



July 1, 2024

# THE CONEJOS COUNTY MESSENGER

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Welcome to our **fourth year** of the Conejos County Newsletter! As elected officials and county department directors, our goal is to inform our citizens of news stories, information and data through the periodic publication of a newsletter. The previous editions of newsletters are archived on the county website,

[www.conejoscounty.colorado.gov](http://www.conejoscounty.colorado.gov)

In an effort to gain more exposure, we are posting this same newsletter on Facebook in the Citizens for a Better Conejos County

Conejos County  
Website QR Code



## Conejos County Citizen Input in Working with Commissioners in Finalizing 1041 Public Utilities' Regulations

Over the past two months, the Commissioners have met with many landowners and citizens of the county in an effort to gain valuable input in finalizing a 1041 Public Utilities set of regulations. There have been two public hearings and two work sessions since May 9. The following is a list of the upcoming work session, hearing, and meeting.

July 11, Draft of Regulations emailed to citizens who have attended work sessions and/or hearings and have provided an email address.

July 31, Work Session, 6:00 p.m., Commissioner's Meeting Room

August 14, Public Hearing, 6:00 p.m., Commissioner's Meeting Room

August 15, Regular Commissioner Meeting, 9:00 a.m., Agenda Item—Adoption of 1041 Public Utilities

# Denise Jiron, Public Health Director, Honored at April 18 Commissioner's Meeting for Leadership, Dedication, and Service during Covid-19 Pandemic

At the April 18th regular Commissioner's meeting, several staff members of the Conejos County Public Health Department, addressed the Board with comments regarding Denise Jiron's outstanding leadership, dedication, service and resiliency during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Ms. Jiron was presented with a bouquet of flowers and a plaque.



Left to Right: Comm. Garcia,  
Comm. Baroz, Comm. Jarvies,  
Veronica Fringer, Denise Jiron,  
Austin Chavez, Annarae Smith,  
Jessica Juarez, Samantha  
Escobedo



# Commissioners Proclaim April as Sexual Assault Awareness and Child Abuse Prevention Month

At the April 4th BOCC meeting, Ms. Nadia Flores, Conejos County Violence Reduction Unit Coordinator presented the Commission with two proclamations, asking Conejos County proclaim the month of April as National Child Abuse Awareness and Sexual Assault Awareness month. Both Proclamations were posted on the county website during the month in their entirety.

The following is an excerpt from the Sexual Assault Awareness Proclamation:

“This year’s SAAM campaign theme, Building Connected Communities, calls on each of us to work together to prevent sexual abuse, harassment, and assault. We believe when anyone experiences sexual violence, every community member is affected. We must strive to build more connected, respectful, and inclusive communities to promote our collective well-being and protect against the risk of sexual violence. We believe all of our communities will be safer and stronger by making them more equitable for people of all gender identities and sexual orientations, races and ethnic backgrounds, ages, faiths, and abilities.”

The following is an excerpt from the Child Abuse Prevention Proclamation:

“Whereas, effective child abuse prevention activities succeed because of the partnerships created between child welfare professionals, education, health, community and faith-based organizations, businesses, law enforcement agencies and families, and”

Nadia Flores,  
addressing the Board





# CONEJOS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES



Greetings,

The Conejos County Department of Social Services would like to wish all of our Conejos County citizens a safe and happy summer!

Congratulations to our scholarship winners James Sanchez and Cienna Daniels. We wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors and we are proud of all of our graduating seniors across the county. CCDSS offers a total of six scholarships every year across our school districts. Upcoming graduates, keep an eye on your school announcements for information on how to apply.



The Conejos County Department of Social Services will be giving away school supplies and backpacks to our TANF eligible families again this year. In addition, this year will be doing a drawing for gift certificates to Foot Locker. This year we will have our giveaway on August 9<sup>th</sup> at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish Hall in Conejos. All TANF eligible families are encouraged to stop by!

### Keep an eye out for these summer programs:

Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (Summer EBT) is a new program created to help families purchase healthy food for the months in which students are not in school. Summer EBT provides \$40 per eligible child per summer month when schools are closed. Families receive a single \$120 lump-sum payment on pre-loaded cards that can be spent on eligible food purchases. More information can be found at: <https://cdhs.colorado.gov/summer-ebt>

### Double-Up Food Bucks

<p><b>GET FREE</b> FRUITS &amp; VEGETABLES WITH YOUR <b>SNAP</b>/ FOOD ASSISTANCE:</p> <p>TEXT YOUR ZIP CODE TO <b>1-844-383-2399</b> FOR A LOCATION NEAR YOU VISIT <a href="http://DOUBLEUPCOLORADO.ORG">DOUBLEUPCOLORADO.ORG</a> OR CALL: 720-573-3617</p>	<p><b>OBTÉN</b> FRUTAS Y VERDURAS <b>GRATIS</b> CON SU <b>SNAP</b> / ASISTENCIA ALIMENTARIA</p> <p>MANDE SU CÓDIGO POSTAL VIA TEXTO A <b>1-844-383-2399</b> PARA LA UBICACIÓN MÁS CERCANA VISITE <a href="http://DOUBLEUPCOLORADO.ORG">DOUBLEUPCOLORADO.ORG</a> O LLAME: 720-573-3617</p>
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They can't.  
You can.

Be their voice. Make the call.  
**1-844-CO-4-KIDS**  
1-844-264-5437





The Sheriff's Office has recently hired four new deputies. Gabrielle Vigil and Eduardo Reyes recently graduated from the Trinidad State Law Enforcement Academy and are currently going through the Field Training Program. Skylar Moran and Zach Bechaver have joined the Sheriff's Office as Detention Deputies. We are extremely excited in welcoming these individuals, and look forward to working with each of them. They will be a great asset to our Office.

The Sheriff's Office has been very busy over the last few months with a heavy concentration on the drug problem that is plaguing our community. Our Deputies along with assistance from outside agencies have been able to take nearly 6000 fentanyl pills off our streets, 201 grams of methamphetamine, 14.5 grams of powdered fentanyl, 4 grams of cocaine, 2 grams of Heroin and 5 guns. Several thousand rounds of ammunition, stolen rifle suppressors, and countless other stolen items. It is heart breaking to witness the effect of these illegal drugs and the destruction they cause in the lives of individuals, families, and the community. At times it feels like a battle that cannot be won and will not be won with law enforcement alone.

To truly have an effect on the drugs and crime poisoning our society, it will take the community getting involved, and help relay a message that this behavior will not be tolerated. Many of these criminals have a mind-set that "Nothing will happen to me." We are seeing more frequent and more violent crimes being committed by the same people over and over again. We here at the Sheriff's Office do not want citizens to take matters into their own hands however, "If you see something say something". That is a motto used throughout our country in the school systems and can carry over into our communities. Crime Stoppers is another tool that is available in which a citizen can remain anonymous and still report suspicious activities or crimes being committed. One can also call directly into the Sheriff's Office to report unusual activities. Please do not try and intervene if you see criminal activity, as you could put yourself in danger. Instead make that phone call, report it, and let the Deputies respond.

Our School Resource Officer Program has also taken off with great success. Sgt. Noga has been to several trainings making the program even stronger. He is continually striving to make our schools a better and more a comfortable place for our children. He responded to nearly 50 Safe to Tell Complaints over the last school year. Some of the complaints were minor, some were unfounded, and some led to serious criminal charges. The SRO Program is continuing to grow and we are hoping to find a way to put another fulltime officer in position to help Sgt. Noga with his work load. This program has been very positive and well received in the community and schools. --- Sheriff Garth Crowther

## Treasurer's Office

Happy Summer 2024 from the Conejos County Treasurer's Office! Our office has just completed the 2<sup>nd</sup> half payment collection which was June 17, 2024. Thank you to all those who have paid their taxes in full. Upcoming delinquent tax notices are scheduled to be mailed July 3, 2024. Real estate taxes need to be paid by September 30, 2024 to avoid advertising charges. For mobile homes and personal property taxes, please pay by August 31, 2024 to avoid advertising charges. Our annual tax lien sale is currently scheduled online for Thursday, November 14, 2024.

A reminder you can still make online payments until October 31, 2024 at our county website at: [conejoscounty.colorado.gov](https://conejoscounty.colorado.gov) Please note we completed our software conversion to Tyler Technologies and have appreciated the public's patience. If you have any questions regarding your taxes, please call our office at (719) 376-5919. Thank you and enjoy the rain, sunshine and celebrations of summer 2024!

**Mack Crowther, Treasurer**





# Conejos County Planning & Zoning and Building Department

**2018 International Building Code, International Residential Code, Energy Conservation Code Adopted July 1, 2023.**

We made it through the first year of the building code. We have experienced growing pains but for the most part everyone has adapted well. Contractors, Landowners, those planning building projects must remember that everything begins with a plan (building and site plan and official drawings) and then a building permit may be issued. Many Landowners in Conejos County build without a permit. It's a very costly mistake to not get a permit; that's a 200% penalty. That is information worth sharing with your neighbors, friends and relatives. "Conejos

County is Zoned – Permits are Required. The Land Use Office is here to help you – If you don't know, ask!

We continue to work on adopting the 1041 Regulations. 1041 is a process for uses that are larger in nature as these projects will affect Conejos County as a whole. The uses include water and major utility projects such as solar gardens,

**1041 POWERS/REGULATIONS** - 1041 powers allow local governments to identify, designate, and regulate areas and activities of state interest through a local permitting process. The general intention of these powers is to allow for local governments to maintain their control over development projects even where the development project has statewide impacts. The statute concerning areas and activities of state interest can be found in Colorado Revised Statute 24-65.1-101.

transmission lines, etc. The draft is available for review at the Land Use Office in Conejos during regular business hours. The Commissioners have established the following work session and public hearing dates. The public is welcome to attend and provide comments. The Hearings and Meetings are held in the County Commissioners meeting room at the County Courthouse on the following dates: ● July 15, 2024 - 1041 Regulations - Major Utilities – New Draft Document Due for review. ● July 18, 2024 - Board of County Commissioners - 1041 Regulations - Water Projects PUBLIC HEARING & Decision – 10:00 AM ● July 29, 2024 - 1041 Regulations - Major Utilities - Work session at 6:00 PM at the Courthouse ● August 14, 2024 - 1041 Regulations - Major Utilities – PUBLIC HEARING at 6:00 PM at the Courthouse ● August 15, 2024 - 1041 Regulations - Major Utilities – Decision – Regular meeting – 10:00 AM.

Land Use has an amazing staff ready to help you. This last spring we said goodbye to Michelle Bradford and Oscar Morales who left to pursue opportunities elsewhere; we wish them well. We hired two new talented people; Aleesha Goodman as our Address Coordinator/Permit Technician and Matthew Beckner as the Building Inspector. I'm sure you will get to meet them, and I hope you recognize their commitment to providing outstanding service to Conejos County. Our office hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

## **LAND USE OFFICE** **STAFF:**

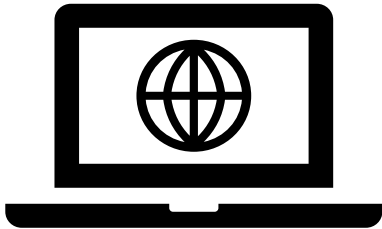
- ◆Aleesha Goodman – Address Coordinator/Permit Technician
- ◆Matthew Beckner – Building Inspector
- ◆Pres Romero – Site/Septic Inspector- Code Enforcement
- ◆Linda DeHerrera - Administrator

**I have a question?**

# What is exempt from permitting?

- One story detached accessory structures that do not exceed 200 square feet.
- Fences less than 7' high.
- Retaining walls not over 4' height - measured from the bottom of the footing to the top.
- Sidewalks and driveways no more than 30" above adjacent grade and not over a basement or story below and not part of an accessible route.
- General maintenance like painting, stucco, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work.
- Playground equipment and swing sets.
- Window awnings supported by the exterior wall that does not project more than 54" and does not require additional support.
- Decks not exceeding 200 square feet in areas, are not more than 30" above grade at any point, are not attached to the dwelling and doesn't serve the exit door requirement.

There may be other exemptions, the list above identifies the most common exemptions. If you don't know, ask!



Land Use Department Webpage  
[www.conejoscounty.colorado.gov](http://www.conejoscounty.colorado.gov)

Check out our website. We are posting public notices on the bulletin board, the Land Use Code, Comprehensive Plan, various maps, and various building guides available for your reference. You can apply for building permits, road access permits, and physical addresses. The link to DORA for electrical and plumbing & gas permits is available on our page. Call us if we can help.