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511WI is Your Winter Driving Headquarters

Drivers need to be ready for changing travel conditions during winter weather. Check www.511wi.gov before you venture out. It's the place to go for travel conditions in Wisconsin.

If you're a Twitter user, Wisconsin's official statewide travel information connection on Twitter is @511WI. Users following @511WI receive timely travel and traffic tweets. In addition to winter road conditions, @511WI provides updates on:

- travel alerts and advisories
- traffic incidents and delays
- travel times on busy highways
- road construction impacts
- highway traffic camera imagery
- public safety messages
- traffic enforcement efforts

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation wants you to "know before you go" by joining the @511WI online community.

Stay connected with DOT news in your area with @WisDOTnorthcent, @WisDOTnortheast and @WisDOTnorthwest. Each site provides region-specific tweets.

Nominate a Top Rural Development Initiative Today

Wisconsin Rural Partners Inc. (WRP) is now accepting nominations to recognize 2016 Top Rural Development Initiatives. WRP looks for nominations that cite positive community impacts, regional success stories, or demonstrated innovative ideas.

Any project, activity, or even a whole community in rural Wisconsin is eligible. Initiatives do not have to be community-based: WRP may recognize any state, federal, tribal, non-profit or for-profit business initiative, regional or statewide, as long as it meets program criteria. Initiatives can be in agriculture, economic or community development,

business, education, health, energy, environment, philanthropy, tourism, the arts, or any other field.

The Top Rural Development Initiative Program began in 1998, to help uncover and share the great things happening throughout rural Wisconsin and serve as a capacity building tool from which all rural Wisconsin communities stand to benefit.

Guidelines and the submission form are available at <http://wirural.org>. Nominations are due Friday, February 5, 2016.

Attention Municipalities!

Training Dates for Community Development Block Grants

The Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Energy, Housing & Community Resources – Bureau of Community Development is pleased to announce two application training sessions regarding the 2016 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for Public Facilities and for Planning.

In anticipation of a highly competitive process for accessing CDBG funding, the purpose of the training is to offer potential applicants guidance and instructions in writing successful grant applications.

The two application training sessions will be:

- **February 24, 2016** in Madison, from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., with a webinar training option
- **March 2, 2016** in Minocqua, from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

More information is available at www.doa.state.wi.us/Divisions/Housing/Bureau-of-Community-Development

more on 2

Chambers & EDCs

Help Spread the Word!

WEDC Announces New Business Development Tax Program

As of Jan. 1, 2016, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) will begin accepting applications for the new **Business Development Tax Credit Program**.

Businesses can receive tax credits for activities including job creation, training, capital investment and corporate headquarters location or retention. Tax credits can only be claimed for job creation over and above a company's previously existing employment base in Wisconsin.

The new Business Development Tax Credits are refundable, meaning that if a company is authorized to receive a quantity of tax credits that exceeds its tax liability, the business can receive a refund for the difference.

The application process begins with contacting a regional account manager to discuss the opportunity and program eligibility. More information about the Business Development Tax Credit Program can be found on the WEDC website at InWisconsin.com/grow/assistance/btc

Save the Date!

Wisconsin Rural Summit

April 20-21, 2016 in Carter, WI
www.wirural.org

Tax Incentives for Businesses

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) [Interactive Incentives Finder](#) assists businesses in identifying tax incentives that may be available to them in Wisconsin. [This page](#) also provides a convenient collection of links to available tax credits, deductions, and grant programs aimed at growing the state's economy.

Wisconsin Procurement Institute

www.wispro.org

Wisconsin Procurement Institute (WPI) is a non-profit organization created by Les Aspin in 1987 to assist Wisconsin businesses with their Government contracting needs. In the last 5 years, Wisconsin businesses have credited WPI with helping them win several billion dollars in Federal contracts which translated to over 4,500 new jobs across the State. Each year WPI works with over 1,200 businesses and presents over 25 seminars/conferences throughout the State.

Two of those seminars are coming to northwest Wisconsin:

- **Government Contracting Opportunities for Small Business in Ladysmith**– March 24, 2016
www.wispro.org/events/government-contracting-opportunities-for-small-business-4/
- **13th Annual Women's Business Conference in Eau Claire** – April 21, 2016
www.wispro.org/events/13th-annuals-womens-business-conference/

Financial Literacy Grants Benefit Northern Wisconsin Schools

Financial literacy grants funded by the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions (DFI) are making a difference in school districts across Northern Wisconsin. The grants, given in 2014 and totaling \$133,142, were awarded to 10 Northern Wisconsin schools and the Cooperative Educational Service Agency #9 in Tomahawk. The grants allowed those districts to implement innovative personal finance programs and, in some cases, make a course in personal finance a requirement for graduation from high school.

In addition to CESA 9, districts or schools that received grants were: Hurley School District, Northwestern High School in Maple, Northwood High School in Minong, Rice Lake Area School District, Siren High School, Solon Springs High School, Superior High School, Wabeno Area School District, Washburn High School and Winter School District.

Do You Know Someone Age 14, 15 or 16 Receiving SSI?

Tell them about Wisconsin Promise!

Wisconsin Promise helps teens with disabilities and their families achieve their school and work goals and move toward a stronger financial future.

So far the program has enrolled 73% of target. The time to enroll is running out! Visit www.promisewi.org or call 855-480-5618.

About the Northern Office

The Northern Office serves as a connection point between communities in Northern Wisconsin and the resources of state government. If you are looking for information, have a suggestion, or need assistance with problem resolution with a state agency, please contact me. I travel throughout the 40 county region north of U.S. Highway 10 and can be available, with 3 to 4 weeks notice, to attend your meetings and events. Keep in touch!