



Public Services & Revenue Division Director Update

Date: February 3, 2026

Many townships considering November elections

The Elections Department is actively preparing for the March Township Elections, which will be held on March 10. Five townships will have questions on the ballot for their voters (Castle Rock, Douglas, Eureka, Hampton, and Ravenna) and will ask voters if they would like to change the town's general election date from March to November of even years. This change makes it easier for voters to participate, aligning township elections with county, school district, and state races. Randolph Township voters approved this in 2023 and many townships in the State have already made the switch and found that it helps reduce costs and increase convenience for voters.

Generous Donation to the non-profit organization, Friends of the West. St. Paul Library

In his will, Thomas (Tom) Richard Kane bequeathed his home in St. Paul, Minnesota to the Friends of the Wentworth Library. Mr. Kane was a member of the Friends since 2019 and visited the Wentworth Library weekly. The Friends organization learned about this generous gift in January 2026 and are working with Mr. Kane's lawyer to manage the real estate transfer.

Assessing Services staff are reminded to take precautions when at properties

Assessing Services is approaching the final field work necessary to complete the 2026 Assessment. It is estimated that there are less than 200 remaining newly built homes or remodeling building permits to inspect. Commissioner Droste recently heard from a resident with concerns regarding staff safety during Operation Metro Surge when appraisers are knocking on doors. Field appraisers are trained on field safety and possess proper identification when visiting properties. Appraisers wear bright vests with Assessing Services logo on the front and carry picture identification when knocking on any door. As field work is wrapping up for the year and with heightened public awareness to activities and presence of people, staff have been reminded:

- *Leave the area if you see any ICE vehicles or suspect enforcement activity in the area*
- *Wear logo vests at all times and hold out picture identification and explain the purpose of your visit*
- *Use available technology or building permit data in place of an on-site visit when reasonably possible to assess new construction*

During routine quintile inspections, when an on-site inspection is necessary, Assessing Services sends out notification postcards to all homes with planned inspections to advise homeowners that they can expect an

appraiser to visit. Today's uncertain environment is further confirmation of the value of using technology as much as practical in the assessment of property when an on-site visit is not warranted.

How normal Library services are supporting families in need during Operation Metro Surge

Within the library's regular role and work, the library is providing supports to help the community. The library shared 400 books, activities, and resources with Neighbors, Inc., 360 Communities, The Open Door Pantry, and Project Access to go to youth whose families are seeking assistance, many who are afraid to send their children to school. The books and activities are set aside for community outreach and funded by the Dakota County Library Foundation. Community members are using library spaces to coordinate food drives and using their connections in schools and neighborhoods to distribute food directly to those in need. We have also been in communication with Dakota County Public Health and Social Services to coordinate efforts. A major theme from recent library event evaluations is gratitude for the library as a place to be in community where diversity is valued – feedback that shows that the library's work and efforts to foster belonging remain essential.

Attached is a Library resource handout that will be available in English, Spanish and Somali with the ability to translate it into other languages as partners request.

Contact us

If you have questions on any of this information, please contact Tom Novak, Director, at Tom.Novak@co.dakota.mn.us or 651-438-4366, or Teresa Mitchell, Deputy Director, at Teresa.Mitchell@co.dakota.mn.us or 651-438-4247.

AT HOME LIBRARY RESOURCES

To access any of these free resources, visit dakotacounty.us/library, select “search the website” and enter the title or key word listed below. You can register online for a free library card and have it mailed to you.

EBOOKS & AUDIOBOOKS

Libby (app)

Enjoy a collection of digital books, audiobooks and magazines.

Ebooks MN

Access to thousands of titles from Minnesota’s independent publishers.

BookFlix

Pairs video storybooks with related nonfiction e-books for kids.

TumbleBook

Collection of animated, talking picture books for kids.

STUDENT SERVICES

HelpNow

Provides 24/7 online homework help in both English and Spanish.

Student Cards

Middle and high school students can use their student ID as a library card. Access instructions can be found at dakotacounty.us/library, search for student cards.

CURBSIDE PICK-UP

Place holds on library books and materials and schedules a time for someone to pick them up at a branch library curbside location.

CRAFT AND HOBBY

Online video-on-demand craft, cooking, and wellness tutorials in English and Spanish for both kids and adults.

2GO KITS

Activity kits complete with the supplies and equipment needed to try out a variety of activities related to fitness, learning, STEM, nature and technology. All ages.

LINKEDIN LEARNING

Easy-to-use online video tutorials for professional development.

