Treasurer is custodian of county’s money

The office of the Midland County Treasurer was created by the State of Michigan Constitution. The treasurer is elected on a county-wide ballot every four years. The majority of the treasurer's duties are set by statute.

The Midland County Treasurer is the custodian of the county’s money and has a fiduciary responsibility for receipting, reconciling and investing the funds of all county departments.

The county treasurer is responsible for the collection of delinquent real property taxes. Through a process referred to as “settlement,” the county treasurer is notified of delinquent taxes by the township and cities in the county on March 1 of each year. The treasurer pays the amount owed in delinquent taxes to the local units of government from the Delinquent Tax Revolving Fund. In this manner the townships, cities and schools receive all tax revenue due to them. The county treasurer then works to collect the delinquent taxes from local property owners.

If the property taxes are not paid within two years of being turned over delinquent, the property is subject to foreclosure and may be offered at a public auction to the highest bidder. The county treasurer holds a public auction of foreclosed property tax properties each summer in July or August.

The county treasurer recently started accepting online credit card payments for delinquent property taxes.

The office of the County Treasurer also conducts the following:

1. Sales of dog licenses and oversight of all licensing of dogs within the county.
2. Collection of delinquent personal property taxes for all but two local units of government.
3. Audits Principal Residence Exemptions (PREs).
4. Processes tax adjustments as directed by Michigan Tax Tribunal, State Tax Commission and local boards of review.
5. Certifies warranty deeds for unpaid delinquent property taxes.
6. Issues transient merchant licenses.
7. Collects real estate transfer tax revenue.
8. Conducts property tax searches for ownership and property tax status.
9. Assists local governments with certification of abandoned properties.
10. Reconciles bank statements and general ledger accounts.

The office of the Midland County Treasurer is dedicated to serving taxpayers with a commitment toward customer service and innovative improvements. The staff upholds a willingness to assist the public in a manner that promotes respect, education and understanding.

The office is located in the Midland County Services Building on the first floor. Office hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., except holidays. The main office phone number is (989) 832-6850. http://co.midland.mi.us/Treasurer.aspx

Gransden is Administrator/Controller

Midland County Administrator/Controller Bridgette Gransden is the chief financial officer of the County of Midland. The board of commissioners looks to this office to provide overall management, leadership and direction to the agencies and programs of Midland County in a manner consistent with State law and the policies of the board. Gransden serves as board liaison in leading the labor negotiation process with the county’s unions, developing the annual budget, completing the annual audit, as well as the day to day operations as established by the board of commissioners.

The administrator/controller has oversight over multiple non elected departments including the finance department, facilities, community corrections, information technology, geographic information systems, emergency management, human resources, equalization, public guardian, health department, mosquito control, parks and recreation, and veterans services. In each of these departments there is an appointed department head responsible for taking care of leading the department and managing the daily activities.

Gransden also works closely with the six countywide elected officials and four judges in terms of finance and administrative policy of the county. It is the role of the administrator/controller to recommend changes to the board of commissioners that may improve the county’s position both administratively and financially.

http://co.midland.mi.us/Administrator/Controller.aspx

The Office of Public Guardian provides assistance to those in need

The Office of Public Guardian was developed in 2006 to provide guardian and conservatorship services to residents of Midland County who are in need of protection and advocacy regarding health, housing, safety and finances. Steve Wixson is the director.

The public guardian serves mentally ill and incapacitated individuals in the community as appointed by the Midland County Probate Court. He represents the incapacitated individual on guardianship (personal and medical) and conservatorship (financial) matters. As wards of the court they are in need of services for various reasons and have no one else to provide for their needs.

The public guardian is present whenever and whenever the incapacitated individual has a need, be it at the hospital, nursing home, mental health unit, jail or personal residence. The person who is unable to make or communicate an informed decision about medical, housing and personal matters is protected by a guardian. Individuals who have assets that would be wasted or dissipated without proper oversight are protected by a conservator. The public guardian provides both services to the community.

The office works closely with local social services agencies such as Community Mental Health and Senior Services. The public guardian’s office has been very successful at providing stability to those who are experiencing the difficulties of incapacity.

Questions pertaining to guardian and conservator services can be answered by calling (989) 837-7145 or by email. More information available on the website http://co.midland.mi.us/PublicGuardian.aspx
Midland County Board of Commissioners make policy

The Midland County Board of Commissioners is the legislative and policy making body of county government. Each commissioner is elected to represent the people of a specific geographic region (district) of the county in matters for which county government is responsible.

Many of the board’s duties are specified by the Michigan Constitution and State Statute. The general functions of the board of commissioners are to:
- set policy for the county
- adopt and monitor an annual budget
- equalize property tax assessments
- set fees
- adopt ordinances and rules
- contract for a yearly audit of all county funds
- approve contracts, grant agreements, and personnel procedures and matters, including collective bargaining agreements
- implement the recommendations of its auditing firm to ensure the legal and efficient use of tax dollars, and
- appoint representatives to all relevant boards and commissions

Midland County is divided into seven districts that are approximately equal in population. Each commissioner represents one district, serving a two-year term. The first meeting in January is the board of commissioners organizational meeting where the commission elects a chair, vice-chair, parliamentarian and chaplain. Also adopted at this meeting are the Board Mission Statement and Rules, which provide the framework under which the board of commissioners acts.

The board of commissioners has organized itself into three standing committees which review and discuss items of business. They are:
- Administrations and Operations Committee
- Finance Committee
- Human Services Committee

These committees, with three members each, review information and make recommendations for consideration by the entire seven-member board.

The board of commissioners meets the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 9 a.m. in the Board of Commissioners Room on the first floor of the County Services Building. All meetings are open to the public in accordance with the Open Meeting Act. The board welcomes residents to express their ideas or concerns about issues affecting Midland County during a public comment period at each meeting. All of the board of commissioners agendas, minutes and meeting videos are posted by the board of commissioners, and are available at http://co.midland.mi.us/Commissioners.aspx

Midland County is divided into seven districts that are approximately equal in population. Each commissioner represents one district, serving a two-year term.
The Friend of the Court Office: Helping families

Your local Midland County Friend of the Court office (FOC) has been in existence since 1919, and nearly half of the county's residents have been served by the office, but few people understand the multitude of services the FOC offers. If surveyed, most people would recognize that the FOC collects child support. It is true that the Midland County FOC has facilitated the collection of over $108.8 million over the past decade, but child support enforcement is only a small portion of the services that the FOC offers.

The FOC also ensures that non-custodial parents receive the parenting time to which they are entitled. Parents who have physical custody of children can be found in contempt of court if they wrongfully deny the other parent their court-ordered parenting time. In extreme cases, the punishment for contempt can include jail time. Historically, Michigan, through its Friends of the Court, was the first state in the nation to enforce parenting time orders. Now other states are beginning to recognize the importance of enforcing both child support and parenting time. Statistically, children who have frequent contact with both parents are more likely to complete high school, avoid drug use and become productive citizens in adulthood — including becoming good parents of the next generation of children. Also, a parent who is more involved with their children is more likely to pay child support. To assist the public, the Midland County FOC has two family evaluators who meet with unrepresented parents at a conciliation conference at the beginning of their case. Usually, an order for custody, parenting time and child support is entered. The Family Evaluators also assist the court by meeting with clients, preparing final reports and by attending court hearings.

Within the FOC office is an attorney who is a referee, and as such, he may hear cases and recommend orders for custody, child support and parenting time. By statute, the referee can hear any domestic relations motion except for a modification of an existing spousal support order. The local referee presides over approximately 1,950 hearings per year. An advantage of a FOC referee hearing is the expediency of getting issues resolved without a lengthy wait for a judge to hear the same issues.

Medical enforcement is another service the FOC provides. The office ensures that parents obtain court-ordered health insurance for children, and pay for a child's uninsured health expenses at a ratio ordered by the court. The referee may ultimately decide what is owed at a medical enforcement hearing.

The FOC office has a history of embracing technology to enhance its operations. In 1996, the Midland County FOC office created the first functional county-run FOC website in the United States. The site, developed by Family Evaluator Alan Zolotowski, received many awards and was chosen as one of the state's most useful websites by Ring On-line. In May, 2013, the FOC continued to move forward by going paperless. The office converted approximately 4,000 files with well over 1,000,000 pages of pleadings and legal documents into a digital format. By comparison, the state has a long-range plan for all courts to be digital by 2020. The Midland County FOC was, again, ahead of the curve. Going digital is both more efficient and environmentally friendly.

As you can see from the above, the FOC office is far more than just a child support enforcement agency. It is a multi-dimensional agency of the court, and its responsibilities and duties change continuously as political and legal philosophies change with the agencies that it reports to: the IRS, the Federal Office of Child Support, the DHHS-Office of Child Support, the Michigan Supreme Court — State Court Administrator’s Office, and the local county government. http://co.midland.mi.us/FriendoftheCourt.aspx

75th District Court

District Court is where most people have contact with the justice system and resolve their disputes. The District court is led by Judge Michael D. Carpenter. He leads a dedicated staff of 15 people in running a busy and efficient court. It is the mission of the 75th District Court to administer justice by providing exemplary service to the public with integrity, respect and fairness. It is one of the top rated courts in the state by the State Court Administrator’s Office.

District Court has exclusive jurisdiction over adult misdemeanor criminal offenses and all adult criminal matters begin here. Felony arraignments and preliminary examinations are held to determine if there is sufficient evidence to bind a case over to Circuit Court. In addition, District Court has jurisdiction over civil claims up to claims up to $25,000, landlord-tenant disputes, land contract forfeitures, small claims disputes, DNR violations and civil infractions.

The District Court judge reviews and issues arrest and search warrants and set conditions for bond and pre-trial release 24 hours a day, seven days a week. He conducts contempt of court and probation violation hearings, as well as civil discovery proceedings. District Court staff includes a magistrate as well as a probation department to assist and monitor those court-ordered rehabilitative programs and to conduct oversight of individuals placed on probation. http://co.midland.mi.us/Courts

42nd Circuit Court

serving Midland County

The Midland County 42nd Circuit Court handles many different matters both as a trial court and as an appellate court, which is why it is called a court of general jurisdiction. Midland County’s two Circuit Court Judges, the Honorable Stephen P. Carras and the Honorable Michael J. Beale, are working to meet the demands of their Court consistent with the changes in the legal system and advances in the field of criminal justice.

The Circuit Court continues to operate a Drug Court program and has recently implemented a new intensive probation program for high risk offenders, known locally as MiHOPE. The Court continues to look for best practices around the country for possible use here in Midland County.

As the court of general jurisdiction, the Circuit Court handles all criminal cases where the maximum allowed punishment exceeds one year, civil disputes for amounts exceeding $25,000, domestic relations cases, including divorces, paternity suits, child support enforcement, and parenting time disputes, personal protection orders, as well as appeals from the Probate and District courts. The Court also has jurisdiction for injunctive or restraining orders issued in Midland County.

The Circuit Court uses the Midland County Friend of the Court for processing new domestic relations cases, as well as assisting the judges with the thousands of cases filed in previous years which the court still has jurisdiction over. The Friend of the Court assists in entering temporary orders while a case is pending, addressing custody, parenting time and support issues, and mediating previously filed cases as issues arise regarding the case which is still pending before the court.

The Friend of the Court is also responsible for collection of past due child support on behalf of the custodial parent, as well as money owed to the State of Michigan. http://co.midland.mi.us/Courts

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The Midland County Prosecutor’s Office — The ‘people’s’ firm

They are especially proud of their leadership efforts in the formation of the Midland County Vulnerable Adult Network-MCVAN, the Methamphetamine Protocol Team and participation on the Mental Health Services and Gaps Committee.

To reach the prosecutor's office, call (989) 832-6722 or visit the Midland County website at http://co.midland.mi.us/ProsecutingAttorney.aspx

J. Dee Brooks and the Midland County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office received the Healing the Hurt Award at the Shelterhouse annual meeting/40th year celebration.

The Midland County Prosecutor’s Office represents the citizens and the interests of the victims of crimes in Midland County. The elected prosecuting attorney is the chief law enforcement official of the county, and directs the prosecution of all state and county law violations that occur within the county. This includes everything from misdemeanors such as first offense drunk driving and other traffic violations, domestic violence and stalking, to felony offenses such as child and vulnerable adult abuse, sexual and other felonious assaults, weapons and drug offenses, burglaries, homicides and everything in-between. Ultimately, the prosecutor’s role is to do everything legally and ethically possible to help ensure the safety and security of the Midland community and to help victims and everyone involved in the criminal justice system to obtain justice.

In addition to the handling of criminal cases, the prosecuting attorney is responsible for more than 200 statutory duties, including representing the state in child welfare and juvenile delinquency proceedings, mental competency hearings, forfeiture actions, and establishing paternity and child support obligations. The prosecutor also serves on the Community Corrections Advisory Board, the BAYANET and DARE Board of Directors, the Drug Court Steering Committee, the Health and Human Services Council, the Midland County Domestic and Sexual Violence Coordinating Council, the Sexual Assault Response Team, the Community Alliance 4 Youth Success and the Midland County Human Trafficking Task Force. In addition to state, federal and local law enforcement agencies, the prosecuting attorney’s office also works closely with the Safe and Sound Child Advocacy Center and the Department of Health and Human Services- Protective Services.

In 2016, the prosecutor’s office reviewed 2,454 adult criminal complaints and authorized charges in 1,727 cases, 1,473 misdemeanors and 254 felonies. In addition, it reviewed 245 juvenile complaints and authorized 162 juvenile petitions. The team of seven attorneys and eight support staff take great pride in the work they do on behalf of the county and its residents. They also engage in a number of proactive activities designed to help deter criminal behavior, such as participation in alternative sentencing programs like Drug Court, MiHope Probation and Tri-Cap.
Community Corrections connects probationers with services

The goal of Community Corrections is to connect probationers in and out of the jail with services that will enable them to better themselves, provide support and keep them in the community.

Midland County Community Corrections is a state and local funded program based on Public Act 551, which was enacted by the State of Michigan in 1988. Community Corrections was developed after sky-rocketing prison and inmate growth in the 1980s. The mission of Community Corrections is to minimize jail and/or prison lengths of stay by using an individualized assessment for each offender. As a result of the assessment, offenders are referred to a continuum of supervision, sanctions or services that promote behavior and change. Through this process, criminal behavior is reduced and risks to public safety are mitigated.

Community Corrections Coordinator Marisa Boulton works closely with the courts and probation officers to help divert people with substance abuse and mental health problems as soon as possible. The Adult Felony Drug Court and MiHOPE programs are both excellent opportunities for offenders to take advantage of. Last year 58 Midland County inmates were diverted from jail to an in-patient substance abuse facility.

During the 2016 year, 356 Midland County inmates and probationers took advantage of Community Corrections programming. These numbers include 111 in the jail classroom where GED prep, high school completion and employability skills are offered. ETC has been a part of the jail since 1983 with over 192 High School Diplomas and 1,029 GED Certificates obtained by students while incarcerated.

Offered in the jail are the cognitive groups led by J&A Counseling, Inc. A total of 178 inmates attended a 16 session group discussing topics such as thinking errors, healthy boundaries, faces of addiction, parenting skills, consequences of actions, changes in the brain and many others.

Network Therapy is another program offered by J&A Counseling for offenders with a felony drunk driving cases. Nine individuals participated in this year long program that involves an assessment of the person having an alcohol use disorder and having a healthy network of family, friends, employer, etc. This program entails weekly individual and group counseling sessions throughout the year.

Tri-Cap, located in Saginaw, is a Tri-County Community Adjudication Program meant to divert non-violent offenders from jail or prison. Last year 58 Midland County offenders attended Tri-Cap. Tri-Cap offers a variety of programming such as job club, cognitive substance abuse groups, individual counseling and a newly established opiate specific program.

Community Corrections also oversees community service for District and Circuit Courts. Last year 3,736 hours of service were completed by 95 individuals throughout the county. Various worksites included Midland Recyclers, Shelterhouse Resale Shop, Humane Society of Midland County, Restoration Fellowship, Midland Reformed Church, New Life Vineyard Church, His Hands Auto and Coleman VFW Post 1071. If you are a non-profit and are in need of volunteers, contact Marisa Boulton at (989) 832-6646 or email mboulton@co.midland.mi.us

The Office of the Midland County Sheriff is responsible for maintaining and operating the county jail as well as investigating crimes reported in the county. This includes road patrol and a detective bureau. The sheriff must also provide security at the Midland County Courthouse, operate Animal Control, oversees a marine division that patrols Sanford and Wixom lakes, participates in the Bay Area Narcotics Team, teaches the DARE program to students, and provides a highly trained dive rescue team and reserve deputies to assist citizens.

The Midland County Sheriff’s Office is the main provider of law enforcement service for all residents of Midland County who live outside the City of Midland. Each year deputies respond to approximately 10,000 calls for service. These calls range from minor complaints such as neighborhood disputes, traffic crashes and petty larcenies, to domestic and felonious assaults, and homicides.

When deputies are not responding to calls for service, they spend their time patrolling the roads in Midland County looking for traffic violators and keeping an eye on local businesses. These efforts help reduce traffic crashes and prevent additional property crimes. Deputies serve civil papers and criminal subpoenas, and spend time speaking to local schools and civic groups on various topics of personal safety.

Keeping the citizens of Midland County safe is a daunting task entrusted to the 22 deputies who make up the road patrol division. To be effective, they make good use of their time and resources. One of the greatest resources deputies have is the public they serve.

The current jail was opened in 2010 and can house 274 prisoners. The jail was built to meet the prisoner housing needs of the community into the distant future. In the meantime, additional revenue is generated by housing inmates for other jurisdictions. The jail currently houses prisoners for various counties throughout the state, the State of Michigan Department of Corrections as well as prisoners from the federal criminal justice system awaiting trial on a range of charges.

While in custody, inmates receive a variety of services to help reduce recidivism. They can complete their high school education, attend a job skills program, receive counseling for drug and alcohol dependency, and obtain mental health treatment.

County deputies respond to 10,000 calls for service

Marisa Boulton

Don’t forget to see your county clerk for:
Marriage License
Name Change For Social Security
Passports • Birth Certificates

Check out your township hall for showers, rehearsals & receptions

Sponsored by Election Source
Midland County Probate and Family Court

Judge Dorene S. Allen presides over the Midland County Probate and Family Court and Juvenile Care Center. Elected in 2001 and re-elected in 2006 and 2012, Allen leads the staff of the Court and Juvenile Care Center to protect vulnerable children. Protection of individuals who may not have the capacity to make rational decisions for themselves is provided through guardianship, conservatorship and involuntary mental health treatment. Ensuring that estates are distributed according to a decedent’s wishes or in accordance with statute provides peace of mind for families in times of grief.

PROBATE COURT

The Probate Court is a Court of statutory jurisdiction, primarily concerned with the protection of incapacitated or mentally ill individuals and their assets, and the proper transfer of assets at death.

PROTECTION OF PROPERTY OF INCAPACITATED INDIVIDUALS

Proceedings concerning the protection of the property of incapacitated individuals involve conservatorships for legally incapacitated adults, conservatorships for minors and guardianships of the estate for developmentally disabled individuals to ensure that the assets are being held and used for the benefit of the ward.

HOSPITALIZATION OF MENTALLY ILL INDIVIDUALS

The Probate Court hears petitions for hospitalization for mentally ill individuals alleged to be a significant danger to themselves or others. Hearings take place on a tight time frame: they are normally required to be held within seven days of involuntary hospitalization.

TRANSFER OF ASSETS

The Probate Court has exclusive jurisdiction over proceedings regarding the transfer of assets at death or transfers where property is held in trust. Transfers at death may involve probate of a will (testate estates) or estates where there is no will (intestate estates), the only difference being whether the will or state statute governs distribution of the property. The court may also be called upon to interpret wills or trusts in the event of uncertainty or conflict over the document’s meaning. Proceedings in decedent’s estates may be unsupervised or supervised by the court, depending on the situation.

The Probate Court also hears a variety of other types of matters. These include petitions for protective orders, which are typically one-time requests for the court to allow or approve some action, such as approval of a settlement or a trust. They also include various civil actions, where one party is suing another party. These cases are just like cases in circuit or district court, except usually a trust, estate or fiduciary is one of the parties, so the proceedings have some relation to the regular business of the Probate Court. Finally, the Probate Court holds wills and trusts proceedings for change of name, drain appeals and secret marriages.

42ND CIRCUIT COURT FAMILY DIVISION

The Family Court provides protection and rehabilitation for youth and families in our community. Working closely with the Department of Health and Human Services, the prosecuting attorney’s office and Community Mental Health along with many other local agencies, the court strives to keep children safe and healthy while helping families thrive.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The court hears cases regarding the abuse and neglect of approximately 70 children from 32 families per year. These families all reside in Midland County. A number of services including Baby Court (addressing the needs of families with children 3 years and younger), Michigan Department of Health and Human Services case management, counseling, home maker services and foster care are implemented to heal these families and teach proper parenting skills. Substance abuse is by far the most prevalent allegation. Methamphetamine use, heroin use, prescription medication misuse and marijuana and alcohol use by parents are the leading causes of child abuse and neglect.

ADOPTIONS

The court is pleased is preside over proceeding bringing new families together. Whether it is a placement as a result of an abuse/neglect case, a stepparent adoption, a direct placement or foreign adoption, each proceeding is special and celebrates a forever family.

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

The Family Court has jurisdiction over Midland County youth under age 17 who violate the law. There are numerous programs to help families and youth involved with the court. The underlying basis of the Juvenile Court’s programming is to provide locally-based, rehabilitative intervention. The goal is to have our young people become successful participants and contributors to our community and make our families stronger. Our youth stay in Midland County rather than going to residential facilities in other distant locations. None of these programs could exist without collaboration between the court and the many agencies and volunteers involved with the programs along with local and state grant funding.

In order to face the challenge of youth substance abuse, the court, along with local non-profit Midland Kids First, developed the Recovering Youth Futures program. Young people under age 18, whether involved with the court or not, now have access to outpatient drug treatment by local area agencies made possible through grants from the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation, the Charles J. Strosacker Foundation and the Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation. Funds for court wards are maximized through the State Child Care Fund.

Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) is a home-based program to assist youth and their families targeting kids who are at high risk of being removed from their home. MST focuses on family interaction, school performance, extracurricular activities and community involvement to build stronger self esteem and relationships.

A unique aspect of Midland County is the court-licensed and operated foster care system which provides foster homes for our delinquent youth. The court also holds a contract with Community Mental Health to provide respite foster homes for young people with emotional or mental issues. In 2016, the court supervised 13 foster homes and provided care for over 100 youth. For information on becoming a foster parent, please contact the foster care coordinator at (989) 832-6398.

MIDLAND COUNTY JUVENILE CARE CENTER

The Juvenile Care Center is a court-run multi-purpose facility. The detention program provides safe and secure short-term care and custody for juveniles who cannot be placed in a less restrictive setting and who have violated the law, violated court orders and stipulations of probation, and/or who are waiting court-ordered placement. The detention facility has a bed capacity of 22, some of which are rented out to area counties to create revenue. A full school program run by Midland Public School provides individualized instruction at the juvenile’s actual functioning grade level.

The Juvenile Care Center is also the home of the day treatment program providing rehabilitative services for up to 22 Midland County juveniles under the court’s jurisdiction. Students enrolled in day treatment attend the highly structured program 5 days a week, 12 hours per day. Transportation and meals are provided along with the Midland Public School’s education program. Juveniles are taught coping skills through group counseling in areas of anger management, life skills and substance abuse treatment. Parenting classes and parent interaction are a key component in strengthening families and rehabilitating youth.

Studies have shown that with a strong adult mentor, kids are less likely to use alcohol or drugs, are less likely to engage in assaultive behavior, and achieve a greater success in school. Midland Mentors is a court-operated program for teens in the day treatment program. Since 2008, over 130 mentors have been matched with at-risk youth. To become a mentor, contact the JCC at (989) 837-6080.

Serving all of Midland County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheduling Hours</th>
<th>Monday- Friday: 7am – 5pm</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Monday – Friday: 5am – 11pm</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Saturday: 5:30 – 9:30am and 2:30 – 6:30pm</td>
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<td>Regular: $3.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children 11 &amp; Under: $1.50*</td>
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<td>ADA/Senior: $2.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADA/Senior Off-Peak (6-9pm): $1.50</td>
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*Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult

Visit our website at: www.cc-om.org
The Midland County Department of Public Health: Protecting citizen’s health in Midland County and the Great Lakes Bay Region

The Midland County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) provides many public health services which are vital to optimizing the health and well being of its citizens. The Department is led by Mike Krecek, RS, MA, PHL, who serves as the director/health officer. Medical direction is provided by Tammy Mvosas, MD, MPH.

1. Does our community know if we are healthy?
MCDPH studies the health of our population and helps to conduct periodic assessments of Midland County's health status. We routinely evaluate health and population data to identify health risks such as chronic disease or tobacco use. MCDPH also assesses data to identify health services needed in the community. Midland County continually ranks near the top of Michigan counties in the County Health Rankings for health outcomes and health factors.

2. Are there partners for the health department?
Fortunately, there are many partners that help to make Midland County a healthy community. The medical community, our local hospital, many nonprofits, business, philanthropy, government, education and a host of others collaborate locally with the health department. Our partners convened to conduct a Community Needs Assessment in 2015 and a Community Health Improvement Plan in 2016 to improve health outcomes. Currently the health department is leading a community needs assessment that focuses on maternal and child health. Results will be available later in 2017. Regional and state agencies also work to improve the health of Midland County residents.

3. Can our community respond to health threats?
MCDPH identifies public health threats and prepares for emergencies that could impact the community. For example, we monitor school absences, and spikes in hospital admissions of communicable diseases such as the flu, norovirus, chickenpox and measles. The department participates in local and state emergency management planning and training to prepare to respond to any situation.

4. How does the community become informed about health issues?
MCDPH provides health information and education to the community. We regularly send out newsletters to healthcare providers offering guidance on public health concerns. We participate in community events such as health fairs, provide displays on health-focused information and coordinate a county-wide baby shower promoting health and safety to pregnant women and infants. The department has a Facebook page and contributes regularly to the county newsletter.

5. What policies are in place to promote health and improve efficiencies?
In cooperation with state agencies such as the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, MCDPH develops policies, codes and legislation to protect the health of the public. We also work closely with colleagues to identify best practices that might better serve our constituents. Currently, we are currently reviewing and updating all departmental policies. The department is active in the use of technology. We maintain a high quality clinical electronic health information system and were the first health department in Michigan to e-prescribe. We text appointment reminders to customers, which reduce no-shows. Our environmental health staff conduct inspections on laptop computers and are working on GIS/GPS solutions for field operations.

6. Does our community receive necessary health services?
MCDPH is not a full service medical provider but does provide an array of personal health services with a special emphasis on the low income population. We offer services to eligible pregnant women and infants to promote healthy pregnancies and healthy infants. We perform screenings in schools and preschools to detect hearing and vision problems. Eligible county residents are connected to medical care assistance with programs such as MiChild or Healthy Kids. We also offer assistance with enrollment in the Healthy Michigan Plan. Children with cancer, diabetes, or other chronic medical conditions are connected to services so they can receive additional medical coverage and resources, regardless of family income. The department has entered into a contractual agreement with Helping Hands Dental so that low income adults can receive needed dental services.

MCDPH provides immunizations to people of all ages and has one of the few travel vaccine clinics in the area. Nurse practitioners and nurses in the family planning clinic provide physical exams, education, and supplies to help women plan their pregnancies. The nurses in the sexually transmitted disease clinic help reduce the spread of disease by offering counseling, testing and treatment. Individuals with communicable diseases such as TB are provided with medications. Clinic service fees are based on a sliding scale.

7. How is the environment protected?
The environmental health staff at MCDPH routinely inspect restaurants and other food service establishments to assure safe food and meal preparation. In addition, staff monitor and inspect private wells, some community water systems, sewage systems, public swimming pools, campgrounds and surface water concerns. The department investigates complaints regarding environmental concerns. Household hazardous waste collections are conducted each year in partnership with the City of Midland. In 2016, an environmental study of Sanford Lake was conducted by staff with results becoming available later in 2017. We monitor the local environment and educate the community regarding environmental concerns. Households hazardous waste collections are conducted each year in partnership with the City of Midland. In 2016, an environmental study of Sanford Lake was conducted by staff with results becoming available later in 2017. We monitor the local environment and educate the community regarding environmental concerns.

8. Can the community depend upon MCDPH for quality service?
MCDPH is accredited with commendation by the State of Michigan for the services it provides. The department is considered a leader in public health by our peers. Quality improvement is a major focus of MCDPH and we continually seek to improve our capabilities. The department seeks out best practices and partners with other community agencies to create a “culture of health.”
Midland County Mosquito Control employee Jessica Fetterman rides her bike before along her route in Midland. Fetterman was dropping mosquito growth regulator pellets into water catch basins using a bicycle as part of a pilot program.

**Mosquito Control protecting the public health, improving quality of life**

Midland County Mosquito Control (MCMC) provides an integrated mosquito management program with the objective of reducing the risk of mosquito-borne diseases in Midland County. An additional benefit is the control of nuisance mosquitoes and improved quality of life for county residents. The mosquito control program is currently funded by a four-year millage that was last renewed in 2016 at 0.50 mills.

Mosquito Control incorporates field and laboratory research, mosquito surveillance, public education, mosquito source reduction and activities to kill mosquito larvae and adults. Mosquito populations, disease surveillance and weather patterns are used to determine what needs to be done and where.

A considerable effort is made to control mosquitoes before they emerge as adults. This involves targeting the aquatic larval stage with a variety of control tools. One product commonly used employs the natural toxins of a soil bacterium, which are specific only to mosquitoes and closely related fly species. The material is distributed via aerial application in the spring as the woodlot mosquitoes begin development. The result is effective control of mosquitoes with an environmentally-friendly product.

Reducing the sources of mosquitoes is an important part of the program. County residents can help themselves by getting rid of old tires, tin cans, or other water-holding containers, by notifying Mosquito Control when adult mosquitoes are a problem, and by reporting standing water that might produce mosquito larvae.

MCMC is diligent to reduce and avoid impacts on beneficial insects such as honeybees. A representative from Saginaw Valley Beekeepers Association serves on the MCMC Technical Advisory Committee and helps to integrate pollinator safety into MCMC operations. Materials are specially formulated to work optimally against mosquitoes with minimal impact on other species and the majority of applications are done at the time of day that bees are not active. MCMC makes note of bee hives in the county to ensure a safe distance is maintained while controlling mosquitoes. Residents who maintain hives are encouraged contact MCMC so that hive location can be mapped and to adjust operations if necessary.

Adult mosquitoes collected in Midland County are tested for evidence of mosquito-borne disease agents. Currently, the diseases of greatest concern in Midland County are West Nile virus and Eastern equine encephalitis. Zika virus, which has recently received national attention, is of very low risk in Midland County as the mosquitoes that spread Zika currently do not occur in Midland.

**Gypsy moth suppression**

The primary goal of the Gypsy Moth Suppression Program is to provide residences and areas of high public use relief from the defoliation and nuisance caused by large numbers of gypsy moth caterpillars. This is accomplished by treating selected areas with aerial application of a naturally produced insecticide called B.t. (Bacillus thuringiensis). The treatment areas are selected based on several criteria: where the most people are affected, where the forest type supports prolonged infestations, and where the infestation is expected to be heavy enough to cause a problem at that site for the coming season.

This program is supported through an extra voted millage, currently at a maximum of 0.30 mills. A portion of the millage is collected as-needed. In many years no millage has been levied. The monitoring effort results in further savings to the county and taxpayers by eliminating unneeded spray. It costs approximately 60 cents to monitor an acre of the county, while it costs over $31 to spray an acre. The decisions of where to spray from year-to-year are based on information gathered from field surveys and from landowners. In 2016, over 1,800 acres were treated for gypsy moths.

The program coordinator also spends considerable time helping landowners understand what they can do to combat the gypsy moth. Educational materials and advice for the landowner’s specific situation are provided. The program has a strong commitment to finding improved ways of handling gypsy moth infestations and supports continued investigations in the field. In 2017, analysis of field data will continue to search for the most effective rates and timing for applications. Predicting severity of outbreaks is also a priority so building populations can be treated before conditions get beyond control.

For more information, visit the county’s website [http://co.midland.mi.us/GypsyMoth.aspx](http://co.midland.mi.us/GypsyMoth.aspx)
A geographic information system (GIS) is similar to other computer technology we use in daily life. GIS integrates geography (maps) with information (data). Many of us use some type of GIS technology every day. If you use Google maps to locate a store or get directions to another city, or if you have a GPS unit in your car, you are using a type of geographic information system.

Midland County initiated the GIS program in 2006 with the expectation that it would have far-reaching benefits for the community. Now that our GIS program is mature, that expectation is being met and surpassed. GIS supports County departments including equalization, health, drain, emergency management, treasurer, mosquito control, register of deeds, gypsy moth, facilities management and even the administrator/controller.

GIS and coordinator Chris Cantrell also supports other public agencies, such as Midland County 911, Midland County Road Commission, Midland Public Schools and the townships. The county GIS program has also fostered partnerships with local private entities such as The Dow Chemical Co., Dow Corning and AECOM. The county actively seeks partnerships with other public agencies and private industry to take advantage of a resource — GIS — that is efficient, accurate and reliable. This resource provides improved service to those seeking information from county services, however through these partnerships the community benefits from shared information across organizations.

Enhanced technologies like GIS serve the broader community without boundaries. Participation by a wide range of public and private sector stakeholders accelerates the development of GIS into a powerful tool for everyone. Benefits include improved communications, data sharing and technology distribution between organizations. These benefits bring value to all of us.

From helping emergency responders, to assisting with planning and economic development, GIS is proving to be a valuable asset to not only county departments, but businesses and the citizens as well. Information in GIS provides accurate address information to the Midland County 911 Center for emergency dispatch purposes. The system has also been used to assist townships in developing accurate floodplain determinations. This results in real savings to homeowners by reducing or eliminating flood insurance premiums.

Midland County’s Interactive Web Map on the County’s website provides general information about every piece of real property in the county, such as ownership, property value, taxes and sales history. Also available are powerful search tools for locating property, addresses, subdivisions, elected officials, veteran’s grave site locations, and the ability to reserve pavilions at the county park.

The future of Midland County’s geographic information system will be grounded in effective partnerships between local governments, and with private and non-profit organizations. Creating economic development information and the mapping tools to make the information useful will require a sound partnership between government and the private sector. Midland County continues to build these partnerships to improve service and meet an increasing number of needs expressed by the community.

To learn more about Midland County’s GIS program, visit http://arcg.is/2lUVgOp

**The role of the Midland County Equalization Department**

Why does Midland County have an equalization department, and what do they do? Equalization of assessments is a process required by state law. Prior to there being a director of equalization, the process was handled by a board of supervisors, the forbearer to county commissioners. Public Act 274 of 1964 required that counties establish and maintain a department to survey assessments and assist the board of supervisors in the equalization of assessments. Midland County’s equalization department was first established early in 1965 with the hiring of the first equalization director. As things change, the job of the director has changed over time but the necessity for the equalization of assessments has not. In a nutshell, equalization is responsible for administration of the property tax statutes within the county, as prescribed by the state legislation.

Currently, the department consists of the director, Mary Cornell, an appraiser and an equalization and mapping technician. The primary purpose of the department is to annually establish the true cash value of all taxable property in Midland County. The equalization process is accomplished using sales and appraisal studies that are used to determine the true cash value of each property class. The goal of county equalization is to ensure equitable and uniform values are established on all property within the county. However, the equalization department does not determine individual assessments; that is the sole responsibility of the local assessor.

Since Proposal A was adopted by Michigan voters in 1994, the equalization department has had the responsibility to monitor the various directives created by the legislation, the largest being the creation of a capped value calculation that directly affected the taxable value of each property. For more information on Proposal A and the affect it has on your property taxes, see the equalization homepage and the FAQ section at www.co.midland.mi.us.

The department is also responsible for maintaining property descriptions and creating parcel maps for all jurisdictions, except the City of Midland. Copies of the tax maps are also available on the equalization homepage.

The department also contracts with local units of government to assist in preparation and delivery of assessment change notices and tax billing statements. The data held in the equalization department base is a central location for maintaining up-to-date information related to property value and ownership and also provides data to departments and individuals who also need property or ownership information. Information is available on the website either through the GIS Interactive Map or by using the Property Assessing and Tax Information link. The public information available through the website is used not only by other county departments, but also by real estate professionals, utility companies, individuals searching for property or ownership information and more.

Information on how property taxes are determined, millage rollback information and a variety of State required reports prepared for the board of commissioners are available on the equalization homepage. They can be accessed through the county website at www.midland.mi.us by selecting “Equalization” from the department list.
Drain commissioner has a variety of duties

Construction and maintenance of drainage systems is the core function of the Drain Commissioner's Office. These drainage systems, called County Drains, may be either open ditches with culverts and bridges or storm sewers with buried pipes, manholes and catch basins. These drainage systems are actually a form of a public corporation. The costs of the construction and maintenance are the responsibility of the corporation, known as a drainage district. The drainage district is composed of all of the landowners within the watershed. The watershed is all the area that drains into the county drain.

The elected county drain commissioner, Doug Enos, must assess the construction and maintenance costs to the drainage district. These assessments are added to the property taxes of the landowners within the drainage districts.

Limited maintenance may be undertaken on the county drains each year without notice to the drainage district and without public hearings. More extensive projects require submittal of a petition from landowners in the drainage district. Notification to the landowners and one or more public hearings are then required. A plan for construction is then prepared by a registered engineer and construction bids are received from contractors prior to construction.

Often these larger construction projects require that funds for the project be borrowed on behalf of the drainage district or bonds are issued through the Midland County Board of Commissioners. Annual assessments, including interest on the borrowed money, are then spread against all the land within the drainage district until the loan is repaid. The length of these annual payments varies from 3 to 7 years on normal borrowings, up to as many as 20 or more years on a bonded project.

The county drain commissioner also serves on the board of public works, the parks and recreation commission and the lake improvement boards of both Sanford and Wixom Lakes. Because of these additional duties, in some counties the drain commissioner instead has the title of public works commissioner or water resources commissioner.

One final duty performed by the drain commissioner’s office is to serve as the county enforcing agent under the laws regarding control of soil erosion. In other words, the office reviews erosion control plans, issues permits and performs inspections on construction activities outside the City of Midland. Any person who undertakes a project other than farming or logging which disturbs the ground within 500 feet of a river, lake or stream, or disturbs more than 1 acre of ground, must obtain such a permit.

For further information on any of these activities visit the County of Midland website at http://co.midland.mi.us/DrainCommissioner.aspx or call (989) 832-6770.
Register of Deeds handles many types of documents

The title Register of Deeds seems to imply our only function is to record deeds. But did you know there are over 200 types of documents that we record? In many parts of the U.S. similar offices are more accurately called “County Recorders.” In Michigan, the County Register of Deeds is a state constitutionally elected officer with duties prescribed by law. Because our duties are set by state statute, it is very important the register stay informed on all legislation affecting the office. The register is the official recording officer for any legal document pertaining to the transfer or encumbrance of real property within Midland County. We also keep a complete history of all land corners surveyed and recorded in our county. Ultimately, it is our duty to record and permanently secure all these records in a safe and searchable system.

The register of deeds is also the chair of the Midland County Plat Board, whose job it is to oversee the subdivision of land within Midland County. Before any newly developed plat of land is sent to the State of Michigan for final approval it must come before the county plat board. As chair of the plat board, the register of deeds must be familiar with the process and regulations for submission that the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth requires. The goal is to help land developers by making the approval process streamlined and successful resulting in good growth for the county.

Many other county departments, such as the treasurer’s office, equalization, GIS, housing and planning departments, depend on our land records in order to fulfill their responsibilities. The city and township assessors receive copies of all our deeds to assist them with tax roll changes. Private businesses such as title companies, real estate firms, lending institutions and others also use our records as references for what they need to accomplish.

Our documents date back to 1855; the first of them were handwritten. Microfilming of our records began in 1972. A copy of all these records is sent to Grand Rapids for permanent safekeeping in underground storage. The history in our office is interesting as legal descriptions and documents have changed a lot over the years. You can find many old deeds where a description could begin something like “Large Pine stump thence East to an Oak Tree.” Historians and genealogists could begin something like “Large Pine stump thence East to an Oak Tree.” Historians and genealogists regularly conduct research using our records.

Our website — http://co.midland.mi.us/RegisterofDeeds — is loaded it with valuable information! You can search our online records; find our contact information, recording requirements, transfer tax information, FAQ section and other related sites. Our online search and printing capabilities for recorded documents improves each day, as we are involved in a back-indexing project for all the old records in our office.

We maintain a user-oriented index system capable of retrieving any of the several million documents recorded since 1855. We use a grantor-grantee index, which simply means we index our records by name. Anyone can view or purchase a copy of any document recorded in our office as they are all public record. Per Michigan State statute MCL 600.2567 (1)(b), all copies of our official records are to be sold at $1 per page.

- Documents from 1957-1965 are found by viewing them online through an Adobe Reader system we have made available or by accessing card indexes located in our vault.
- Indexes for documents recorded from 1855-1957 are available to search online or through reviewing the old journals located in our vault.
- Documents from 1965 through the present can be viewed (with watermarks) online. Any document viewable online can also be purchased (without watermarks) online.
- Documents from 1957-1965 are available to search online or through reviewing the old journals located in our vault.

We have recently begun e-recording documents. The State of Michigan approved e-recording requirements in 2014 and counties throughout Michigan are now recording electronically. This means we are recording virtual (paperless) documents if they meet state recording requirements. As technology and standards change, so will the register of deeds’ office. Our goal is to maintain an accurate index system which is crucial and is used to prove a chain of title or property ownership.

The Midland County Register of Deeds office is open Monday–Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and can be reached at (989) 832-6820. If you want to know more, or are interested in learning how to use our records, just come in or give us a call, and any member of our excellent staff will be glad to answer your questions and help you get started!
Emergency management ready for disasters

Michigan law requires every county to have an emergency management coordinator. The Midland County Office of Emergency Management fulfills that requirement for Midland County, with the overall mission of preparing the community for disasters.

Its goal is to organize community resources to respond to significant events and disasters, and to bring other resources into the community when needed.

Local public and private organizations cooperate with the office of emergency management to develop an emergency operations plan. This plan identifies tasks to be completed when responding to a disaster. Organizations are matched with tasks and responsibilities.

Emergency response may include public warning, search and rescue, firefighting, emergency medical care, evacuation and sheltering, and damage assessment. When needed, local officials gather at an emergency operations center (EOC) to coordinate disaster response and recovery efforts. The emergency management coordinator is responsible for maintaining the readiness of the EOC staff by providing training exercises regularly.

Other plans and procedures complement the emergency operations plan. There are separate emergency plans for flooding and chemical related emergencies. Sometimes hazards can be reduced or eliminated through community planning or federally supported programs. These issues are addressed in a hazard mitigation plan.

Local emergency management programs in Michigan are overseen by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Michigan State Police (MSP).

FEMA and MSP set standards for planning and training. They also keep local programs informed of regulatory and program changes, advances in technology and lessons learned from disasters in other parts of the country.

Since 2001, the Office of Emergency Management has been responsible for managing certain homeland security initiatives. These include a coordinated effort to conduct community risk and threat assessments; develop plans; purchase equipment for local agencies with grant funding; provide training; and keep agencies informed of regulatory changes. Midland County is also a member of the Region 3 Homeland Security Planning Board and has provided leadership in developing homeland security strategy for the 14-county region.

For more information call (989) 832-6750 or go to http://co.midland.mi.us/EmergencyManagement.

You can also follow the office on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/MidlandCountyEmergency-Management

Maintenance of public records, customer service are No. 1 priority in the County Clerk/Circuit Court Clerk’s offices

The Midland County Clerk/Circuit Court Clerk’s Offices pride themselves on maintaining the integrity of all public records for the residents of Midland County.

Both offices have a wide variety of responsibilities, most of which include maintaining public records.

The County Clerk’s Office is responsible for all vital records (death, birth and marriage). These records are now indexed and scanned using optical scanning software. This technology allows staff to locate and print vital records from their desktops, saving time having to locate the paper copy of the records. In addition to maintaining vital records, the county clerk is the chief election official for the county and requires the clerk’s office to conduct every election held in Midland County. In 2006, the county switched all of its election equipment to optical scan, thus improving the accuracy of all elections.

The county clerk is the clerk of Midland County Board of Commissioners and must attend all meetings of the board and prepare the official minutes of the meetings. The clerk’s office is also responsible for maintaining all contracts which the board of commissioners enters into.

Business filings, notary commissions, military discharges and concealed weapons permits are also maintained by the county clerk’s office.

The Circuit Court Clerk’s Office is responsible for all Circuit Court records, which includes divorces, civil cases, paternity and criminal cases. Again the Circuit Court Clerk’s Office is using technology to improve customer services to the public. All Circuit Court documents from 1996 to present are scanned and indexed.

The Circuit Court Clerk’s Office attends all sessions of court and collects all fines, costs and bond payments that are ordered by the Court.

Due to changes in the law, the Circuit Court Clerk’s Office handles passport applications and also provides photos for passports.

The county clerk is also clerk of the Board of Canvassers, the Elections Commission, the Plat Board, the Jury Board, the County Retirement System, the Apportionment Commission and a number of other boards and commissions. In addition, the county clerk sits on the committee to fill vacancies in the office of sheriff, treasurer, register of deeds and drain commissioner. The Midland County Clerk also oversees the county’s mailing system.

http://co.midland.mi.us/County-Clerk.aspx
Pinecrest Farms: A caring home

For over 150 years Pinecrest Farms has been a caring home for Midland county residents. Pinecrest serves the frail and elderly, cognitively and developmentally impaired and the physically challenged. And with support of a Midland County millage, residents of Midland County and area foundations, Pinecrest serves everyone based on their assets and income.

In 2007, Pinecrest Farms received approval of a millage at a ratio of 3-to-1 for the 60-unit county infirmary. Voters passed a 20-year millage to operate and renovate the physical Pinecrest Farms structure. After expert analysis, it was determined that it would be a cost saving to the taxpayers to demolish the old Pinecrest facility and build a brand new one. So in 2010, the doors to a beautiful new facility were opened. Maintaining over a 95 percent occupancy annually demonstrates the need for our community.

Through the millage and community support, Pinecrest provides care to residents aged 18 and over (with 70 percent of residents over age 70), who have personal challenges that may be related to social or physiological barriers. The types of care and needs for each resident at Pinecrest differs. The staff and administration strive to provide person centered care. These care levels often include medication management to ensure that proper prescriptions are being taken. Residents may need assistance with getting ready for their day in the morning or for bed at night and help with hygiene. Through physical ailments or as people age; transferring and ambulating may become a burden so our staff encourages independence while being there every step of the way.

Over the past few years, Pinecrest has added services and partnerships. Courtesy of an $18,000 grant from the Midland Area Community Foundation, Pinecrest has started a safety initiative to decrease the number of falls for its residents in the Pinecrest community as part of the larger Community Health Improvement Plan, or CHIP Program. Through the late Judge Donna Morris and Strosacker Foundation, Pinecrest Farms received a $100,000 donation that assists residents with the expenses of medication not covered by insurance.

In terms of long term care living facilities, Pinecrest Farms residents couldn’t be more fortunate. The facility sits on 160 acres of land in Homer Township just 5 miles from downtown Midland. The 160 acres offer serene views of the trees changing each season, a pond, trails and lots of wildlife. As seasons turn, residents gather by the fireplace where they are able to view fall and winter storms outside through the floor to ceiling windows.

Resident associates provide care to residents, cook meals and clean the facility. Along with the dedicated resident associates, Pinecrest has 24-hour licensed practical nurses that supervise the staff and perform needed cares to the residents. The health and wellness of the residents is closely monitored by Director of Nursing Ronda Cunningham, MSN, RN, CNRN, MSCN, SCRN, CDP. Pinecrest residents have visiting physicians at the facility, podiatry, audiology, dentistry and optometry services. X-Rays, ultra sounds, lab work and other diagnostic services are available to residents as well. Pinecrest partners with Saginaw Valley State University as a clinical site, which brings nursing students for additional attention to the residents.

With a focus on life enrichment, an activity director oversees the socialization, spiritual, cultural and physical activity of the Pinecrest residents. Along with regularly scheduled activities, resident’s can look forward to outings to the Great Lakes Loons games in the summer, a Kiwanis chicken dinner, a large community pig roast celebration, regular supervised shopping trips weekly, Pinecrest-sponsored Creative 360 classes and many other outings and events.

Pinecrest Farms is generally at full capacity but does have occupancy available at times and interested people are encouraged to be on a wait list. Contact Pinecrest Farms for more admission information. Pinecrest also welcomes volunteer organizations to assist in activities. The facility is located at 413 N. Homer Road. For more information call Administrator Joe Blewett at (989) 832-6634.

MSU Extension serves Midland County

For 99 years, MSU Extension has served Midland County. Whether it has been building new leaders through the 4-H program, providing information on how to manage chronic illness, training growers in new research to grow the agriculture economy, or teaching the community how to sustainably use their natural resources, MSU Extension has been beside you to develop early literacy skills that support school readiness. Through 4-H programs, youth participate in hands-on learning activities that enhance self-esteem, build leadership skills, and encourage career exploration. Anyone interested in joining 4-H or volunteering may call Dee Howe at (989) 832-6640.

MSU Extension’s Health and Nutrition programs work to empower individuals to be accountable for their own health. Participants learn the benefits of eating healthy, how to stretch their food budgets to include healthy choices, how to...
Midland County Parks and Recreation

The Midland County Parks and Recreation Commission provides unique parks and open space areas in Midland County. In addition, it facilitates several community-based special events and programs throughout the year. The parks team led by director John Schmude maintain all parks. Parks include:

- Sanford Lake Park (90 acres) — Located along the west side of Sanford Lake in the Village of Sanford, the park includes over 1,100 feet of sandy beach, swimming, picnicking, boating access, splash pad, playground, universal canoe/kayak launch, fishing area and an 18-hole disc golf course. Annual events include Parkapalooza, Sanford and Sun Triathlon, Sanford Lake Triathlon and several fishing tournaments.
- Pere Marquette Rail-Trail (30 miles) — The 22-mile portion of the trail under the jurisdiction of Midland County Parks begins at Dublin Avenue in the City of Midland and continues northwest to the Midland/Isabella County line. The trail provides barrier-free, non-motorized recreation and transportation opportunities such as walking, hiking, running, bicycling, wheelchair use, in-line skating and cross-country skiing. It also links two county parks (Sanford Lake Park and Veterans Memorial Park), two natural areas of statewide significance (a coastal plain/wet sand prairie and a bog), and features a stop at the Averill Rollway historic logging site.
- Veterans Memorial Park (130 acres) — Located west of the Village of Sanford, the park has two entrances: one from Neiner Road which accesses the southern portion and one from Eight Mile Road which serves the northern portion of the park. Amenities include interpretive nature trails, picnic areas, fishing and canoe access and Scout camping.
- Manitou Park (154 acres) — Located approximately eight miles west of the City of Midland, the park encompasses one and one-half miles of frontage along the Chippewa River. Amenities include fishing areas, canoe launch and picnic area.
- Laur Big Salt River Park (40 acres) — This 40-acre site along the Big Salt River was donated by the Laur family in the fall of 1993. Amenities include nature trails, fishing areas, a small picnic area and canoe access.
- Pine Haven Recreation Area (327 acres) — Located west of the Village of Sanford, this facility is primarily Michigan State Forest land managed by the county. Amenities include cross-country ski trails, hiking trails, mountain bike trails, nature’s study area and limited equestrian trails.

Additional Midland County park lands include the 87-acre River Trails Heritage Park in Edenville Township, which has not yet been developed, and an additional 117 acres of property in Edenville Township east of N. Sanford Lake Road. A master plan for this property will be developed in the fall/winter of 2017.

For more information on Midland County Parks, you can access the website at www.co.midland.mi.us/ParksandRecreation.aspx

The MSU Extension staff in Midland County

safely store and prepare food to decrease foodborne illnesses, and how to prevent or manage a chronic disease. For more information on upcoming classes please call Melissa Pavlik, Samantha Hebert or Lisa Treiber at (989) 832-6640.

MSU Extension’s Greening Michigan programs partner with local governments for good governance education, facilitate community groups for issue based conflict management, assist residents with personal finance, guide communities in community food system development, as well as support entrepreneur development. MSU Extension’s Agriculture and Agribusiness programs help farmers and agribusiness professionals learn how to profitably grow, market and commercialize food and nonfood commodities, as well as helps residents learn how to raise a portion of their own food.

Soil test kits are available for farmers as well as for residents who have a garden or yard to test. MSU Extension sells soil sample test kits are available through the online MSU Extension Bookstore http://shop.msu.edu (click MSU Extension Books on the top right) or the MSUE Midland office on Wednesday afternoons or by appointment.

Information about all of the MSU Extension programs and related current news articles can be found at http://msue.msu.edu.

Midland County Master Gardeners are available to answer questions you may have in the MSU Extension Midland office on Wednesday’s from 1 to 4 p.m. or residents can leave a message at (989) 832-6640. The MSU Extension Lawn and Garden Hotline at 888-MSUE-4MI allows people from all over Michigan to get answers to questions from a consumer horticulture expert concerning vegetable, lawns, shrubs, trees, indoor plants, as well as garden and house pests. Consumers can also use the “Ask the Expert” feature at http://msue.msu.edu to get answers to their questions. Finally, sign up today to receive valuable information from the MSUE’s Home Gardening News at http://migarden.msu.edu.

Information on MSU Extension in Midland County can be found on the county’s website at: http://co.midland.mi.us/MSUExtension
At Dow we are committed to the success of our communities. When we invest in the places that we live and work, we invest in our future. Whether we support events and organizations or roll up our sleeves and volunteer, we work to bring together our employees, friends and neighbors to build a better community in the Great Lakes Bay Region.

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