



Gary Shelton's first Scott County employee badge, issued in 1978 when he was hired as a security officer in the jail.

EmergenSCENE

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Emergency Management
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Plan for dangerous winter storms

Minnesota residents are used to cold, snowy winters. Winter is a way of life for us, so much so that we often lose sight of how dangerous winters can be. From exposure to the cold to winter storms to driving in icy conditions, there are a lot of threats to keep in mind during the coldest part of the year.

It didn't take long this year for temperatures to drop below freezing. In the peak of winter, even a small wind can drive the wind chill down to dangerous levels for anyone exposed. Most people in our area have learned to properly layer and protect themselves for normal exposure to winter cold. Proper planning can make time outside much more comfortable.

Winter storms are inevitable each year. Freezing rain can immobilize the entire community, stranding commuters, knocking down trees, and causing power outages. In the worst winter storms, power may not be restored for few days. Every Minnesotan should have a plan for dangerous winter storms. Most Minnesotans have a winter emergency kit for their car, but do you have one for your home?

During a winter power outage, most of the conveniences of home will quickly fail: The furnace and hot water heaters will stop working. Shorter days mean long nights without lights. Even the garage door opener will fail unless it has a battery backup. Everyone should think about surviving a winter day without power.

In addition, winter power outages have unique risks. Many people have been killed by carbon monoxide. Cars, gas grills, camp stoves, and generators should never be run inside the house or in the attached garage. Connecting a generator to the electrical supply of a house should only be completed by a licensed electrician. Unfortunately, people have been electrocuted trying to use a portable generator for the first time during a power outage. During these storms, emergency services will be strained. If you become injured, it will take longer for help to arrive.

At the very least, each home should have a basic winter survival kit. This should include snacks, food, water, blankets or sleeping bags, flashlights, and spare batteries. It is important to consider that your caloric intake may need to be much higher if you are living in a cold environment. (This is a great excuse to keep a few chocolate candy bars hidden for a special occasion.) Special consideration must be made for those with functional needs. It is especially important that you be exceptionally careful if you chose to use candles. A tipped over candle may quickly catch your house on fire. Volunteer firefighters will have to battle the power outage at their own homes to get to the fire station.

In the event of a long-term winter power outage, emergency shelters may be opened. These shelters are places with generators that can maintain a safe temperature. What they are *not* comfortable. If you come to a shelter, you should expect to sleep on the floor; some shelters have a limited number of cots. Bring things to keep yourself occupied and any medication necessary to sustain your life for a few days. We will use our mass notification system to send a wireless emergency alert (think AMBER Alert) to cell phone users in the area and messages those who have subscribed to our CodeRED system to announce the opening of a shelter.

A properly equipped **standby generator** can keep your home functioning when utility power fails. Versions of generators can operate on gasoline, diesel fuel, propane, or natural gas. Once the motor of the generator spins, power is produced. A transfer switch allows the power from the generator to feed selected circuits in your home. Automatic transfer switches operate like a big light switch that flips from utility power to generator power when power fails. Local home improvement stores offer generator installation services.

Like every year, the first winter snow brought too many crashes. Our snowplow operators are trained, experienced, and prepared to assist us through another winter season, but we need to give them the space to do their job. Last year, 72 vehicles hit snowplows in Minnesota – and many of the crashes were caused by inattentive drivers and motorists driving too fast for the conditions. **Stay back at least five car lengths behind the plow. Slow down to a safe speed for your weather condition, and give yourself a lot of travel time. As always, buckle up, keep your eyes on the road, and stay sober.**

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unparalleled, and her understanding of the County's organizational and community culture has been demonstrated through her leadership in such efforts as SCALE, Delivering What Matters, Priority Based Budgeting, and developing a true data-driven, citizen-centered environment."

Scott County Vice Chair Barbara Weckman Brekke concurred, adding that "... Lezlie is well-respected throughout our community, this organization, and the region as a whole, and she has gained a great level of trust with her collaborative approach to doing business. I know this Board has made the right selection for this position."

In addition to Vermillion's professional attributes, the Board also expressed their intent to continue the organization's current course toward meeting its larger goals and objectives, preserving a level of stability in the pursuit of the County's mission. "We have the utmost faith in Lezlie's ability to maintain our standards of fiscal and professional excellence," Chair Wolf continued. "And she has a well-tested team of high caliber staff to help us all move forward confidently."

Vermillion will officially assume her new position on Jan 1.

Shelton's service

Shelton has served as the Scott County Administrator since 2009, and has been with the County since 1978 when he was hired to work as a security officer in the jail. He later served as a Corrections Unit Supervisor, Jail Administrator, Computer Services Manager, and was the Deputy County Administrator before being named the Administrator.

"Gary has exhibited exceptional management skills and innovation throughout his 40-plus years of service

with Scott County," said Scott County Commissioner Jon Ulrich. "Scott County has undergone rapid growth during his tenure as Deputy Administrator and Administrator, and he has helped manage the growth while providing the level of services necessary to meet -- and often exceed -- mandates and citizen expectations."

Ulrich, the longest serving County Board member, said under Shelton's management the County has maintained a structurally balanced budget, restored its fund balance, and improved its bond rating to the coveted AAA rating. He also provided leadership for such diverse projects as partnering on a new medical examiner's facility, establishing a drug court and a mobile crisis intervention team, developing a pay for performance merit system for County employees, building partnerships for the development of the Regional Public Safety Training Facility and an Intensive Residential Treatment (IRTS) Facility, and overseeing a countywide system of broadband fiber to help save money and boost economic development and connectivity of public institutions. "His vision and collaborative efforts have benefited Scott County and the entire region," noted Ulrich.

Shelton said the County today is "certainly not the same County I started in. Scott County today has to be lean, linked, mobile, electronic, collaborative, and malleable. And what I learned along the way is that the problem is never how to get new, innovative thoughts into our minds and into practice, but how to get the old ones out."

Shelton said he and his wife, Linda, plan to continue to live in Scott County.

The County Board will recognize Shelton for his years of service at its Dec. 18 meeting.

SCALE news Continued from previous page

ment size. For now, the council and city staff are focused on building in the downtown area of Shakopee. The study is expected to be completed in February, at which point the City Council, in cooperation with Scott County, will explore funding options.

From the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community:

Free Christmas tree drop-off for Scott County residents

Don't trash your tree—let the SMSC Organics Recycling Facility recycle it for free! Wednesday, Dec. 26, through Saturday, Jan. 12, Scott County residents can bring their trees, garlands, wreaths, and spruce tops free of charge to the SMSC Organics Recycling Facility, located at 1905 Mystic Lake Drive South in Shakopee. Saturday drop-off will be available on Dec. 29, Jan. 5, and Jan. 12 from 8 a.m. to noon. Christmas trees must be cleared of tinsel, flocking, decorations, and everything non-compostable. The SMSC Organics Recycling Facility will be closed on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

Celebrate the New Year family style at Playworks

Kick off 2019 with your kids! Join Playworks for their annual New Year's Eve Party on Dec. 31 from 4 – 7 p.m. in the Playworks Atrium. Complete with party hats, confetti, noisemakers, and games, this party will have everything you and your kiddos need to ring in the New Year the right way. All are welcome! Standard Atrium rates apply. Located at 2200 Trail of Dreams in Prior Lake.

Learn how to save lives

Mdewakanton Public Safety is offering a Friends and Family CPR class on Jan. 2 from 6:30 – 8 p.m. Friends and Family CPR is excellent for parents, child care providers, or teens that babysit. Cost is \$10 per person, and the class is located at Mdewakanton Public Safety, 2525 Flandreau Trail NW in Prior Lake. Call (952) 233-1077 or visit mdfire.org to sign up or for more information about additional classes.

All enterprises owned and operated by your neighbor, the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community. Learn more about the SMSC at shakopeedakota.org.



SmartLink Dial-a-Ride is a shared ride transit service available when you call for a reservation. **All ride requests are available to anyone in Scott County** and SmartLink recommends you call two to three days in advance to ensure your request is filled. The bus offers convenient door-to-door service and operates evenings and weekends in addition to daily service. Fares are based on time of day (see below).

To schedule a ride, please call (952) 496-8341 and select "Option 1."

Fares:
6 - 9 a.m. and 3 - 6:30 p.m., \$4.50
9 a.m. - 3 p.m. and weeknights 6:30 - 9 p.m., \$3.50
Saturdays and Sundays, 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., \$3.50