



# The Iowa County

magazine

October 2023  
Cybersecurity Month





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# The Iowa County

October 2023 \* Volume 52, Number 10

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#### ISAC's Mission:

To promote effective and responsible county government  
for the people of Iowa.

#### ISAC's Vision:

To be the principal, authoritative source of representation,  
information and services for and about county government  
in Iowa.

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# Safeguarding Iowa Counties in 2023

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Hi, my name is Andrew De Haan. I'm the new Information Technology (IT) Director for ISAC. I'm excited to be one of the newest members of the ISAC team. I've been in IT for over 20 years, the last 10 as an Iowa county IT Director. I know and understand how Iowa county government works, especially from the technical side of things, and I hope to bring that knowledge and experience to ISAC as well.

Another part of my role will be to assist Joel Rohne in the Technology Service Bureau (TSB) with county technology needs. Maybe you will see me in your county offices soon! I'm excited to help ISAC innovate and advance its technology strategy in all areas of the business. Cybersecurity is one area that I will be focusing my efforts on for ISAC, and Iowa counties should be as well.



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## **Safeguarding Iowa Counties in 2023: Navigating the Ever-Evolving Landscape of Cybersecurity Threats**

In 2023, Iowa counties continue to grapple with the escalating risk of cybersecurity threats. As technology advances, so do the techniques employed by malicious actors seeking to exploit vulnerabilities in our interconnected world. Here are some of the most common cybersecurity threats that Iowa counties have dealt with in the last year.

### **Most Common Cybersecurity Threats in 2023**

**Ransomware Attacks:** Ransomware remains a pervasive threat in 2023. Malicious actors employ increasingly sophisticated techniques to infiltrate systems, encrypt data, and demand hefty ransoms for decryption keys. Many times, the ransom is paid but the decryption keys are never given or the ransom is increased as a method of extortion. Iowa counties must be prepared to defend against these attacks, which can lead to data loss and significant financial losses.

**Mitigation:** The best way to protect against ransomware is to know that your data can be recovered, no matter what the bad actor does with it. Implementing a robust backup solution that has an immutable backup option can ensure that critical data remains accessible even in the event of a ransomware attack. These backups are immune to encryption attempts and provide a reliable means of data recovery. It is also important to routinely test your backups. An untested backup should not be trusted.

**Phishing and Social Engineering:** Phishing attacks continue to evolve, becoming more convincing and harder to detect. Social engineering tactics manipulate individuals into revealing sensitive information, making employees the weakest link in cybersecurity defenses. This is generally done over email with malicious links or attachments but can also often be seen in bad internet search results or links on a web page.

**Mitigation:** Iowa counties should invest in comprehensive employee training programs to raise awareness about phishing threats and the dangers of social engineering. Encouraging a culture of skepticism and providing tools for reporting suspicious emails can significantly reduce the risk. Non-punitive routine testing of all users is also a good training opportunity. Failed phishing tests should be used to open a dialog about better decision making by the user.

**Advanced Persistent Threats (APTs):** APTs are long-term, stealthy attacks aimed at stealing sensitive information or maintaining unauthorized access to systems. They often target government entities and are challenging to detect due to their persistence and careful planning. These threats can 'live' undetected on a county's computer

# Safeguarding Iowa Counties in 2023

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system for weeks or months gathering data on users, elected officials, or department heads. Once the bad actor has enough information gathered, they can detonate several other attacks on their target such as data encryption or bank account access.

**Mitigation:** Deploying advanced threat detection systems, like CrowdStrike from the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), can help identify APTs early in their lifecycle. These solutions employ machine learning and behavioral analysis to detect abnormal activities indicative of an APT. OCIO will monitor your county's computers and contact you if any malicious activity is detected by the CrowdStrike system. This is a huge benefit to counties since most cannot afford this level of coverage provided by the OCIO.

## Compliance

All Iowa counties deal with compliance. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliance should be mandated county-wide, not just at the county Public Health offices. HIPAA requires a named security officer who should generally be someone on the internal IT team. HIPAA compliance addresses some of the mitigation risks above, emphasizing data encryption, data access controls, audits, and employee training.

For law enforcement and county attorneys, Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) compliance mandates secure data transmission, strict access controls, and continuous auditing and monitoring. Similar to HIPAA, CJIS requires a named Local Agency Security Officer (LASO) who is typically a technical position given to the internal IT team as well.

The last year has proven that the security of sensitive information and critical systems is non-negotiable. Iowa counties have data that criminals want, and counties can help better protect themselves by adopting these mitigation measures. Cybersecurity is not a one-time effort; it's an ongoing commitment to safeguarding our digital future.

# Revealing the Dark Side of AI

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Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become the latest craze sweeping the technology industry. This cutting-edge technology is trending due to its potential to revolutionize the way we work, interact, and innovate. From self-driving cars and virtual assistants, the potential use of AI has just begun to scratch the surface. However, the same capabilities that make AI a positive change can also be utilized for malicious purposes. As this technology becomes more sophisticated, the potential dangers and malicious use of it is beginning to emerge which raises serious concerns about its unintended consequences. What are the dangers that we can face with AI?



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One danger that AI presents is the malicious use of deepfakes. What are deepfakes? Deepfakes are AI-generated manipulations that convincingly replace a person's appearance or voice in videos, audio recordings, or images with that of another individual. These sophisticated creations utilize AI algorithms to analyze and replicate subtle facial expressions, mannerisms, and vocal inflections. While the use of deepfakes can provide fun entertainment and be harmless, the evil use of deepfakes is a growing concern. Malicious actors can use deepfakes to fabricate convincing content that deceives and misleads viewers. This technique can be used to create fabricated videos or audio clips that impersonate someone's identity, leading to character defamation, misinformation, or even manipulation of the public with false information.

Deepfakes can also be used to exploit facial recognition systems, potentially enabling unauthorized access to personal devices like smartphones or even bypassing certain security measures by mimicking the targeted individual's appearance.

Another concern that AI presents is the risks around data privacy. For AI to mimic human thinking and decision-making processes, it has to be trained with large amounts of data sets. The concern that we face today is identifying which data sets are being used to train the different models. Do they contain personal information such as addresses, names, medical records, social security numbers, or financial information? Was this information obtained from a security breach? If the data sets being used to train the AI model contains private information, this imposes the risk of a new data breach. Depending on the application using the AI, cleverly crafted input could be used to try and trick the AI into exposing this data leaving the information in the hands of an attacker.

The same can be said too if you have ever used a public AI product such as ChatGPT. Maybe, you have asked the system questions that included personal information about you or even private information from your organization. This data being inputted into the system is also being used and stored to continue to teach the AI model. This data could also be at risk for a potential data leak if someone was able to manipulate the AI and bypass any of the safeguards that may have been put in place.

Another danger in AI is its ability to generate content to spread malware, develop malware, and even create targeted phishing attacks. AI is being used to spread malware by bad actors as they use the technology to generate professional-looking tutorials for popular software that ends up leading the user down a path to install malicious software.

Attackers are also utilizing AI to develop new malware. They are using this technology as the AI can be taught to continue to mutate and change itself on the fly to continuously slip through any cybersecurity or antivirus detection.

# Revealing the Dark Side of AI

Since AI is commonly used now as a language tool and can generate human like speech and writing, cybercriminals are now using this to craft very realistic phishing emails much faster than if a human were to. Information from social media or data beaches are being used to feed the AI to personalize the message to generate realistic emails to trick the victim to danger. We can expect sophisticated phishing attempts and new malware to increase as the use of AI evolves.

Artificial Intelligence offers great potential to transform our lives in a positive way and has proven to be a great technological advancement. However, as it continues to evolve, we must exercise caution and awareness of the potential dangers it can introduce. The rapid expansion of AI across the various industries raises concerns for new security risks that we must try to stay ahead of and put in mechanisms to safeguard ourselves and our organizations.

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# Unveiling the Future: ISAC Technology Service Bureau Latest Update

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I wanted to give you all an update on some of the cool things happening with our counties and the Technology Service Bureau (TSB). I have been at the job a year already and am having a blast visiting with so many county people and talking about techy stuff. Here are a few of the things I wanted to share with you:

## 1. Tech Team Assessments

Iowa Counties Information Technology (ICIT) has been going out to counties with the “Paying IT Forward” program since 2011. This good neighbor project has county IT and GIS volunteers visiting counties to perform assessments and visit with county officials to provide IT guidance and recommendations for the county. We provide an unbiased approach to assisting county officials in navigating the world of computers, software, security, and all things in between. Reach out to me if your county would like to chat about the ever-changing world of technology in government. We have visited over 40 counties and have really enjoyed helping them!



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## 2. Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity is one of the driving forces in technology spending and decisions that counties are making today. **All of us must be proactive** in our approach to cyber, and we have many partners and programs to help you with those conversations. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), Secretary of State’s Office (SOS), Homeland Security, TSB, and ICIT are all organizations committed to helping counties with the cyber world. TSB has been actively involved with these entities to make sure counties are informed about all the services that are offered with the goal of keeping us and our citizens cyber safe.

*I heard an analogy the other day that I am going to steal. When you are out shopping and in a large parking lot, occasionally you may see an individual walking down the rows trying door handles to see if they can find an unlocked car. They pass by the locked ones because they know that they will eventually find that unlocked car and steal what’s inside of it. Cyber criminals are no different. We need to learn how best we can lock our “cars” so the bad guys will pass us by looking for the easy score.*

## 3. Education

Technology adoption and use in county government is going to continue to evolve and increase. Elected officials and staff need to be prepared and knowledgeable to work in this ever-changing environment. County elected officials and staff are incredibly busy serving the needs of citizens, but time needs to be taken for IT education and training. The motto of “We have always done it this way”, needs to be removed from our lives.

## 4. Communication

I have been involved in MANY incident responses, table top exercises, conferences, planning sessions, roundtables, and the list goes on in my time in county government. In **all** these events, the singular phrase I hear is, “We could have been better at communication.”

One of the main goals of the TSB is to improve communications between county staff, departments, county-to-county sharing, and between county, state, and federal partners.

**We have an exciting new program to help us share information and assist each other better. This program is called the Iowa Cyber Information Network (ICIN) and is described in the next article.**



# Unveiling the Future: ISAC Technology Service Bureau Latest Update

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## 5. Artificial Intelligence

AI has exploded in the last year as a tool that all of us can now easily use, and it is rapidly becoming a part of our everyday lives. It can provide us with amazing benefits but also can make for a scarier world as the bad guys take advantage of that power. We need to start harnessing the good that AI can provide us in county government but be prepared to deal with the misuse of that power as well.

AI has the ability to be a societal game changer much like the internet has radically changed our lives in a relatively short time.

Colin Gerst, IT Director from Des Moines County, did an Artificial Intelligence presentation for the treasurer's affiliate this summer. I think it scared and informed the crowd on just a few of the ways that AI will change the way we look at our world. NACo has also stood up an AI committee to discuss this emerging technology as it applies to county government.

Please let us know if your group or county would like to learn more about AI and how it could affect local governments and our day to day lives.

Thanks for letting me rant once again, and I enjoyed visiting with so many of you during the ISAC Annual Conference in Des Moines in August.

Please reach out to us if you have any needs that ISAC staff can assist with. We have added Andrew De Haan as the new ISAC IT Director, and Andrew brings a ton of IT knowledge to the counties that you can use to make your lives easier.

# Introducing the Iowa Cyber Intelligence Network

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The Iowa Cyber Intelligence Network (ICIN) is a free resource for the benefit of local governments. The project is a collaborative effort from the ISAC Technology Service Bureau, the Iowa Counties Information Technology (ICIT) affiliate, and the Iowa Department of Public Safety's Fusion Center. Best of all, it's built for all of us – not just the IT geeks.

If you're an attorney, auditor, recorder, treasurer, sheriff, supervisor, or anyone else in local government who appreciates the importance of keeping up with cyber threats, ICIN is for you. ICIN gives you a window into worldwide trends and, more importantly, what's happening right here in Iowa. You'll also join the ranks of like-minded public servants protecting our communities and our citizens.

I don't have to tell you that we are, each of us, targets for cyber attacks. We're targeted with automated intrusions by thieves in search of a payday. We're targeted by shadowy adversaries with dreams of subverting our elections. And, we're always subject to the dispassionate whims of mother nature.

We face these threats daily, and knowing what's happening within our state, across our country, and throughout our world is vital if we intend to counteract the risks they present. The problem – the thing that holds us back – is not a lack of information. The problem is that we have way too much of it.

In a sea of endless emails, texts, tweets, buzzes, and beeps, how can we tell what's really important?

This is why we live in a continual state of "alert fatigue". When every news report demands our full attention, we get overwhelmed, even paralyzed. We don't know where to start, so we do nothing. We cross our fingers. Inevitably, when a real threat appears (and it will), we're going to miss it.

The last thing we need is *more* information. What we really need are tools that make sense of the data we have. We need focus, and when we find something that our county colleagues should know about, we need a way to spread the word quickly, easily, and, of course, securely. These are the goals of ICIN.

ICIN is a web portal custom-designed for our local governments. It's an effort spearheaded by the ISAC TSB, working with the ICIT Security Committee, and hosted by the Iowa Fusion Center on its IOWAINTEX intelligence platform. It's an information sharing tool built on a proven infrastructure already trusted by over 1,500 law enforcement professionals.



ICIN's primary aim is to reduce alert fatigue. To accomplish this, it leverages automation to pull data like announcements and security bulletins from MS-ISAC, EI-ISAC, CISA, and other trusted public and private sources. The system builds on this open source intelligence by using cutting-edge AI to provide concise executive summaries for your perusal. In short, ICIN is engineered to save you time.

ICIN also lets you interact with your colleagues, statewide, so that when one of us detects danger, we can all shore-up our defenses. Got a particularly phishy email? Caught an attacker probing your networks?



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# Introducing the Iowa Cyber Intelligence Network

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Your warning will reach hundreds of users in minutes, and any sensitive data you choose to share will be protected by security that includes strong encryption and multi-factor authentication.

If we want to be resilient in the face of security threats, we've got to work together. Today's cyber criminals move fast. By joining ICIN, you'll help us ensure that Iowans move faster.

For more information and to create your ICIN account, visit <https://iowaintex.gov> today.

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# Preferred Vendor of the Month: IP Pathways

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## Securing Your Data Against Cyber Threats

Data security has become a major priority for individuals and businesses in today's digital age. "Whether you live in Sioux City, Des Moines, Dubuque, or points in between, one thing is clear: The cyber threat to our businesses, farms, food processing facilities, local governments, and communities in Iowa is increasing exponentially" (Kowel, 2023). Hackers are targeting large corporations, and malicious software is infiltrating our personal computers. Staying one step ahead of these threats is crucial for safety, but the need for a plan when the inevitable threats occur is the most paramount.

These plans include, of course, backup and disaster recovery. Without a proper plan, recovery costs can be high, and business continuity can suffer. According to a 2014 study by Gartner Inc., the average cost of downtime runs \$5,600 per minute or more than \$300,000 per hour (Lerner, 2014). This can be a significant blow to any business, but one that is preventable. Are you prepared for cyberattacks that could threaten your operations?



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Disaster recovery is a plan that allows access to data when the primary location is down due to a disaster. Backup infrastructure supports operations during downtime; once the primary location is up, operations can switch back.

The key differences between backup and disaster recovery are their purposes, recovery time objective (RTO), recovery point objective (RPO), and planning requirements. Backups are used for long-term data storage and help access lost files, while disaster recovery is focused on restoring business operations after a disaster. Backups have longer RPOs and RTOs, making them unsuitable for critical data, while disaster recovery has shorter RPOs and RTOs. Backup processes are straightforward, while disaster recovery requires proper planning and evaluation of business applications.

Implementing a data backup and disaster recovery plan is crucial for maintaining business continuity during incidents. Take Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) for example. In 2021, the Des Moines Register reported that DMACC had a ransomware attack that prompted a two-week internet outage, class cancellations and a delay in school registration. DMACC's President, Rob Denson, commented that the event was "very discouraging and disheartening because of the impact" this had on the students and how "disruptive" it was for the staff (Joens & Hernandez, 2021). DMACC recovered its IT systems and resumed all academic activities, but the impact and frustration it left was not easily soothed. A complete data backup and disaster recovery plan can help eliminate downtime and maintain functions for everyone involved.

While backup as a service ensures daily file saving and security, it cannot provide a complete IT system reboot like a disaster recovery service. Partnering with a managed service provider (MSP), such as IP Pathways, can offer disaster recovery as a service to re-establish the entire IT structure and minimize negative impacts on the business. Outsourcing backup and disaster recovery allows counties to focus on their priorities without worrying about lost data.

**"Using IP Pathways allows me to focus on the IT department and to assist educators in their roles. With IP Pathways, I have more time to meet with the people I work with and more time to find ways to address their pain points." – Bradley Malloy, Network Systems Administrator at Northwest Area Education Agency**



# Preferred Vendor of the Month: IP Pathways

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In conclusion, data backup and disaster recovery plans are essential for individuals and businesses to maintain continuity and protect themselves against cyber threats. With the increasing frequency of cyberattacks and the high cost of downtime, it is crucial to be prepared with a comprehensive plan. By partnering with an MSP like IP Pathways, businesses can have peace of mind knowing that their IT infrastructure is secure so they can focus on their core operations. At IP Pathways, we partner with multiple counties across the state of Iowa to provide customized IT solutions that deliver optimal value and performance. Contact us today to learn how we can help secure your business and keep it running smoothly.

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## **Strengthen Your County's Professional Development with NACo's Cybersecurity Leadership Academy**

"Many frontline managers are exactly the people we cannot afford to lose. The NACo Enterprise Cybersecurity Leadership Academy helps to retain these vital employees and helps enable them to be better leaders." – Matt Chase, Executive Director, NACo

## **ENROLLING NOW FOR JANUARY 8, 2024**

Join us in investing in the county workforce – empowering them to become better cybersecurity leaders today and into the future.

The NACo Cybersecurity Leadership Academy is a 12-week collaborative readiness program led by Fortune 500 CISOs and peers. It includes proven frameworks and insights on how to lead and secure a network and an organization – protecting data assets and your local government's reputation. This program coaches participants on what it means to think and act as a cybersecurity leader.

### **WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE?**

Enterprise Cybersecurity Leadership is designed for cybersecurity managers and their teams. Each participant remains accountable for their training and progress through the direct involvement of their supervisor at the county. Supervisors are encouraged to meet with participants and review the program content as related to individual development plans. Supervisors also receive regular dashboard reports that outline the learning progress of the program participant.

### **WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT?**

Enterprise Cybersecurity Leadership is designed to maximize ROI on participants' time and consists of 12 one-week modules with a time commitment of 30-60 minutes per day. Module units can be completed on the participants' schedule and accessed online anywhere.

### **WHAT IS THE COST?**

NACo Member County cost per enrollee begins at \$1,995. Additional discounts may apply. Contact us for more details.

### **INTERESTED IN ENROLLING?**

Contact Luke Afeman, VP, Enrollment & Managing Director, at 503.908.5381 or [lukea@pdaleadership.com](mailto:lukea@pdaleadership.com).

# FEMA Mitigation Grant Programs

## Let's Team-up to Not Leave Any Dollars on the Table

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is working with local governments in Iowa as communities face the increasing threat of natural disasters and hazards. The potential disasters and hazards that each community may face can vary, which is why FEMA works with local government officials in reducing or eliminating risk through hazard mitigation. Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) provides both pre and post-disaster grant awards to states, tribes, and local governments to reduce or eliminate potential damage from future disasters. Communities and local governments that are looking at the hazard mitigation planning process may want to consider exploring the below programs. FEMA Region 7, which serves Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, and Kansas, looks forward to continuing to work with local officials in Iowa to cultivate resilient communities.



# FEMA

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[angela.droege@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:angela.droege@fema.dhs.gov)

## Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)

If your community has been affected by a recently declared federal disaster, you may be eligible for grant funding through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). Grants through HMGP help communities implement projects after a major disaster that will reduce future disaster losses. Your community must have adopted a FEMA-approved local hazard mitigation plan to be eligible to apply for funding. In Iowa, the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEMD) administers the HMGP program and establishes project selection criteria based on state priorities and available funding. Eligible project types are those that make a long-term effort to reduce risk and the potential impact of future disasters. Eligible project types have a 75% federal and 25% non-federal cost share that can be partially offset in Iowa per state code, which typically authorizes the State of Iowa to fund 10% of eligible costs. HMGP grants can help fund projects like the following:

- Development of local hazard mitigation plans
- Acquisition of hazard-prone homes and businesses, enabling owners to relocate to safer areas
- Protection of homes and businesses with permanent barriers to prevent floodwater from entering (levees, floodwalls, floodproofing)
- Elevation of structures above known flood levels
- Drainage improvement projects to reduce flooding
- Structural retrofits to make a building more resistant to damage
- Retrofits to utilities and other infrastructure to enhance resilience
- Construction of safe rooms
- Slope stabilization projects
- Warning systems to alert communities to danger



### Hazard Mitigation Assistance Guidance

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, and Flood Mitigation Assistance Program  
February 27, 2015



Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Department of Homeland Security  
500 C Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20463

You can learn more about HMGP grants in FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance Guidance, which provides information to help interpret federal statutes, regulations, and best practices about mitigation strategies. FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance Guidance is available on FEMA's website, [www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation](http://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation).

## Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) Post Fire

In addition to standard HMGP grants, a specialized HMGP program to help communities implement hazard mitigation measures after wildfire disasters is also available to help communities. Known as HMGP Post Fire, these grants specifically assist states, federally recognized tribes, and territories affected by fires resulting in a Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) declaration. These special fire-related HMGP grants fund projects like the following:

- Reduction of hazardous fuels
- Removal of standing burned trees

# FEMA Mitigation Grant Programs

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- Ignition-resistant construction
- Installation of warning signs
- Strengthen or harden water systems that were burned and caused contamination
- Reseeding of ground cover
- Planting grass to prevent the spread of noxious weeds
- Placement of erosion barriers
- Installation of debris traps
- Modifying or removing culverts
- Addition of drainage dips/construction of emergency spillways
- Construction of dams in small tributaries to prevent flooding

## Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)

FEMA also offers mitigation grant opportunities to communities without a recent federally declared disaster. The Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program is nationally competitive and the application period opens each fall. Communities can apply for funds to address future risks from natural disasters; including wildfires, drought, extreme heat, and flooding. BRIC funds may be used for capability and capacity-building activities, mitigation projects, and management costs. Potential project types are similar to those for HMGP. Projects must be cost-effective and reduce or eliminate risk and damage from future natural hazards.

## Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA)

Additionally, FEMA offers Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) grants for projects that reduce or eliminate the risk of repetitive flood damage to buildings insured by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The FMA grants can be used for project scoping, technical assistance, community flood mitigation projects, individual structure/property-level flood mitigation projects, and management costs. Examples of project are included below:

- Installation of drainage pipes
- Construction of pump stations
- Topographic grading
- Installation of seawalls
- Restoration of marshes
- Acquisition of flood-prone properties
- Relocation of flood-prone properties
- Elevation of flood-prone properties
- Reconstruction of flooded properties
- Dry floodproofing of historical or commercial structures



To learn more about FEMA's mitigation work, consider attending the Hazard Mitigation Partners Workshop. FEMA will host this virtual workshop from 11:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m. on October 16-19. The theme "All Together for Climate Resilient Communities" will bring stakeholders together to discuss FEMA's focus on partnerships, community-based efforts to reduce flood risk, expanding access to funding, and simplifying FEMA programs. Visit [www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation](https://www.fema.gov/grants/mitigation) for more information.

FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant programs are provided to eligible applicants such as the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEMD). Local governments are considered subapplicants and will coordinate with HSEMD on their application. FEMA Region 7 looks forward to partnering with local governments in Iowa to strengthen communities through hazard mitigation.



# General Session Minutes Summary

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## Summary of Minutes – 2023 ISAC Annual Conference General Session

ISAC President Brian Gardner called the General Session to order and led the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance. He introduced the ISAC Executive Committee and the remainder of the ISAC Board of Directors.

Bill Peterson gave conference announcements and introduced NACo Past President Denise Winfrey, Commissioner, Will County, Illinois. Commissioner Winfrey addressed the audience.

Lindsey Laufersweiler, Webster County Recorder, awarded the 2023 ISAC Excellence in Action Awards to the Johnson County Public Health Jynneos Vaccine Program and the Story County Sheriff's Office Dive Team Advanced Imaging and Robotics Initiative. Representatives accepted the awards.

Bill Peterson explained the history and qualification of the ISAC Golden Eagle. President Gardner recognized the 2023 ISAC Golden Eagle, Joan McCalmant, ISAC Past President and former Linn County Recorder. Joan gave an acceptance speech.

President Gardner adjourned the meeting following conference announcements.



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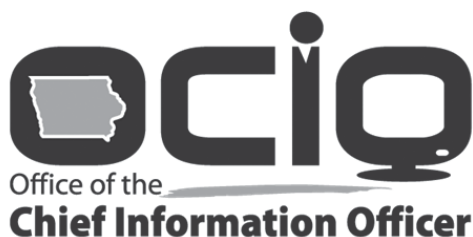
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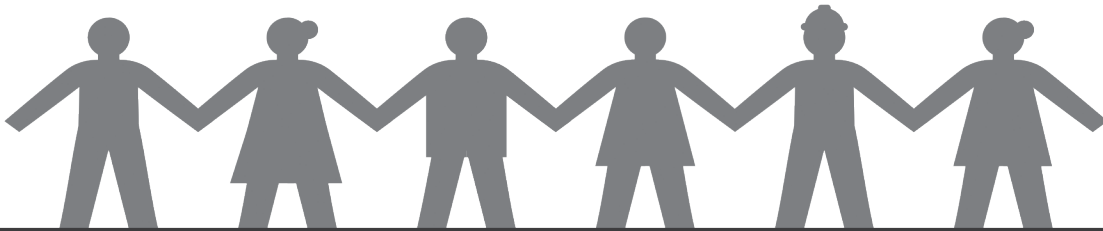


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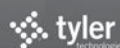
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## 2023 Calendar

### October 2023

- 8-11 Assessors Fall Conference  
(Holiday Inn Des Moines Airport)  
19-20 Treasurers October Leadership Conference  
(Cedar Falls, Iowa)

### November 2023

- 15 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting  
(Hotel Renovo)

### December 2023

- 12-15 ISSDA Winter School  
(Holiday Inn Des Moines Airport)  
13-15 77th Annual Iowa County Engineers Conference  
(Veterans Memorial Community Choice Credit  
Union Convention Center, Des Moines)

### January 2024

- 17-18 ISAC University  
(The Meadows Events and Conference Center)

### February 2024

- 8 Statewide Supervisors Meeting  
(Embassy Suites Des Moines Downtown)

### March 2024

- 13 County Day at the Capitol  
(Iowa State Capitol)  
14-15 ISAC Spring Conference  
(Veterans Memorial Community Choice Credit  
Union Convention Center, Des Moines)

### June 2024

- 11-13 ICRA Summer School  
(Okoboji, Iowa)

### August 2024

- 21-23 ISAC Annual Conference  
(Veterans Memorial Community Choice Credit  
Union Convention Center, Des Moines)

If you have any questions about the meetings listed above or would like to add an affiliate meeting to the ISAC calendar, please contact Kelsey Sebern at [ksebern@iowacounties.org](mailto:ksebern@iowacounties.org).

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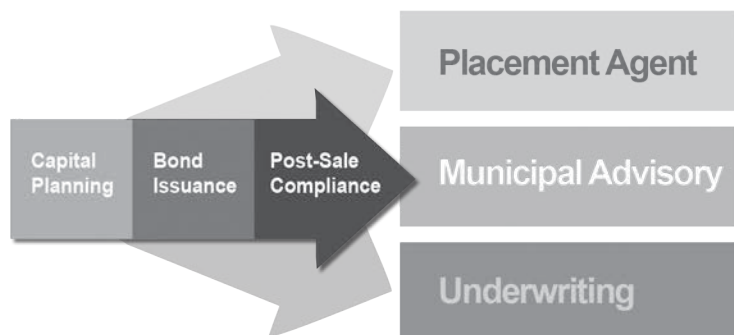


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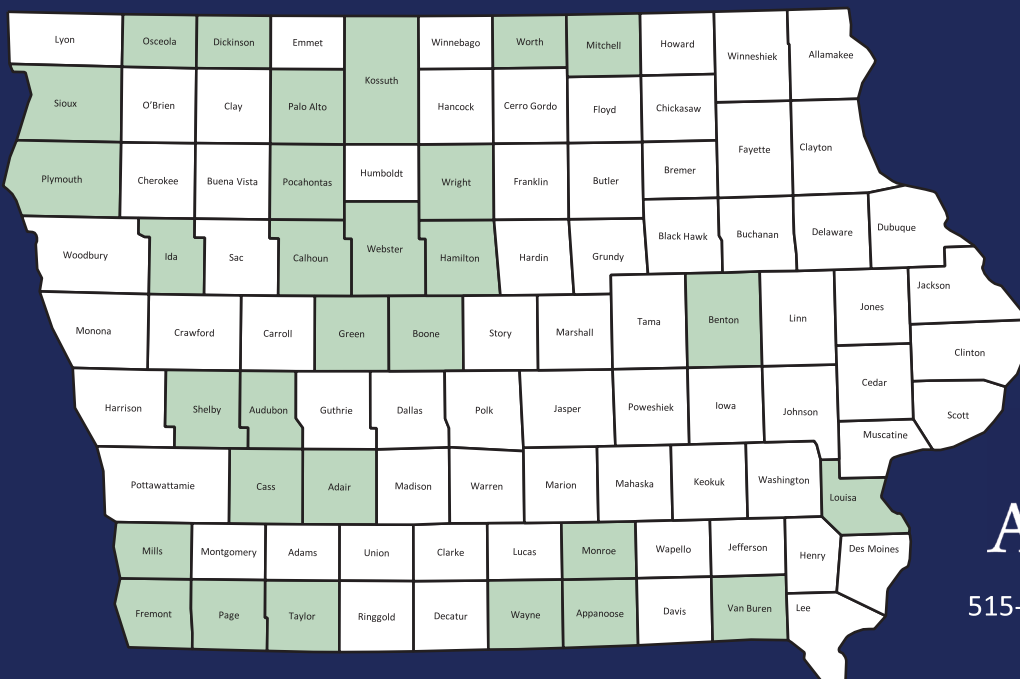
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