

## Legal SCENE

By Ron Hocevar  
Scott County Attorney



### Victims' rights respected; support provided during court process

National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW) is April 19 – 25, 2020. This year's theme is *Seek Justice – Ensure Victims' Rights – Inspire Hope*. NCVRW is an initiative to promote victims' rights and honor crime victims and those who advocate on their behalf. In recognition of Victims' Rights Week, I wanted to talk about what we do for victims in Minnesota, Scott County, and this office.

Under Minnesota law, victims and witnesses of crimes have many rights. These rights include the right to be notified of:

- The content of any plea bargain agreement;
- Changes in the schedule of court;
- Final disposition of the case;
- Any pending appeals by the offender, including the right to attend appellate arguments and hearings;
- Any sentence modification for the offender; and
- When an offender is released from any form of custody, transferred from one location to another, or has escaped.

Additionally, victims have the right to participate in the prosecution including:

- Attending the sentencing hearing and providing a victim impact statement;
- Providing input in a pre-trial diversion decision;
- Requesting a speedy trial;
- Having a supporting person with them at court hearings, including when they testify; and
- Objecting to a plea agreement.

Victims can also apply for financial assistance, request restitution from the offender, have their name and address withheld in public proceedings, and stay in a secure waiting area during court proceedings.

Domestic violence, sexual assault, and harassment victims have even more rights and protections. For instance, sexual assault victims do not pay for the cost of a sexual assault examination. So any concern about cost should never deter a victim from receiving appropriate medical care.

In this office, I have three individuals dedicated to taking care of victims and helping them through the court process. They are Tera Portinga, Caari Dueffert, and Tori Haider. They do an excellent job making sure all the victims' needs are met, and making them as comfortable as possible navigating the court system.

We are also very fortunate in Scott County to have two other organizations that do an outstanding job in assisting victims and providing them the resources they need: the Sexual Violence Center and the Southern Valley Alliance for Battered Women (SVABW). Both the Sexual Violence Center and SVABW have 24-hour confidential crisis lines. The Sexual Violence Center can be contacted at (612) 871-5111. SVABW can be contacted at (952) 873-4214.

When local law enforcement gets involved with a domestic assault situation, SVABW is contacted to work with the victim. Their trained advocates provide information and resources and work closely with the victim on legal issues, including assisting victims in seeking Orders for Protection, which require abusers to have no contact with their victim. SVABW has a Safe Home Program where a victim and their family can stay in a safe, confidential, and private home for up to three days while the victim makes long-term plans. SVABW also provides an "I'm O.K." Children's Visitation Center. This is a supervised, safe, and child-friendly setting where children can visit their non-custodial parent or where supervised exchanges can be made.

SVABW has their annual fundraiser coming up on Friday, June 12 at Mystic Lake Center. The social hour and silent auction begin at 6 p.m., with dinner and the program starting at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$75 per person. You can register online at [www.svabw.org](http://www.svabw.org) or by calling (952) 873-4214. Please consider joining us for a fun evening to support this great organization.

## GENERAL NOTICE TO CONTROL OR ERADICATE NOXIOUS WEEDS UPON YOUR PROPERTY IN SCOTT COUNTY

Notice is hereby given on or before the 15th day of April 2020, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 18.83 Subd. 1 (2018), that all persons in Scott County, Minnesota, shall control or eradicate all noxious weeds on land they own, occupy or are required to maintain. Control or eradication may be accomplished by any lawful method, but the methods may need to be repeated in order to prevent the spread of viable noxious weed seeds and other propagating parts to other lands. Failure to comply with the General Notice may mean that an individual notice will be issued. An individual notice may be appealed within two working days of receipt to the appeal committee in the county where the land is located. Failure to comply with the individual notice will mean that the inspector having jurisdiction may either hire the work done or seek a misdemeanor charge against the person(s) who failed to comply. If the work is hired by the inspector, the cost can be placed as a tax upon the land and collected as other real estate taxes are collected. You may obtain a list of the plants that are noxious and a list of the members of the appeal committee from the County Designated Employee or local weed inspector. The local weed inspectors are township supervisors, city mayors and/or their appointed assistants.

### BY ORDER OF THE TOWNSHIP AND CITY WEED INSPECTORS OF SCOTT COUNTY

BELLE PLAINE TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS	LOUISVILLE TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS	CITY OF BELLE PLAINE MAYOR
BLAKELEY TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS	CITY OF SHAKOPEE SUPERVISORS	CITY OF ELKO NEW MARKET MAYOR
CREDIT RIVER TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS	NEW MARKET TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS	CITY OF JORDAN MAYOR
CEDAR LAKE TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS	SAND CREEK TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS	CITY OF NEW PRAGUE MAYOR
HELENA TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS	ST. LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS	CITY OF PRIOR LAKE MAYOR
JACKSON TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS	SPRING LAKE TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS	CITY OF SAVAGE MAYOR

**If you have complaints regarding a noxious weed issue, your first point of contact should be either your township or city official.**

### 2020 Minnesota Noxious Weeds

To view the Minnesota 2020 Noxious Weed List, please visit  
<https://www.mda.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/2020-01/2020NoxiousWeedListFactsheetV3.pdf>

Contact Nick Reishus, County Designated Employee, Noxious Weed Inspector for more information at (952) 496-8707 or [nreishus@co.scott.mn.us](mailto:nreishus@co.scott.mn.us)

For assistance with educational information on prevention, eradication, or control please call the Scott SWCD at (952) 492-5425.

## Farmers, boat businesses recycle tons of plastic

For the second year in a row, farmers and boat businesses have worked together to accomplish big things in Scott County. For 2019, that big thing was to recycle 177,843 pounds of plastic wrap, enough to make 16 million plastic grocery bags!

What do farmers and boat businesses have in common that could yield that much recyclable material? The answer is *plastic wrap*. Just like most of us use plastic products every day to help preserve and protect food and products, farmers and boat storage businesses use plastic wrap to preserve and protect their livestock feed and customers' boats, only on a much larger scale. You've probably seen the white ag plastic tubes throughout the County, or the boats covered in white stretch film plastic throughout winter. That plastic is (#4) Low Density Polyethylene or (LDPE), just like our bread and frozen food bags, and very similar to our (#2) High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) grocery bags. And just like those bags, plastic wrap can't be recycled in recycling carts, which means it has to be collected differently. So what happens when a valuable material like plastic wrap is recyclable, but it can't go in the recycling cart like plastic bottles, or a bin at the grocery store like our shopping bags?

By coordinating pickup at farms and businesses and providing dumpsters for collection, Revolution Plas-



**Scott County farmers and businesses using plastic wrap recycled 117,843 pounds of it in 2019.**

tics collects plastic wrap from farms and businesses across the County. Annually, the business recovers, cleans, and processes over 150,000,000 pounds of plastic material, which is then recycled into a host of different products, from garbage bags to agricultural plastics, and used all over again, keeping it out of landfills. Working with Revolution Plastics, Diann Korbel with the Scott SWCD has been instrumental in making it happen here in Scott County. Almost 100 percent of farmers and producers who use plastic wrap participated in 2019, helping us exceed our goal.

Two farmers who participated last year were effusive in their praise. Tim Zweber, of Zweber Family

Farms near Elko, is grateful for the recycling program. He says that he is proud that Scott County farmers now have a way to re-use their plastic rather than sending it to the landfill. Additionally, the dumpsters prevent loose plastic from blowing into fields and tree lines. Rick Stocker, a dairy farmer from Jordan, agrees. He believes this is a win for producers and the County.

Increasing recycling by 89 tons is a great win, especially since waste was diverted from landfills. It also helps Scott County exceed its current recycling goal of 50 percent, as programs like this help us to recycle 60 percent of our waste annually. However, with a new goal to recycle 75 percent of our waste by 2030, there is a lot of room for improvement. Estimates suggest American households use 1500 plastic bags a year, and only one percent of that gets recycled in store drop-off locations. If that number is correct, Scott County households generate approximately 413 tons of plastic shopping bag waste a year, and we only recycle about four tons of it. So although we are doing great things to increase recycling, there is always more work to reduce, reuse, and recycle.

For more information about plastic recycling, contact Scott County Environmental Services at (952) 496-8177 -- and please remember not to recycle plastic bags in your curbside recycling cart!