather mix should bring out bright colors.

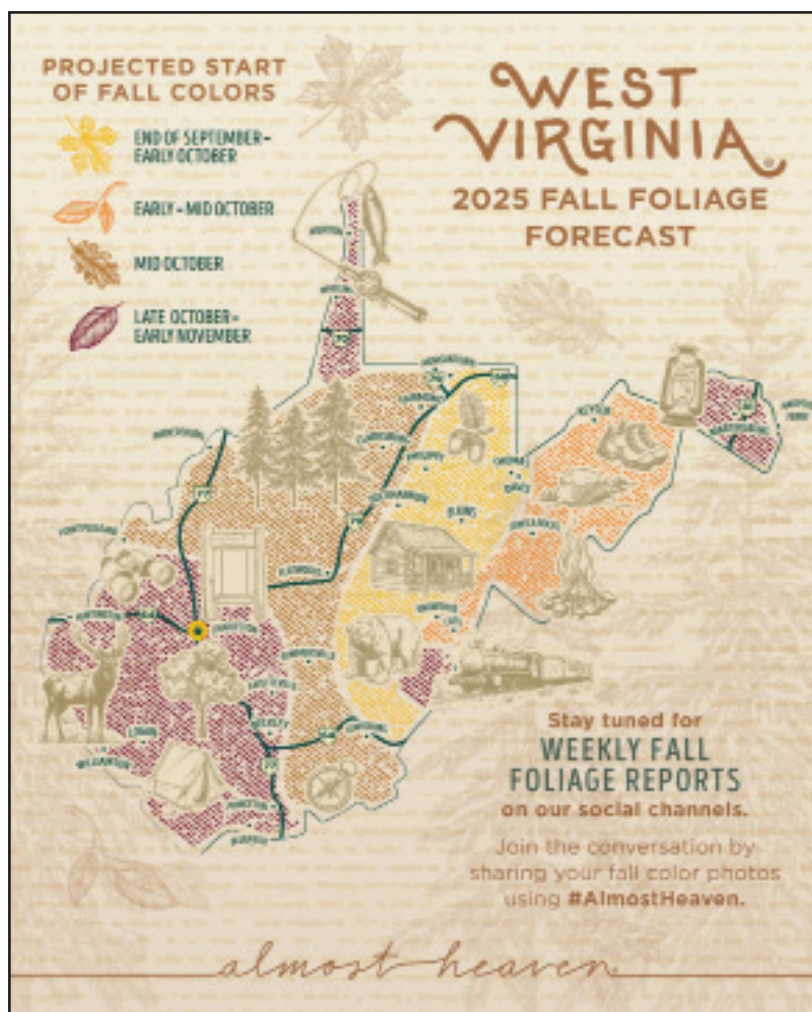
"West Virginia's mountains are poised to put on one of their most breathtaking shows yet," Jones said. "With the wet summer and perfect mix of warm days and crisp nights, we're expecting vibrant reds, brilliant oranges, and golden yellows to sweep across the hillsides this fall."

The Department of Tourism will release weekly fall foliage maps beginning in mid-September.

"There are still a few weeks of summer left, but it's never too early to start planning a trip to experience West Virginia's stunning fall foliage," said Tourism Secretary Chelsea Ruby. "Thanks to above-average rainfall this summer, the fall colors are expected to really show off. Head to our website for inspirational fall content and trip planning tips. There's no better place to spend this season than in Almost Heaven."

Tourism is once again inviting travelers to share their fall photos on social media at #AlmostHeaven. The department's live leaf tracker will be up and running by the end of September.

*Click here to get weekly foliage updates straight to your inbox each week!*



## Fleet Offers Variety of Rental Options for State Employees

The Fleet Management Division (FMD) has a small rental pool of state vehicles, including vans, medium and large sedans, and SUVs, available to state agencies for daily or long-term rental.

A mileage calculator found online at [www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/travel/rental.html](http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/travel/rental.html) helps the user establish whether renting a vehicle from FMD or Hertz/Enterprise is the most cost-effective option.

FleetCommander conveniently offers 24/7 access to the Capitol Complex Motor Pool. Through FleetCommander, individuals can make reservations, view their existing reservations, update their profile, and more. User profiles and reservations are kept safely online for viewing at any time, which means quicker and easier access to the Capitol Complex Motor Pool. Keys for reservations can be picked up at the FleetCommander kiosk located in the parking lot across from Laidley Field on Elizabeth Street.

To register your Capitol Complex Motor Pool Kiosk account through the FleetCommander website and make a reservation, visit <https://wvmotorpool.agilefleet.com> or scan the QR code.

The FMD has also created a Renter's Guide that walks you through how to reserve, access, and return vehicles using Fleet Commander and our self-service kiosk. The guide can be found on their website, [fleet.wv.gov](http://fleet.wv.gov) under the Rentals tab. If you have any questions, they can be directed to the FMD at 855-817-1910 or [fleet@wv.gov](mailto:fleet@wv.gov).



Scan this QR code to make a reservation!

# Purchasing Division Employee Gets Blue Ribbon and Best of Show at State Fair in Lewisburg

Teresa Cutlip, a public information specialist in the Purchasing Division, is a blue ribbon and Best of Show winner of the 100th State Fair of West Virginia.

Cutlip won the jewelry division in the Fine Arts and Crafts category with a wire-wrapped cuff bracelet she made from wire and beads. The bracelet was on display in the West Virginia Building during the fair, along with agricultural products, artwork, photography, and more.

"I couldn't stop smiling when my sister called me after she found my bracelet on display with the ribbons," Cutlip said. "I couldn't wait to get there myself to see it."

Having grown up in Greenbrier County, going to the state fair was an annual tradition for Cutlip and her family and friends, whether it was for concerts, fair food, or

carnival rides. She and her twin sister Lisa entered various kids' crafts competitions at the fair over the years.

Cutlip started making jewelry more than 10 years ago while living in South Carolina, and would regularly update social media pages and a blog she had at the time with her crafting and jewelry-making endeavors. She hadn't done any jewelry making upon moving back to West Virginia until earlier this year.

"I like working with my hands. And for me there's something 'zen' about jewelry making and wire work," she said.

**The Purchasing Division's Teresa Cutlip takes home a blue ribbon and Best of Show at the 100th State Fair of West Virginia.**



## New Civil Service Legislation Effective July 1, 2025

During the 2025 Legislative Session, one of Gov. Morrissey's top priorities was three state civil service reform bills, which make new employees or those who change positions in most agencies, including those in the Department of Administration, classified-exempt as of July 1, 2025. This reform is designed to facilitate a more streamlined, efficient, and accountable state government where state employees are held to high standards, merit can truly be rewarded, and the state can better compete with the private sector for talent.

Beginning July 1, 2025, newly appointed individuals and employees currently covered by the Division of Personnel (DOP) merit system in the agencies named in the legislation who voluntarily change positions will be included in the classified-exempt service and will be exempt from the state grievance procedures. Below are some important factors for state employees to keep in mind when considering changing positions:

- Classified-exempt positions are those that are classified by the DOP (i.e., DOP determines the job title) but are not covered under the DOP merit system standards.
- Classified-exempt positions serve at the will and pleasure of the employer.
- A change in position means a voluntary change of position through the acceptance of a classified-exempt position. Reallocation, reclassification, demotion with prejudice, or involuntary transfer does not constitute a change in position.

Classified-exempt positions are not covered under the DOP merit system. Therefore they are not subject to minimum qualification requirements or the DOP's salary range. The DOP can provide resources to agencies to assist in determining appropriate salary levels based on current market data.

Classified-exempt positions do not need to be posted internally or exter-

nally via Public Service Announcements (PSA). However, agencies may run a PSA for classified-exempt positions through the DOP. Agencies can collect their own applications or have the DOP collect the applications for them.

Agencies are not required to complete EPAs for classified-exempt employees. However, agencies are encouraged to perform regular performance evaluations on classified-exempt employees, as those evaluations and other recorded indicators of performance should be considered when making decisions pertaining to salary advancements, position changes, and retention.

For additional help, contact DOP Employee Relations at 304-414-1853, or by email to [dopemprrelations@wv.gov](mailto:dopemprrelations@wv.gov).

# Google Gemini is Now Available for State Employees

Google Gemini has been approved and implemented on all state Google Workspace applications, in addition to Google NotebookLM.

Gemini is Google's AI assistant that can help with writing, planning, brainstorming, and more.

The West Virginia Office of Technology (WVOT) urges you to remember that the following types of data must never be entered into any Gemini Chat or any large language model (LLM):

- Confidential or legally privileged content, including internal communications
- Personally identifiable information (PII) such as names, addresses, SSNs, or employee IDs
- Protected health information (PHI) governed by HIPAA
- Source code containing passwords, API keys, or encryption credentials

- Any data that could compromise public trust or government integrity if disclosed



WVOT encourages users to refer to Google's training resources for hands-on learning with Gemini and Workspace tools - Generative AI Training & Help, Gemini for Google Workspace, and Google NotebookLM.

WVOT also has an AI resource page with helpful information at <https://sites.google.com/wv.gov/othub/policy-governance/artificial-intelligence/risks-of-using-ai-software>.

## State Seeks Reduction in Energy Costs in Agency Buildings

West Virginia state agencies are being asked to do what they can to reduce energy consumption and costs.

David Parsons, energy manager with the General Services Division (GSD), said state code requires a regular check and report on the energy usage of state buildings. Every building GSD manages is checked every six to eight months.

"The goal is to reduce the cost of state government and promote the efficient use of utilities," Parsons said.

GSD oversees the maintenance and operation of many of the state buildings and facilities and has developed the practices below to reduce consumption to yield savings.

### Know the workplace environment temperature settings and dress for comfort

- Winter heating setting: 68 degrees average space temperature
- Summer cooling setting: 76 degrees average space temperature
- Setbacks for after hours and weekend/holiday occupancy should be approximately 62 degrees during the heating season and 78 degrees during the cooling season.
- Every degree above the recommended setting will increase utility costs up to 3%.

### Reduce personal work space consumption

- Turn off computers, monitors, and printers daily (*sleep mode uses energy*)
- Eliminate individual convenience appliances, such as refrigerators, microwaves, and coffee pots
- Use a consolidated workplace break area

### Be a good energy citizen

- Turn off lights when not in use
- Report maintenance issues, such as a leaky faucet or running water
- Promote a positive attitude toward conservation

### Review operational requirements

- Consider opportunities to network printers and copiers
- Appoint an energy monitor or committee
- Review operating hours or schedules

### Seek opportunities to improve energy efficiency

- Look for operating improvements, such as closing and opening window shades for lighting modification
- Close window shades and curtains at night to help retain heat in the room
- Make sure exterior doors are not left open

**It is also important to note that the use of portable heaters, fans, and other devices circumvents the intent of this policy and are not acceptable.**



## Question of the Month

Last month, we asked Department of Administration employees **“What’s your most irrational fear that you know makes no sense, but it’s still real to you?”** Below are some of the responses we received.

- Going to the dentist
- Octopuses
- Inanimate objects coming to life. No creepy dolls for me, thanks.
- Deep water (it’s irrational fear because I know how to tread water and swim, and yet...)
- The unmanned floor cleaning machine at Sam’s Club (stalking me - LOL)
- I’ve always feared being buried alive. I watched a movie (fiction) when I was young about a man that was poisoned by his wife. They buried him and he wasn’t dead. After that, I have had that fear.
- House centipedes

**Welcome!** ... The Department of Administration is pleased to welcome **Gregory Bailey** (Technology); **Jarred Badaluco Crist** (Technology); **Salena Legg** (CPRB); **Rashawn Davis** (GSD); **Chad Bodmer** (BRIM); **Jay Yoon** (PEIA); **Gregory Quinn** (Technology); and **Joshua Collins** (Technology).

**Best Wishes** ... to **Joseph Thornton** (Public Defender Services); **Brian Thomas** (GSD); and **David Taylor** (GSD) who recently resigned from our department.

**Happy Retirement!** ... After years of hard work and dedication, we would like to wish **George Muncney** (Technology) the very best during his retirement.

**Question of the Month** ... Thank you to all of the individuals who continue to participate in our **Employee Question of the Month**. This month we want to know **“If your alarm clock had a voice, what would it say to you to wake you up every morning?”** To answer this question, visit <https://forms.gle/cFX-qwJCfQfUGdWNQ8>.

**Got News?** ... Share YOUR good news with all of your department co-workers! Email **Samantha.S.Knapp@wv.gov** with detailed information so we may include it in the next issue of the newsletter.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY in SEPTEMBER

Below is a list of Department of Administration employees celebrating their birthdays during the month of September:

**AVIATION** Michael Linkenauger

**BRIM** Luke Mitchell

**CPRB** Adam Blankenship  
Jennifer Dills  
Christine Fernandes  
Jamie Huff  
Kevin Kerns  
Virginia May  
Adena Mays  
Dan Morris  
Donald Murray  
Genna Saunders  
Paige Strickland  
Tammy White  
Melissa Williams  
Cody Young

**ETHICS** Donald Carter  
Daniel Guida

**FINANCE** Diane Corker  
Jennifer Curia  
Sarah Long  
Cynthia Williams

**FLEET** Kenny Yoakum

**GEN.SRVS.** John Anderson  
Aaron Armstrong  
Paul Boswell  
Ada Kennedy  
Gary Morris  
Todd Mosteller  
Terry Parsons  
Scotty Pauley  
Joseph Pratt

**GRIEVANCE** Joshua Fraenkel

**PERSONNEL** Brandon Perdue

**PUB.DEF.SRVS.** LeeAnn Doyle  
Mark Doyle  
Dana Eddy  
John McGinn

**PEIA** Sherman Biniza  
Damita Johnson  
Donna King  
Jessica Wallace

**PURCHASING** Krista Chadband  
Rojen Embol

**REAL ESTATE** Gail Delmaar  
John Hildreth  
Arlie Hubbard

**SEC. ADMIN.** Sara Jones

**TECHNOLOGY** Thomas Allen  
Thomas Ball  
Tanya Bradshaw  
Franklin Buskirk  
Kenneth Casto  
Dakota Cheatwood  
Scott Combs  
Derrick Day  
James Dixon  
Patricia Ebert  
Madeline Fitzwater  
John Foster  
Adena Mays  
Shannon McGrew  
Michael Moore  
Jason Nichols  
Robert Pack  
Allison Plants  
Deidre Rainwater  
Terri Sheets  
Mark Smith  
Larry Sutters  
Stephen Windon

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Patrick Morrissey  
Governor

Samantha Knapp/  
Communication  
Director/Editor

Production  
Courtney Johnson  
Teresa Cutlip  
Jessica Carl