



# Neighbors



## Macoupin County Housing Authority

### FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

According to the calendar, spring arrives this month. I think we are all ready for some warm weather and sunshine.

With the warmer weather coming, make sure that you are cleaning up the exterior of your apartments. This includes cleaning up the trash around the building and the trash receptacles. Picking up toys and those that belong outside, storing them neatly along the building. Removing those items that do not belong outside and getting rid of them or storing them inside.

Also inside: is a chance to apply for the Illinois Association of Housing Authorities Central Council Educational Assistance Grant

### OFFICE NEWS

Sunday, March 8  
Tuesday, March 17  
Friday, March 20

Daylight Savings Time begins at 2 a.m.  
St. Patrick's Day  
International Day of Happiness

#### Address:

P.O. Box 226  
760 Anderson St. Carlinville, 62626  
217-854-8606  
Fax: 217-854-8749

#### Toll Free:

1-866-363-5142

#### Office Hours:

Monday & Tuesday  
8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.  
Closed Wednesdays  
Thursday & Friday  
8 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

Emergency Work Order  
Number:  
(217) 827-2100

#### EMERGENCIES INCLUDE:

- ♦ Gas leaks
- ♦ Broken water pipes
- ♦ Exposed electrical wires
- ♦ No heat (if the outside temperature is 45-degrees or lower)
- ♦ Sewer line stoppage (not drain line) - this includes a clogged toilet
- ♦ CO/Smoke detector beeping or chirping
- ♦ Also fire, flood, or anything that threatens life, safety or property damage



## PROTECT YOURSELF. KNOW THE SIGNS OF TAX FRAUD.



### WHAT IS TAX FRAUD?

Tax fraud happens when someone doesn't pay taxes owed, gives false information on a tax return to get money they shouldn't receive, or files a tax return using someone else's information.

### WHY SHOULD YOU BE CONCERNED?

Tax fraud harms you and your community. It can lead to civil or criminal charges, put your money and personal information at risk, and reduce funding for essential community services.

### THIS TAX SEASON:



• **Choose a trustworthy tax preparer.** Avoid return preparers who promise large refunds or charge a fee based on your refund amount. A trustworthy tax preparer will also provide their Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN) on your tax return and give you a complete copy of your return for your records.



• **Protect your return.** Never sign a blank tax return, and make sure your refund goes to your account, not your tax preparer's. Do not file your return if it reports false income, expenses, or dependents.

• **Be cautious with emails and texts.** Don't click links or open attachments from unknown senders claiming to be from the IRS. These could be scams that steal your personal information or install malware on your device.

• **Don't fall for social media scams.** Ignore social media influencers who encourage you to falsify your tax return with inaccurate income, false withholdings or credits. You could owe a hefty sum to the IRS if your tax return is not accurate, including penalties and interest.

• **Report suspicious activity.** If you think someone is trying to scam you during tax season contact law enforcement and the IRS.

#### Penalties for tax fraud

- » **Filing a False Return:** Up to 5 years in prison and/or \$100,000 fine.
- » **Conspiring to file false returns:** Up to 10 years in prison and court imposed fine.
- » **Credit disallowance:** You can be banned from claiming certain credits for up to 10 years.



### PROTECT YOURSELF:

- Find a vetted tax preparer by visiting [www.irs.gov/chooseataxpro](http://www.irs.gov/chooseataxpro).
- Look for FREE, [IRS-certified help from VITA](#) (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance).
- Rely on [IRS.gov](http://IRS.gov) for answers to questions about tax forms and eligibility for credits and deductions.
- Report suspicious activity online using [Form 14157, Return Preparer Complaint](#).
- If you think you've been scammed, call the IRS Identity Theft Hotline at 1-800-908-4490.



OFFICE OF  
COMMUNICATION

Stay informed. Stay safe.  
Protect yourself from tax fraud.





### NSPIRE FOR MARCH

**Gillespie 47-10 and 47-14** - This includes units on Gillespie, High, Fillmore, & South Street as well as E. Oak Street.

### PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE FOR MARCH

**Staunton 47-12** - The "S" building and Sunset Court  
**Virден 47-11** - Church and Prairie Streets

\*Inspections may take place on any day of the month between the hours of 8am—4:30pm Monday—Friday.\*  
You do not need to be home for these inspections.

\*Q&A (Quality Assurance) inspections may take place on work orders and inspections anywhere from 3-5 days after the inspection/work order happens.

### CHANCE TO WIN!

Every month, those residents who are having inspections for the month (Preventative Maintenance and NSPIRE—see above) will have a chance to win a \$100 Gift Card from Walmart!

All you need to do is make sure that your account has a **ZERO** (\$0.00) balance on it by the 5th of that month. If so, your name will go in for a drawing for the Gift Card. So make sure that your rent and all charges are paid in full and you could be a WINNER!

The winner of February's drawing Christina Copeland



*APPLICATION*  
*ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF HOUSING AUTHORITIES*  
*CENTRAL COUNCIL*  
*EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE GRANT*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_, State \_\_\_\_\_, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade in School: \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Date/G.E.D. Completion: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Major (if any): \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Point Average: \_\_\_\_\_

List the Colleges or Universities of interest to you, to which you have applied, or to which you have been accepted:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Summarize your academic accomplishments (i.e., scholarships, awards, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

List Extra-curricular school activities in which you have participated (i.e., clubs, teams, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Indicate some of the community activities in which you have participated (i.e., church, community service, etc.):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

List any hobbies and special interests: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Indicate any jobs that you have held: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

List two personal references (names, addresses, and phone numbers): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*(Use additional sheets if more room is required.)*

*In addition to the above information, you must provide the Housing Authority with the following for your application to be complete: all high school, college, and/or trade school transcripts; two letters of recommendation from teachers; and an essay of 200 words on your goals and how you would use the grant. (Use a separate sheet.) Print or type neatly.*

**ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF HOUSING AUTHORITIES**

**CENTRAL COUNCIL**

**EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE GRANT**

The Central Illinois Council of the Illinois Association of Housing Authorities has elected to implement an Educational Assistance Grant Program. The Central Council will administer the program. The funds can be used for tuition, books, approved activity fees, necessities, work programs, and other items at the discretion of the sponsoring Council. The application requirements and grant rules are as follows:

- Applicant must be a graduating senior or anyone continuing their education and residing in a member agency-owned or managed project. Previous participants can reapply.
- Students must have maintained at least a 2.0 grade point average during their junior and senior years (except G.E.D.).
- The Housing Authority’s Executive Director must recommend the student. **All applications must be submitted by the Executive Director only. The Executive Director is responsible for verifying all application requirements and collecting all application materials.** Local promotion of the Grant Program is the responsibility of the Executive Director.
- Applications must include 1) a school transcript or proof of G.E.D. completion; 2) two teacher recommendations; 3) an essay (200 words) by the student explaining their goals and how the grant would be used; and 4) the Executive Directors' comments.
- Additional recommendations from clergy, counselors, and others may be submitted.
- Provide a list of schools to which the student has applied. Proof of subsequent admission will be required.
- Student must describe extra-curricular activities, awards, community services, employment, and other accomplishments.
- If the leaseholder is the recipient of this scholarship, they must be in good standing with the Housing Authority. The recipient will continue to be eligible to receive payments if he/her move out of the Housing Authority.
- The deadline for receipt of application materials is March 31, 2026.

**ENCLOSE ALL MATERIALS** and forward to the Executive Director of your Housing Authority.

- Grant will be awarded for the academic year 2026-2027.



**Macoupin County  
Public Transportation**  
509 Illinois Avenue | Gillespie, IL  
Phone: 217-839-4130 Fax: 217-839-3809

**MARCH GROUP TRIPS**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 6TH | Springfield Product Expo**

- Call for pick-up/drop-off location | Cost: \$20 per person
- Orr Building, Illinois State Fairgrounds
- A celebration of Illinois-made products including a variety of jellies, baked goods, sauces, cheeses, desserts, and MORE!
- Hosted by the Illinois Department of Agriculture
- Dining at D’Arcy’s Pint

**THURSDAY, MARCH 12TH | Dining & Shopping in Litchfield**

- Call for pick-up/drop-off location | Cost: \$10 per person
- Dining at Pizza Man
- Shopping at Walmart, Aldi, Dollar General, Rural King

**THURSDAY, MARCH 19TH | Movie and Dining**

- Call for pick-up/drop-off location | Cost: \$20 per person
- Movie options to be determined at a later date
- AMC Edwardsville 12 Theater - Price varies
- Average price for Adults: \$13.00; Children: \$10.99; Seniors: \$12.49
- Dining at Chick-fil-A

**THURSDAY, MARCH 26TH | St. Louis Premium Outlets**

- Call for pick-up/drop-off location | Cost: \$20 per person
- Dining at The Cheesecake Factory

**TUESDAY, MARCH 31ST | Argosy Casino in Alton**

- Call for pick-up/drop-off location | Cost: \$20 per person
- Dining at the casino

**Seats are limited and are available on a first come first served basis.  
Please call us at 217-839-4130 to reserve a seat.**

**All riders are entitled to a 15-bag maximum limit, with the max weight of a bag being no more than 20lbs. All riders are responsible for their own bags and purchases. Macoupin County Public Transportation assumes no liability or responsibility for lost, damaged, or stolen items or property.**

*Partially funded by the Area Agency on Aging for Lincolnland through the Older Americans Act of the Illinois Department of Aging.*





**Question:**

What is Preventative Maintenance (PM Inspection)? I see this in the newsletter every month and I'm not sure what it is or what happens during it.

**Answer:**

Preventative Maintenance (PM Inspection) is the proactive, schedule inspection to prevent breakdown of major mechanical systems and equipment and prevent deterioration of community units and equipment. Preventative maintenance offers PHAs a number of important benefits including:

- ◆ Prolonged life of agency equipment
- ◆ Less unplanned downtime caused by equipment failure
- ◆ Less unnecessary maintenance and inspections.
- ◆ Fewer errors in day-to-day operations
- ◆ Improved reliability of equipment
- ◆ Fewer expensive repairs caused by unexpected equipment failure that must be fixed quickly.

Ideally, a preventative maintenance schedule will prevent all equipment failure before it occurs. It will save time, reduce costs, and keep an operation running efficiently and productively.

HUD requires that every public housing authority, in order to provide comprehensive maintenance delivery, must have a preventive maintenance plan.

This inspection happens one time (1x) per year on all units.

While at the unit we are looking to ensure that the systems are functioning the way they should, we are also looking to ensure that the resident is abiding by the lease and resident handbook, also including the housekeeping policy.

If you have a question that you would like answered in the newsletter—please submit them in writing to the office. This can be sent via email to [info@teamhousingcenter.com](mailto:info@teamhousingcenter.com) or mail it in to MCHA PO Box 226 Carlinville, IL 62626. You can also bring it into the office during business hours or put it in the overnight drop box located outside the front door.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- AWAKENING
- BASKETBALL
- BLOSSOM
- DAFFODIL
- DAYLIGHT SAVING
- EASTER.
- EQUINOX
- FLOWER
- FRESH
- GREEN
- GROWTH
- HOLI
- KITE
- LEPRECHAUN
- LUCK
- MADNESS
- MARCH
- PARADE
- POT OF GOLD
- RAIN
- REBIRTH
- RENEWAL
- SHAMROCK
- SHOWERS
- SPRING
- ST. PATRICK'S DAY
- WINDY



WORD SEARCH DIRECTIONS: Find and circle the vocabulary words in the grid. Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.

Y	T	A	S	D	V	R	I	J	B	Y	L	Z	P	V	B	Y	O	F
M	S	J	C	A	F	E	T	R	H	T	K	O	G	P	N	D	E	V
D	M	H	C	D	Y	T	Y	E	G	I	C	A	A	H	U	N	Q	Z
Z	Y	G	A	K	N	S	Q	N	N	H	U	P	C	Z	A	I	U	B
F	A	X	A	M	I	A	N	E	I	O	L	R	R	W	H	W	I	M
R	D	S	F	A	R	E	Q	W	N	L	A	A	P	Y	C	Q	N	O
E	S	S	L	K	V	O	Q	A	E	M	I	M	F	G	E	N	O	B
S	K	E	G	K	D	B	C	L	K	N	H	T	W	O	R	G	X	D
H	C	N	E	H	Y	E	I	K	A	B	D	G	Q	H	P	F	V	Z
B	I	D	O	B	D	Y	I	Y	W	N	V	A	N	U	E	Y	R	J
M	R	A	L	A	G	N	I	V	A	S	T	H	G	I	L	Y	A	D
E	T	M	R	S	H	N	Y	R	U	A	T	G	H	T	R	A	Q	L
H	A	A	S	K	F	E	M	O	S	S	O	L	B	D	E	P	S	O
X	P	B	E	E	T	E	E	O	T	J	K	I	T	E	W	E	S	G
W	T	V	Y	T	W	R	J	N	Y	M	Z	K	X	Q	O	G	U	F
G	S	F	H	B	A	G	M	S	R	E	W	O	H	S	L	L	H	O
R	P	C	O	A	U	M	L	R	E	B	I	R	T	H	F	H	E	T
B	J	X	L	L	E	D	A	F	F	O	D	I	L	S	O	Z	E	O
J	A	B	I	L	I	V	P	T	K	T	V	U	O	N	G	I	Z	P