



VOL. 3 ISSUE 1 • JANUARY 2022

MISSOULA COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS

Official Newsletter

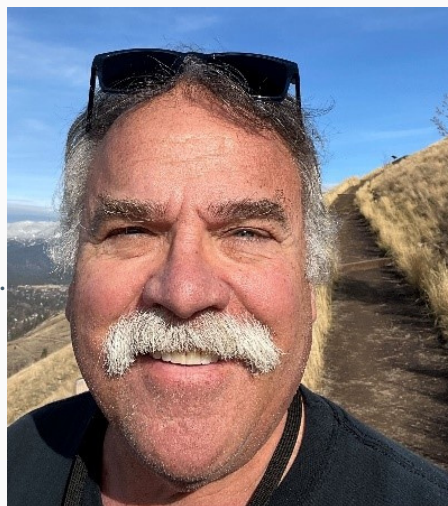
Meet Your New Building Official, Dave Larkin

Dave comes to public works with experience as a subcontractor, a general contractor and years of public service enforcing building codes.

"On one recent inspection, in the northern part of the County, I was up a long, narrow, primitive 'road' that had me dropping into four-wheel low in order to keep going. High and steep, the drop off was, well, alarming. Looking for a turn-around, as I must surely have gotten lost, I teetered onto a brand-new, beautiful custom four bedroom, way gorgeous, way up, way awesome, and right where they said it was. The rugged individualist is alive and well in Missoula County!

Some of the very best building I have ever seen has been in the county, and I'm proud to be associated with it. It's easy to recognize good work when I see it, and there's plenty of that in Missoula County. And this department is very busy. We need to get to a lot of places every single day."

Dave recently received a Master Code Professional certification, the most prestigious certification given by the International Code Council. There are currently fewer than 1000 certified Master Code Professional's worldwide. Achieving it requires outstanding recommendations from employers, safety code knowledge of very high standard and overall commitment to the profession. Congratulations, Dave!



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DIRECTOR'S HIGHLIGHTS

SHANE STACK, P.E.

Public Infrastructure

Construction

Shane Stack started as Director of Public Works on April 1, 2019, after nearly 23 years with the Montana Department of Transportation, most recently as the Missoula District Preconstruction Engineer. At MDT, he planned, implemented and oversaw several high-profile, multimillion-dollar engineering projects in the Missoula area.



'We appreciate the positive comments we receive over the winter. They are passed on to the men and women that are doing the work of keeping the roads clear.'

The past few months have brought needed moisture to western Montana. I am always happy to receive the snow and rain with the thought that the more precipitation we can accumulate now, the lower the chances of a smoky August and September. The negative is that we end up with icy roads that are a little more challenging to drive on. These challenges require our crews to be out plowing and sanding from 5 A.M. to 1:30 P.M., our normal hours of operation in the winter. The goal is to make sure that the roads are clear and sanded by the time commuters and school buses are on the roads. The road crew has limited staff and equipment, but even with that, they still do a great job and provide excellent service to the public at a low price.

On the weekends, we rely on crew members willing to come in and work overtime to plow and sand roads, as we do not have crews scheduled to work them. It can take longer to complete these tasks on the weekends, because the team is generally very small. Please be patient and understand that early Monday the roads will be plowed and sanded. We appreciate the positive comments we receive over the winter. They are passed on to the men and women that are doing the work of keeping the roads clear.

The County is fortunate to have the team of hard-working individuals that manage and maintain both roads and bridges. They provide a wide range of services that require them to have multiple skill sets. They pave roads, install culverts, repair bridges, plow and sand, grade and sweep, and mow shoulders, along with many other activities. All of these tasks require different skills and abilities, and our team does it all and with the highest of quality.

Thank you to the team that manages and maintains the county roads and bridges. Also, thank you to those that call, write and email to share the positive thoughts and appreciation for the services provided by the road and bridge team.

As always, wishing you the best.



High winds force trees down in Potomac along Hole In The Wall Road

ROAD DIVISION

WINTER HAS ARRIVED AND ALWAYS BRINGS ITS CHALLENGES

The only thing predictable about winter in Montana is its unpredictability.

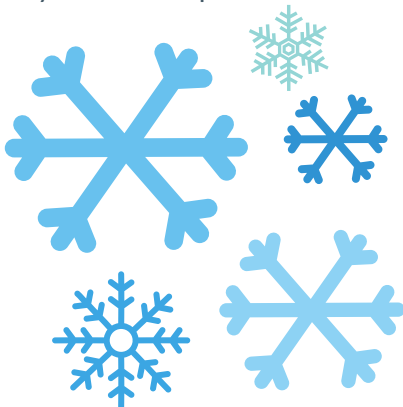
December and January alone have had more snow accumulation than they have had in the last four to five years. And according to howwillitsnow.com, Missoula has seen 8% more snowfall this year, by this time of year, than the average historical snowfall.



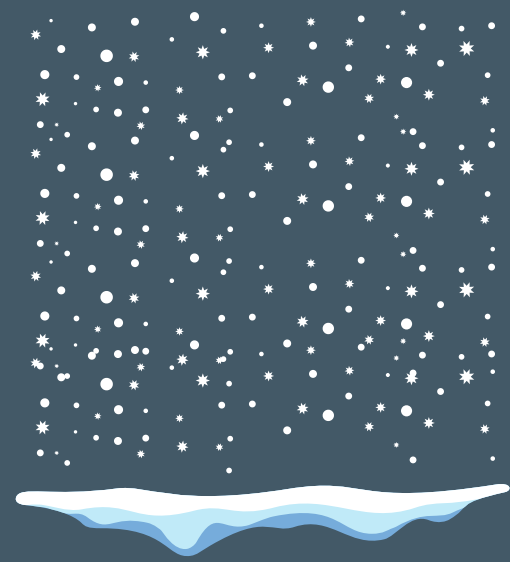
Cutting snow pack off of Placid Lake Road

Freezing temperatures have caused multiple equipment failures this year. It's not uncommon for sanders to freeze up, especially those that travel at interstate speeds to reach their destination. Sand used on icy roads tend to hold moisture. Add higher speeds at freezing outside temperatures, and equipment doesn't operate as it should. If you've seen a lack of sand on your road, now you know why!

When ice forms on roads and the temperatures stay below freezing preventing ice melt, graders often show up to 'chip' away at the ice packs.



Equipment break down along Hwy 200



Freezing temperatures and equipment, even those built for cold weather, often clash, leaving the road crew short on properly working equipment.

WELCOME TO THE BUILDING DIVISION

We Can Help You

While we are administering the same codes as previous years, changes may be noticed. We need sites clearly marked and the permit and our released plans on site. Don't give originals to sub-contractors; instead, provide them photocopies. This basic requirement of the code goes a long way to passing the inspection in a timely manner. Many people use closed PVC tubes and strap them to a tree or post to hold construction documents. The pipe-plan-holder idea works great, so we have made them available for \$100 with your plans. Email your order to permits@missoulacounty.us and mention "Plan Tube."

If the site, permit or released plans can't be found, inspectors will fail the inspection. We all understand time and expense, so please be sure all documents and, if necessary you, are available during inspections. There will be a \$50 re-inspection fee that must be paid before an inspection will be re-scheduled. Not being ready for the inspection nets the same re-inspection fee.

There will be more positive changes coming, but these first few are essential. Any future changes will be code-compliant and in the interest of the community. As released plans leave our office, they will be looked over and tips will be sent out to assist the process. Check out the 'tip sheets' on our website at missoulacounty.us/building. These are the same lists carried by the inspectors.



THE OFFICE CONTINUES TO BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC. THERE ARE SUPPLIES LOCATED OUTSIDE THE OFFICE DOOR AS WELL AS BOXES TO RECEIVE YOUR APPLICATIONS. OUR STAFF IS AVAILABLE VIA PHONE TO HELP YOU AT 406-258-3701. MANY ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS CAN BE FOUND ON OUR ONLINE PORTAL AT WWW.MISSOULACOUNTY.BUILD.

WE ARE CONSIDERING PROVIDING A MORNING SEMINAR AFTER THINGS SLOW DOWN IN THE WINTER WITH THE TOPIC OF "GETTING A PERMIT AND PASSING INSPECTION." PLEASE SIGN UP! IF ENOUGH PEOPLE SIGN UP, WE WILL MAKE IT HAPPEN. WHAT CONCERNS YOU?

HELP US HELP YOU. SIGN UP FOR THE SEMINAR AT MISSOULACOUNTY.US/BUILDING.

PLEASE SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO PERMITS@MISSOULACOUNTY.US.

BE SAFE-
DAVE LARKIN
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