

# PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Thursday, March 20, 2025 | 6 pages | Volume 9 • Issue 60



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## FM board starts search

**HUXLEY FIRM:** FMCSDB  
board hires Grundmeyer  
Leader Services to find  
next superintendent

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – The Fort Madison School District board has quickly launched a search for the district's next superintendent.

The board met in a workshop Wednesday night to consider hiring a search firm to help navigate the district and community in bringing the new leader yet this spring.

Current Superintendent Dr. Erin Slater accepted a position last week with the Johnson City, Tennessee school district as its new superintendent.

The board heard from one search firm and hired that company Wednesday night.

School board president Josh Wykert said one other company inquired about providing services to the district.

The board hired Grundmeyer Leader Services out of Huxley, Iowa on a unanimous vote after an hour-long interview with Shannon Bisgard, a

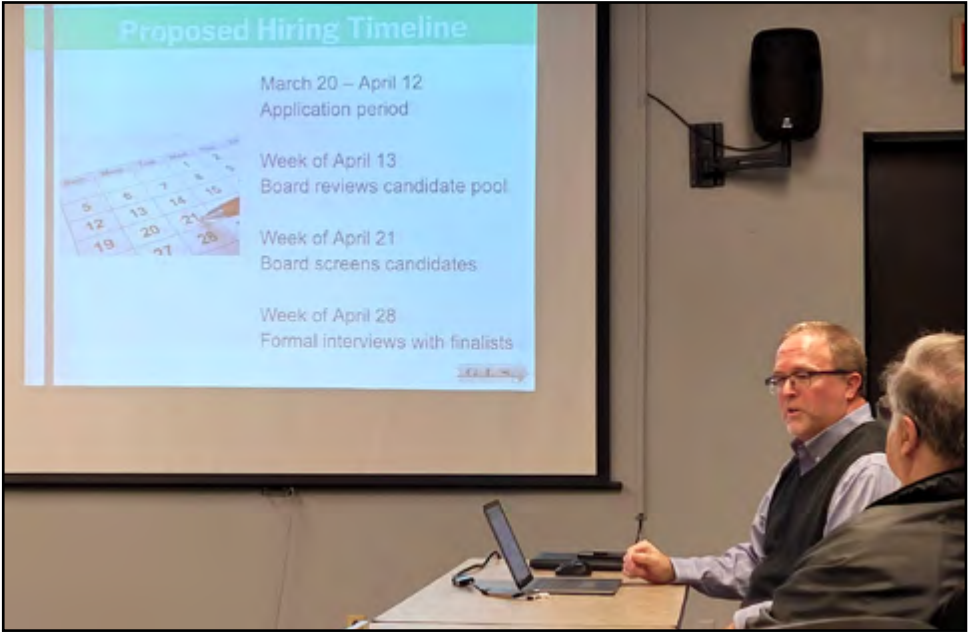


Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Shannon Bisgard, of Grundmeyer Leader Services, talks with the Fort Madison School Board Wednesday night during a search firm interview at the Central offices. The board hired GLS to conduct the search for the next superintendent for the district. Current Superintendent Dr. Erin Slater has accepted another offer in Tennessee.

consultant with the company.

GLS has been hired by more than 80 districts and colleges in the state and has a 90% outstanding rating, according to Bisgard. The contract with the district will be \$16,617. That represents 1/8 of Slater's current salary with the district.

He outlined a six-week hiring process that would include community engagements through "stakeholder

surveys", team interviews that would include parents and teachers, and school board interviews that will be held in closed sessions until a final candidate is selected.

With the hiring, advertising for the position will start in a basic form this week and then a more substantial position will be listed in multiple state

See SCHOOL, page 6

### COUNCIL MEETINGS

## Council crusty over Pizza Hut easement

• Restaurant wanted \$5K for parcel to allow rec. trail to stay at 8-feet

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – An effort to secure an easement for the concrete path that will go in front of Pizza Hut as part of the reconstruction of Avenue L was met with extra onion Tuesday night at the Fort Madison City Council meeting.

Public Works Director Mark Boussetot said city staff had reached an agreement to secure a portion of the property at 24th and Avenue L at the corner of the Pizza Hut lot.

The easement was needed due to a spotlight on the corner that would require the city to secure some space outside of the right of way to continue the new 8-foot recreational trail that is part of the new construction on that stretch of highway.

The work is part of the next phase of the city's Business 61 reconstruction efforts from 20th Street to 30th Street.

Boussetot wrote in a report to the council that that corner has been an issue. The city is required to secure all easements outside of the right of way per DOT regulations.

"The northwest corner of 24th Street and Avenue L is a particularly challenging corner for the trail because of the existing traffic signal mast arm," he wrote.

"In order to bid the project with the Iowa DOT, the engineer reduced the width of the trail to four feet."

Summit Pizza Inc. had agreed to sell the parcel to the city to allow it to continue with the designed 8-foot wide rec. trail, which would eliminate one parking stall on the property, for \$5,000.

Boussetot and City Manager Laura

See TRAIL, page 4

## History in rubble

The former Richardson Elementary is basically a pile of bricks at this point. The newer portion is being left standing for Harmony Bible Church, who purchased part of the building last year.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

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### WEATHER

THU 20 Mar .....	Sunny and chilly, 45° F/ 32° F
FRI 21 Mar .....	Partly sunny and cool, 59° F/ 30° F
SAT 22 Mar .....	Sunny and cool, 53° F/ 40° F

### IOWA LOTTERY

LUCKY FOR LIFE 03/18 .....	8 20 37 39 46, Lucky Ball: 15
MEGA MILLIONS 03/18 .....	27 28 31 32 33, Mega Ball: 24 Megaplier: 3
PICK 3 MIDDAY 03/18 .....	510
PICK 3 EVENING 03/18 .....	441
PICK 4 MIDDAY 03/18 .....	2459
PICK 4 EVENING 05/16 .....	5753

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Obituaries

OBITUARIES

DANIEL J. PETERSCHMIDT

Daniel J. Peterschmidt, 81, of Brandon, Florida, and formerly of Ft. Madison passed away peacefully on March 17 at Tessera of Brandon.



PETERSCHMIDT

He was born November 18, 1943, in Fort Madison, Iowa, Dan was the son of Joe and Dorothy (Stolwyk) Peterschmidt. Dan graduated from Aquinas High School in Fort Madison before proudly serving in the US Navy from 1965 - 1968. After his military service, he married Linda Winke on October 6, 1973, at St. Mary's Catholic Church and together they were married for fifty one years. Dan and Linda initially lived in Champaign, Illinois before moving to Brandon, Florida where Dan worked as a Graphic Illustrator for the Special Operations Command at MacDill Air Force Base for 30 years. Beyond his profession, Dan loved watching and playing tennis. He was a gifted artist, specializing in charcoal, oil, and acrylic painting. Dan's creative and artistic talents continued into the house where he mastered cabinetry, tile work, wallpapering and roofing- all self-taught skills.

Dan is survived by his wife, Linda Peterschmidt of Brandon, FL; son, Aaron Peterschmidt and wife Sybil of Wahiawa, Hawaii, Elaine Theodore and husband Danny of Charlottesville, Virginia, and Laura Hall and husband Greg of Riverview, Florida. He has four grandsons Leo Theodore, Cole Theodore, Jackson Hall and Liam Hall; his brother John and his wife Maryrose of Muscatine, Iowa.



Dan was preceded in death by his parents, his sisters Joann Wolfe, Rose Peterschmidt, and Marilyn Beimer and brother Ted Peterschmidt.

The funeral mass will be held on Monday, March 24, 2025 at 11 AM at Sacred Heart Church with Reverend Gary Beckman officiating, burial will follow in Sacred Heart Cemetery. The family will meet with friends from 10 AM until 11 AM just prior to the service. King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory is assisting the family.

A memorial has been established in his memory and online condolences may be left at [www.kinglynk.com](http://www.kinglynk.com).

OBITUARIES

LYLE W. NAGEL

Lyle William Nagel, 93, of Warsaw, Illinois, passed away on Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at his home in Warsaw.



NAGEL

Lyle was born on April 25, 1931, in Sutter, Illinois, the son of Homer and Ida (Koehler) Nagel. On July 4, 1952, he was united in marriage to Charlot Weigand in Sutter. She survives.

A jack-of-all-trades, Lyle worked hard to provide for his family, being employed throughout his life at the Warsaw Battery Factory, Foote Mineral, and the water department, as well as farming and carpentry work. He enjoyed spending his free time riding his motorcycle and playing Euchre. Lyle will forever be remembered for his strong work ethic and his love for his family, especially his grandchildren.

Lyle is survived by his wife of seventy-two years, Charlot Nagel, of Warsaw; three sons: Rod (Kim) Nagel, Rick Nagel and Jeff Nagel, all of Warsaw; two brothers: Donald Nagel of Sutter and James Nagel of Colorado Springs, Colorado; five grandchildren: Amy, Ashley, Ryan, Eric and Nick; and ten great-grandchildren.

Lyle is preceded in death by his parents, nine siblings, and his daughter-in-law Judi Nagel.

Private family services will be held. Memorials may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Tributes and condolences may be left at [www.printy-funeralhome.com](http://www.printy-funeralhome.com).

Printy Funeral Home of Warsaw is in charge of arrangements.

Pen City Current obituary policy

Pen City Current runs obituaries one time at no charge to funeral homes and they run the day they are submitted in most cases. They are also run as submitted by the funeral homes. Reposting of obituaries due to changes can only be requested by the submitting funeral home and will be assessed a \$15 reposting fee.



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For the Record

For the Record

**Fort Madison Police Report**  
03/17/25 – 7:22 a.m. – Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 3100 block of Avenue J.  
03/17/25 – 12:58 p.m. – Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1700 block of Avenue F.  
03/17/25 – 3:59 p.m. – Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 3100 block of Avenue M.  
03/18/25 – 6:40 a.m. – Fort Madison police responded to a report of a burglary in the 2000 block of Avenue J.  
03/18/25 – 6:40 a.m. – Fort Madison police arrested Zackary Steven Williams, 29, of Fort Madison in the 2000 block of Avenue J, on a warrant for possession of drug paraphernalia. He was held in Lee County Jail.  
03/18/25 – 9:43 a.m. – Fort Madison police arrested

Eric Eugene Fortune, Jr., in the 3400 block of Avenue L, in a warrant for 3rd-degree theft. He was transferred to another agency.

**Keokuk Police Report**  
03/14/25 – 10:03 a.m. – Keokuk police arrested Brian Robert Nickel 33, of Keokuk, in the 500 block of S. 2nd Street, on a warrant for being a fugitive from justice. He was held in Lee County Jail.  
03/14/25 – 10:24 a.m. – Keokuk police responded to a report of a burglary in the 500 block of Johnson Street.  
03/14/25 – 11:54 a.m. – Keokuk police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 100 block of Carbide Lane.  
03/14/25 – 7:12 p.m. – Keokuk police arrested Crystal Dawn Watts, 40, of Keokuk, in the 1500 block of Johnson Street, on a warrant for 1st-degree harassment. She was held in

Lee County Jail.  
03/15/25 - 9:19 a.m. - Keokuk police arrested Thomas Christopher Dodge, 58, of Keokuk, in the 100 block of S. 12th Street on a warrant for failure to appear. He was held in Lee County Jail.  
03/15/25 – 11:19 a.m. - Keokuk police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 3000 block of Main Street.  
03/15/25 – 3:20 p.m. – Keokuk police arrested Cornelius Tyrone Brewer, 33, of Keokuk, in the 1100 block of Timea Street, on charges of driving while license revoked, drug stamp violations, possession of a controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia and possession with intent to deliver – marijuana. He was held in Lee County Jail.  
03/15/25 – 6:22 p.m. – Keokuk police cited Angel Ramon Tarre Valderrama, 39, of Montrose in the 1400

block of Main Street, on a charge of driving under suspension.  
03/15/25 – 10:36 p.m. - Keokuk police responded to a report of a burglary on S. Oak Drive.  
03/15/25 – 11:10 p.m. – Keokuk police arrested Franz Quinton Dunsworth, 39, of Keokuk, in the 600 block of F Street, on a warrant for driving while barred. He was held in Lee County Jail.  
03/16/25 – 12:11 p.m. – Keokuk police arrested a 13-year old male in the 2100 block of Plank Road on a charge of assault causing serious injury. He was released to a parent.  
03/16/25. – 12:23 p.m. - Keokuk police responded to a report of a stolen vehicle in the Keokuk area.  
03/16/25 – 3:11 p.m. - Keokuk police responded to a report of a burglary in the 300 block of S. 18th Street.  
03/16/25 – 9:12 p.m. –

Keokuk police arrested Ricky Leon Riddle, 47, of Keokuk, in the 1200 block of Palean Street on a charge of eluding. He was held in Lee County Jail.  
03/16/25 – 10:10 p.m. – Keokuk police arrested Wesley Lane Stinson, 20, of Keokuk, in the 2300 block of Main Street on a charge of possession of marijuana. He was held in Lee County Jail.  
03/17/25 – 4:03 p.m. – Keokuk police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1200 block of Johnson Street.  
03/17/25 – 4:59 p.m. – Keokuk police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1700 block of Timea Street.  
03/18/25 – 3:08 a.m. – Keokuk police arrested Douglas Kent Smith, 59, of Camanche, in the 400 block of Orleans Avenue on a charge of OWI. He was held in Lee County Jail.

**Lee County Sheriff's Report**  
03/17/25 – 1:18 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Darrin Michael Fitzgerald, 23, of Hamilton, Ill., at the N. Lee Courthouse, on a warrant for driving under suspension. He was taken to Lee County Jail and released on bond.  
03/18/25 – 9:19 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Ashley Ann Caulkins, 39, of Keokuk, at the S. Lee Courthouse on a warrant for violation of probation.  
03/18/25 – 9:20 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Adrian Faith Olson, 18, of Fort Madison at the N. Lee Courthouse, on a judgment hold and a charge of voluntary absence from custody. She was held in Lee County Jail.  
*Those listed above should be and are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.*

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From the Front

Council votes 5-1 to turn down offer for Avenue L easement

TRAIL - Continued from Page 1

Liegois recommended the city council approve the easement purchase.

But Mayor Matt Mohrfeld pushed back and said the restaurant should recognize the value of the trail and give the city the easement that provides for what he said was about six feet of trail.

“Alright, I think this is a terrible idea,” he said. “They want us to pay for an easement about the size of that podium just so that we have a section of it that can be this wide instead of this wide. It bottle-necks there because of the traffic light. And I like Pizza Hut, but they’re going to get a nice wellness trail in front of there and I think they should work

with the city a little more than this.”

“I don’t think \$5,000 for that little wedge of ground there is right. I think it sets a bad precedent as we move forward with our P.O.R.T trail and easements.”

Bousselot said he agreed with the Mayor that it’s a lot of money for the easement.

“Where we differ is we’ve been working a long time with Pizza Hut to get this easement. The Avenue L 20 to 30 project was designed with an 8-foot walking trail from beginning to end,” Bousselot said.

“Working with the DOT, we had to have all the easements and we didn’t have all the easements, so on the corner of 24th and Avenue L, we narrowed the walking trail from 8 feet to five feet to dance around the traffic signal.

Narrowing the walkway down at that part near the traffic signal allowed the city to bid the project because doing that didn’t require the easement so there would be no issue with the DOT. Bousselot said the city did that to keep the project moving, but wanted to continue to work with the business to try to keep the original intent of the trail.

“If we approve this easement with Pizza Hut, we would have an 8-foot wide trail from beginning to end and there would be no narrow spot to get around the traffic light,” he said.

Councilman Rusty Andrews said the city could move the traffic light for less than \$5,000, but he said just narrowing the trail there isn’t that big of a deal.

“If you move it to five feet, who’s gonna be mad?

Tell me again,” Andrews said.

Bousselot said he doesn’t know why the city would want to have an 8-foot trail down the north side of the street except for that section.

Councilman Dustin Yager had the quickest response.

“Because they want \$5,000,” he said.

Mohrfeld said it’s nowhere close to 20 feet and it’s closer to five, but Bousselot said it’s 20 feet from the intersection to where the 8-foot resumes. Bousselot said the stretch would also hinder the city maintaining the trail with snow removal.

“If we’re running our side by side down it ,it would be beneficial if it was 8-feet the whole way,” he said.

Mohrfeld said so now Pizza Hut gets a new trail in front of their building that the city will have maintain and they want \$5,000 for what amounts to one parking spot.

Bousselot said he was asking for the easement because it would be beneficial for the trail. He said the \$5,000 helps reimburse Summit Pizza’s legal expenses in considering the easement.

The contract for the work has already been approved, according to Liegois, and the contract is bid with the narrowing included.

“This is the lowest you get to get that to 8-feet. If you don’t approve it, you’re stuck with the (narrowed) path.

The motion failed 5-1 with Angela Roller voting in favor of paying for the easement and the rest of the council voting against it. Jack Gray was absent.

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Classifieds/Public Notices

PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICES

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**CITY OF**  
**WEST BURLINGTON**  
**Regular City Council**  
**Meeting**  
**Wednesday, March 19,**  
**2025 - 6:00 PM**  
**West Burlington**  
**City Hall**  
**122 Broadway Street**

**TENTATIVE AGENDA**

CALL TO ORDER  
PLEDGE OF ALLE-  
GIANCE  
ROLL CALL  
PERFECTING & AP-  
PROVAL OF AGENDA  
CONSENT AGENDA  
All items on the Con-  
sent Agenda are Action  
items that will be con-  
sidered by a single vote.  
Council members may  
request that an item be  
pulled for discussion and  
held for a separate vote.  
Items on the Consent

Agenda may include  
claims over the City  
Administrator's authorized  
spending limit, payments  
related to previously  
approved contracts, and  
non-controversial or rou-  
tine expenses as defined  
by the City's Purchasing  
Policy.  
1. Minutes from the  
Regular City Council  
meeting on March 5, 2025  
2. Approve payment to  
Centre State Internation  
Trucks, Inc for the pur-  
chase of a 2026 Dump  
Truck - \$99,850  
3. Accept Alex Beard's  
resignation from the Fire  
Department  
4. Clerk's Monthly Fi-  
nancial Report for Febru-  
ary 2025  
5. Payment of Claims  
as listed on the Ex-  
pense Approval Report  
- \$273,062.27  
COUNCIL & STAFF

**REPORTS**  
• ADMINISTRATOR:  
• PUBLIC WORKS:  
• POLICE DEPART-  
MENT:  
• FIRE/BUILDING DE-  
PARTMENT:  
• CLERK/FINANCE/IT:  
• OTHER STAFF RE-  
PORTS:  
• COUNCIL REPORTS:  
• COMMUNITY RE-  
PORTS:  
PROCLAMATIONS  
1. Junior Achievement  
Day - April 3, 2025  
CITIZEN INQUIRIES  
OLD BUSINESS  
NEW BUSINESS  
1. Consider the pur-  
chase of a MRX Data  
Collector from Ferguson  
Waterworks - \$12,500  
2. Consider a Resolu-  
tion Waiving the Prelimi-  
nary Plat and approving  
the Final Plat for Veterans  
Subdivision  
CITIZEN INQUIRIES

**CLOSED SESSION**  
1. Closed Session in  
accordance with Iowa  
Code Section 21.5.1(j), to  
discuss the purchase of

particular real estate only  
where premature disclo-  
sure could be reasonably  
expected to increase the  
price the governmental

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Ag News/From the Front

Firm to start search for superintendent this week

SCHOOL - Continued from Page 1

and national search outlets.

The period for accepting applications will begin tomorrow and run through April 12. The board will then review the candidate pool the week of April 13.

“I would expect this to get between 10 and 20 candidates,” Bisgard said. “Based on some of the searches we’re in right now and the size of the district.”

Board screening of candidates will take place the week of April 21, just a month from now, with formal interviews of final candidates taking place the week of April 28.

“The proposed hiring timeline is what we put together looking through what we thought was a realistic timeline,” he said. “But that’s somewhat of an aggressive timeline for you, as well, knowing that we’re in that spring window. We don’t feel like you’re late in the search, but if we drag this out for too long you’re definitely going to lose some candidates.”

Bisgard said he would expect the salary range for the Fort Madison position, based on the current salaries of superintendents of 10 smaller districts and 10 larger districts in enrollment higher and lower than Fort Madison, to be about \$190,000 to \$210,000.

The board will be setting additional meetings to fine tune the specifications around the hiring process, including finalizing dates and salary ranges, and what the makeup of team interviews will look like.

The board met Monday to start the search for the hiring firm before hiring them on Wednesday.

USDA expediting \$10B through ECAP

WASHINGTON – U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins, on National Agriculture Day, announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is issuing up to \$10 billion directly to agricultural producers through the Emergency Commodity Assistance Program (ECAP) for the 2024 crop year. Administered by USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA), ECAP will help agricultural producers mitigate the impacts of increased input costs and falling commodity prices.

“Producers are facing higher costs and market uncertainty, and the Trump Administration is ensuring they get the support they need without delay,” said Secretary Rollins. “With clear direction from Congress, USDA has prioritized streamlining the process and accelerating these payments ahead of schedule, ensuring farmers have the resources necessary to manage rising expenses and secure financing for next season.”

Authorized by the American Relief Act, 2025, these economic relief payments are based on planted and prevented planted crop acres for eligible commodities for the 2024 crop year. To streamline and simplify the delivery of ECAP, FSA will begin sending pre-filled applications to producers who submitted acreage reports to FSA for 2024 eligible ECAP commodities soon after the signup period opens on March 19, 2025. Producers do not have to wait for their pre-filled ECAP application to apply. They can visit [fsa.usda.gov/ecap](https://fsa.usda.gov/ecap) to apply using a [login.gov](https://login.gov) account or contact their local FSA office to request an application once the signup period opens.

Eligible Commodities and Payment Rates

The commodities below are eligible for these per-acre payment rates:

Wheat - \$30.69

Eligible oilseeds:

Corn - \$42.91

Canola - \$31.83

Sorghum - \$42.52

Crambe - \$19.08

Barley - \$21.67

Flax - \$20.97

Oats - \$77.66

Mustard - \$11.36

Upland cotton & Extra-long staple cotton - \$84.74

Rapeseed - \$23.63

Long & medium grain rice - \$76.94

Safflower - \$26.32

Peanuts - \$75.51

Sesame - \$16.83

Soybeans - \$29.76

Sunflower - \$27.23

Dry peas - \$16.02

Lentils - \$19.30

Small Chickpeas - \$31.45

Large Chickpeas - \$24.02

Producer Eligibility

Eligible producers must report 2024 crop year planted and prevented planted acres to FSA on an FSA-578, Report of Acreage form. Producers who have not previously reported 2024 crop year acreage or filed a notice of loss for prevented planted crops must submit an acreage report by the Aug. 15, 2025, deadline. Eligible producers can visit [fsa.usda.gov/ecap](https://fsa.usda.gov/ecap) for eligibility and payment details.

Applying for ECAP

Producers must submit ECAP applications to their local FSA county office by Aug. 15, 2025. Only one application is required for all ECAP eligible commodities nationwide. ECAP applications can be submitted to FSA in-person, electronically using Box and One-Span, by fax or by applying online at [fsa.usda.gov/ecap](https://fsa.usda.gov/ecap) utilizing a secure [login.gov](https://login.gov) account.

If not already on file for the 2024 crop year, producers must have the following forms on file with FSA:

Form AD-2047, Customer Data Worksheet.

Form CCC-901, Member Information for Legal Entities (if applicable).

Form CCC-902, Farm Operating Plan for an individual or legal entity.

Form CCC 943, 75 percent of Average Gross Income from Farming, Ranching, or Forestry Certification (if applicable).

AD-1026, Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification.

SF-3881, Direct Deposit.

Except for the new CCC-943, most producers, especially those who have previously participated in FSA programs, likely have these forms on file. However, those who are uncertain and want to confirm the status of their forms or need to submit the new Form-943, can contact their local FSA county office.

If a producer does not receive a pre-filled ECAP application, and they planted or were prevented from planting ECAP eligible commodities in 2024, they should contact their local FSA office.


ECAP Payments and Calculator

ECAP payments will be issued as applications are approved. Initial ECAP payments will be factored by 85% to ensure that total program payments do not exceed available funding. If additional funds remain, FSA may issue a second payment.



ECAP assistance will be calculated using a flat payment rate for the eligible commodity multiplied by the eligible reported acres. Payments are based on acreage and not production. For acres reported as prevented plant, ECAP assistance will be calculated at 50%.

For ECAP payment estimates, producers are encouraged to visit [fsa.usda.gov/ecap](https://fsa.usda.gov/ecap) to use the ECAP online calculator.

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320 North 3rd Street, Suite 100, Burlington, Iowa 52601-0337  
1603 Main Street, Keokuk, IA 52632  
[www.PothitakisLaw.com](https://www.PothitakisLaw.com)