

Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

May 15, 2020

1. **Monday's COVID-19 Update** - Monday's update will be given by the Yellowstone County Unified Incident Management Team.

COVID-19 Information:

- Governor Extends Energy Assistance
- Governor Secures Swabs, Viral Transport Medium to Support Testing Framework

2. **Utility Payments** - As of April 30th, 807 accounts were in shut-off status. This means that these customers had not paid their bills and would have been shut off if Public Works was shutting off water for non-payment. In pre-Covid-19 conditions, Public Works typically had an average of 32 shut-offs during this time of year.

Public Works accounts receivable balance was \$4,225,045 as of 4/30/20 which is an increase of \$776,078, or 22.5% over the accounts receivable balance on April 30th of the prior year.

3. **GIS** - The City's GIS Team has put together a new "City of Billings Mapping Library". It is a whole new page designed around highlighting the many interactive maps that are available to the public on our website. Take a look: <https://city-of-billings-public-mapping-library-billings.hub.arcgis.com/>
4. **Fiscal Year 2021 Proposed Budget Work Session** – Monday, May 18th Aviation & MET, Information Technology and Planning & Community Services will present their FY2021 budgets.

5/12/20 – City Council Work Session

Human Resources

Question: CM Purinton asked what is the average starting pay for a City Employee?

Answer: Average starting salary, by union, is the following:

<u>Employee Group</u>	<u>Average of Annual Starting Salary</u>
<u>Fire (Non-Probation F77 Step 4 at 6 mos)</u>	<u>\$54,700.82</u>
<u>Non-Bargaining</u>	<u>\$52,973.37</u>
<u>Police</u>	<u>\$54,310.67</u>
<u>Teamster</u>	<u>\$35,496.95</u>

Question: CM Ewalt asked how many of the people that left the City were for retirements?

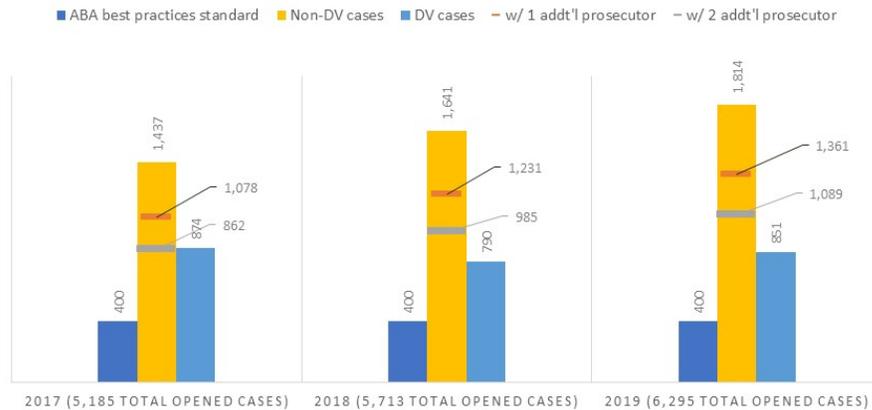
Answer: In 2019, there were 35 retirements from the City.

Legal

Question: CM Purinton what would that graph look like with a second prosecutor, what would that cost? How many to get to ABA standards?

Answer: It will take about 5 additional attorneys to reduce the workload closer to ABA standards. Each additional attorney will cost approximately \$147K in first year costs. An adjusted slide is presented below to demonstrate with a 2nd additional prosecutor.

Caseload Per Prosecuting Attorney



Police

No unanswered questions.

Fire

No unanswered questions.

Have a wonderful weekend!

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

Steve Bullock
GOVERNOR



Mike Cooney
LT. GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, May 14, 2020

CONTACTS:

Marissa Perry, Communications Director, Governor's Office, (406) 444-4514

Erin Loranger, Press Secretary, Governor's Office, (406) 444-9725

Jon Ebelt, Public Information Officer, DPHHS, (406) 444-0936

Governor Bullock Extends Energy Assistance for Thousands of Montanans Impacted by COVID-19

MONTANA – Governor Steve Bullock today announced he is directing \$5 million in federal CARES Act funds to expand assistance to thousands of Montanans struggling to afford their home energy needs due to financial strain caused by COVID-19.

“Montana families shouldn’t have to choose between putting food on the table and paying their utility bill,” Governor Bullock said. **“This funding is critical to keeping families afloat and will give peace of mind to thousands of current LIEAP clients, and to thousands more Montanans who will now be eligible for the program.”**

The \$5 million in federal funding will be used to provide COVID-19 supplemental assistance to approximately 18,000 current Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) clients. It will also be used to fund the LIEAP Emergency COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program, which the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) estimates will provide energy assistance to an additional 6,000 Montana households. These funds are not part of the \$1.25 billion Coronavirus Relief Fund allocated to the state.

Current LIEAP program recipients will automatically receive the supplemental assistance. The supplemental benefit will be applied toward the recipient’s electric bill, since the electricity cost is usually higher during the summer months. Further, current LIEAP clients will be able to have any remaining 2019-2020 season benefit applied to their accounts rather than being returned at the end of the heating season as is normally the case.

Individuals who are not current LIEAP clients can apply for the new Emergency COVID-19 Energy Assistance program by contacting their [local LIEAP office](#). Individuals can also call the toll-free LIEAP number at 1-833-317-1080. Applications are available now for both homeowners and renters.

“We know these are challenging times for Montana families, and we are here to respond to the immediate needs of the people we serve,” DPHHS Director Sheila Hogan said. “We strongly encourage families who think they may be eligible to apply.”

Eligibility for LIEAP is based on household income and resource limits. The Emergency COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program will use a one-month income (annualized) lookback period to determine eligibility. For example, a family of four with monthly household income of \$4,046.00 would be eligible. For new clients, unemployment and/or documented proof of loss of wages related to COVID-19 may also be used to determine eligibility.

Households that receive support from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program may qualify automatically for energy assistance.

The benefit period for the program will run from today through August 31, 2020 or until funds are expended.

In addition to the \$5 million received by the State of Montana, Tribal LIHEAP programs in Montana received \$1 million in direct supplemental funding through the CARES Act. Tribal program participants are encouraged to contact their local Tribal LIHEAP offices for information about how these funds will be allocated.

Additional information about LIEAP is available at www.lieap.mt.gov.

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Monday, May 11, 2020

CONTACTS:

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Erin Loranger, Press Secretary, Governor's Office, (406) 444-9725

Governor Bullock Secures 19,500 Swabs, 9,000 Viral Transport Medium to Support Testing Framework

MONTANA – Governor Steve Bullock today announced he secured 19,500 swabs and 9,000 viral transport medium that have arrived from the federal government to support the effort to continue testing symptomatic Montanans and ramp up testing to protect vulnerable Montanans in nursing homes and assisted living facilities and in tribal communities.

“As we continue on the path of reopening, it’s critical we have consistent access to supplies to identify new cases and ambitiously contact trace to remove chains of transmission and continue to contain the virus,” Governor Bullock said. **“I will continue to work with the federal government and private suppliers to ensure we receive the consistent supply chain we need to reach our testing targets.”**

Governor Bullock recently announced a framework to boost testing over the next several months, including a goal to eventually conduct 60,000 tests per month and prioritize testing for vulnerable Montanans in nursing homes and assisted living facilities, tribal communities, and ensure there are enough supplies to continue testing Montanans with COVID-19 related symptoms.

Last week, the state worked with nursing homes and assisted living facilities on logistics for testing and is working with facilities to schedule testing over the next several weeks.

To continue testing symptomatic Montanans and perform contact tracing and to scale up Montana’s ability to test vulnerable Montanans, Governor Bullock has consistently participated in phone calls with the nation’s governors and the President, Vice President, and Senior Administration Officials to reiterate Montana’s need for a consistent supply chain of swabs to collect samples and other supplies including viral transport medium to protect the sample during its transportation to a lab for testing.