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Maryland Board of Public Works Finalizes Prince George's County Department of Social Services Relocation to New HHS Building

By PRESS OFFICER
Prince George's County
Department of Social Services

LANDOVER, Md. (July 22, 2026)—The Maryland Board of Public Works (BPW) today approved agenda item DGS 55-LT, finalizing the relocation of the Prince George's County Department of Social Services (PGCDSS) to the new Prince George's County Health and Human Services (HHS) Building in Capitol Heights, MD.

"With our co-location at the HHS Building with the Health Department and the Department of Family Services, this move represents an incredible opportunity for us to strengthen our relationships and collaborate closer with our sister agencies," said Jennifer Amaya Thompson, Director of the Prince George's County Department of Social Services. "By sharing this state-of-the-art space, we are dismantling silos and creating more seamless, integrated models of care for Prince Georgians."

"This milestone reflects the power of sustained collaboration between the State of Maryland and Prince George's County," said Gloria Brown Burnett, Deputy Secretary for Operations at the Maryland Department of Human Services. The new location will better serve the residents of Prince George's County over the next 20 years by bringing together critical health and human

service agencies, including the administrative operations of all three health and human service departments, along with a senior center, veterans affairs, aging and other social services under one roof and in one accessible location."

The move will include the Department of Social Services' Administrative Services Division and Adult Services Bureau within the Child, Adult, and Family Services Division. This marks a major milestone in the effort to centralize and improve the accessibility of essential senior and vulnerable adult services in Prince George's County. Located at 9187 Central Avenue, the state-of-the-art facility will foster a collaborative environment by co-locating PGCDSS Administrative and Adult Services teams with the Prince George's County Department of Family Services and the Prince George's County Health Department.

This approval represents the culmination of years of strategic planning to better serve our residents. By moving into this shared space, we are creating greater opportunities for streamlined collaboration and communication with our partner agencies, ultimately strengthening the support networks for Prince George's County families.

The new HHS building also features a Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) Senior Center, providing a dedicated space for seniors to remain active and social. This addition

is particularly significant as it is one of the first senior centers established in the inner beltway in recent years.

The Board of Public Works' decision was reached during their July 22, 2026, meeting. The public can view the session and the approval of agenda item DGS 55-LT by visiting the following link under "BPW 07/22/2026" at timestamp 50:12: <https://bpw.maryland.gov/Pages/board-of-public-works-meetings.aspx>.

While Administrative and Adult Services transition to the Capitol Heights location, Prince George's County residents will continue to receive family investment services at their existing home district offices in Hyattsville, Temple Hills, and Landover. Child Welfare will continue to be available at the 925 Brightseat office location in Landover, MD. Residents should anticipate no interruption to service during this relocation.

The Prince George's County Department of Social Services provides opportunities for residents of the County to become independent, responsible, and stable members of the community. The department fulfills this mission by providing intervention services that strengthen families, protect children and vulnerable adults, encourage self-sufficiency, and promote personal responsibility through critical assistance programs. Learn more about the department at: socialservices.mypgc.us.



IMAGE COURTESY PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORTATION

Prince George's County Kicks Off DPW&T Stuff The Bus Back to School Supply Drive

By ANGELA J. ROUSON, MPA
Department of Public Works and Transportation

LARGO, Md. (July 22, 2026)—The Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) announces the return of its annual Stuff The Bus Back to School Supply Drive, scheduled to run **Monday, July 20, through Friday, August 15, 2026.**

This initiative provides an opportunity for DPW&T, its partners, and community members to support Prince George's County students by providing new backpacks and essential classroom supplies.

About Stuff The Bus:

Since its inception, the Stuff The Bus School Supply Drive has garnered overwhelming support and donations from County Government agencies, staff, community organizations, and residents. To date, Stuff The Bus has collected and distributed more than 80,000 school supply items.

Prince George's County Public Schools 2026–2027 academic year begins Tuesday, August 25, 2026. DPW&T invites the community to donate supplies and

join this year's effort to support Prince George's County's future leaders. For more information on how to participate, please visit <https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/departments-offices/news-events/news/stuff-thebus-school-supply-drive-1> or contact Angela Rouson, Chief of Communications, at AJRouson@co.pg.md.us.

Stuff the Bus Dates: Donations Accepted:

Monday, July 20–Friday, August 14

Monday through Friday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Stuff the Bus Summer Palooza – Wednesday, August 5, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

Residents, local organizations, businesses, and community partners are invited to participate in a day dedicated to giving back to Prince George's County students.

Location:

9400 Peppercorn Place
Largo, MD 20774
(End of the cul-de-sac)

AI Appreciation Day: A Spotlight on Capitol Tech's New Artificial Intelligence Lab and Staff

By PRESS OFFICER
Capitol Technology University

(July 16, 2026)—This AI Appreciation Day, we take a closer look inside Capitol Tech's new artificial intelligence lab and meet the expert staff leading its development—all made possible through the generosity of a Capitol Tech alumnus.

Set to launch in fall 2026 and made possible by the generous support of alumnus and entrepreneur Ed Sealing, the Capitol Artificial Intelligence Learning and Innovation Environment (CAILIE) represents a major step forward in the university's commitment to hands-on, industry-driven education. This new, state-of-the-art lab is designed not just to teach artificial intelligence, but to transform how students interact with it.

Sealing's vision for CAILIE is forward-thinking: a remotely accessible AI lab environment for students, faculty, and researchers that will provide Capitol Tech with the high-end GPU and storage resources needed to perform advanced AI model training and inference research. "Since these technologies are important across numerous fields, we are looking to provide an environment that can serve both developers and non-developers," said Sealing, "with user-friendly tools and project templates that ensure everyone is able to learn about the different applications of AI."

Behind the scenes, a small, talented team is bringing this vision to life and building an important foundation for what's to come next fall.

Laying the Groundwork

As Director of CAILIE, Keith Michel is leading the effort to bring the lab from concept to reality. From planning resources to developing processes and partnerships, his role centers on ensuring the lab is ready to support students from day one.

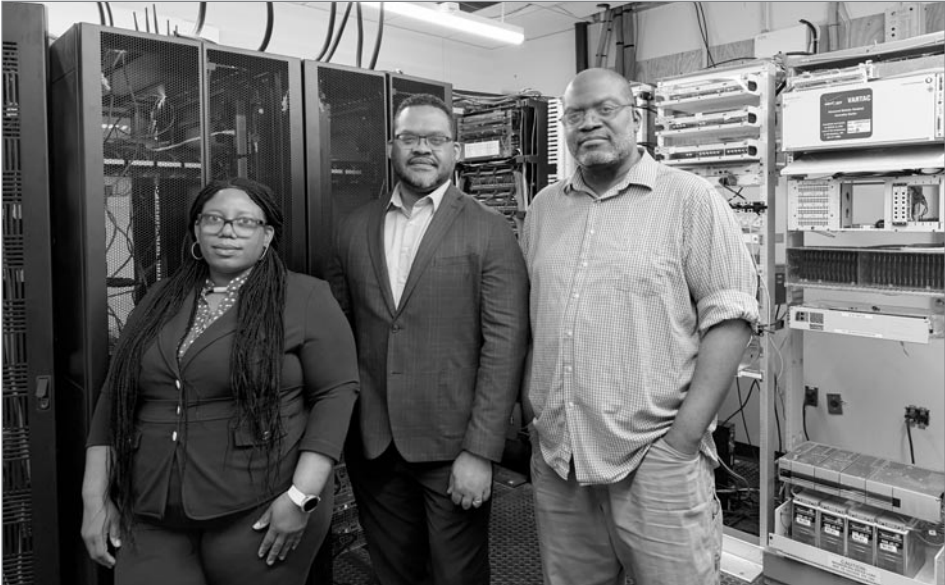


PHOTO COURTESY CAPITOL TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY

Capitol Tech AI Lab Staff (from left to right): Ejekeghachi (EJ) Agbo, Keith Michel, and Khalid Shaheed

"The opportunity to build and lead a next-generation AI lab from the ground up was especially compelling," Michel says. "It's been rewarding to contribute to something that will support future student work."

Supporting that vision is Ejekeghachi (EJ) Agbo, who manages the infrastructure that will power the lab's operations. As a Linux Cloud Engineer, Agbo is responsible for ensuring systems are secure, reliable, and ready to handle the demands of advanced AI work.

Drawn to Capitol Tech's focus on applied learning, Agbo saw the role as an opportunity to work with real-world technologies while contributing to an educational mission. "It allows me to apply my technical skills in a meaningful way," she says, "while continuing to grow in a collaborative, innovation-driven environment."

Khalid Shaheed is helping shape the lab's technical vision. As an AI Engineer with experience across the federal and commercial job landscape, he focuses on the

architecture and design of the environment itself. On just his second day, Shaheed began developing a 3D model of the lab setup that he envisioned. That early work reflects a larger mindset: building something new requires experimentation, iteration, and persistence. "We will try and fail," he says, "while all along making our own path; this is what will make us unique."

Building More Than a Lab

Now that construction and infrastructure are complete, the team's work is centered on impact. CAILIE was designed as a space where students can move beyond theory by engaging directly with AI tools, systems, and challenges that mirror the real world. For Michel, it's about creating access and opportunity.

"For students, that means providing structured pathways to participate in AI re-

See SPOTLIGHT Page A2

2026 Capital Challenge Horse Show Prize List and Entries Open

By PRESS OFFICER
Capital Challenge Horse Show

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (July 28, 2026)—Entries for the 2026 Capital Challenge Horse Show, to be held on **September 23–October 4** at Prince George's Equestrian Center in Upper Marlboro, MD, are now open. They will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

The prize list is available at www.CapitalChallenge.org, and entries are all electronic via the Show Management System™ electronic entry platform. Entries close Sunday, August 30, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. EDT.

CCHS begins with the Equestrian Showcase, presented by BIGEQ.com, from Wednesday, September 23, through Sunday, September 27, and continues with hunter, jumper, and equitation competition from Monday, September 28, to Sunday, October 4, 2026, at Prince George's Equestrian Center.

2026 Capital Challenge Entries

Exhibitors can submit entries electronically for the Capital Challenge Horse Show starting Tuesday, July 28, 2026, at 10 a.m. EDT. All entries must be received before midnight EDT on Sunday, August 30, 2026.

At the time of entry, exhibitors may also register their horse for consideration for the Connaway & Associates North American-Bred High Point Horse Award, which honors the horse bred in the United States, Canada, or Mexico that has earned the highest score in a jumping round in a professional division or special class.

The tentative schedule for the show is available online.

For more information about sponsoring and being a part of the CCHS Circle of Sponsors, email Jen Glass at jen.glass@capitalchallenge.org.

For more information, please visit www.CapitalChallenge.org.

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TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

Brandywine-Aquasco by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

A CREATIVE BUSINESSWOMAN

Zahra Tholley (’25) Boldly Expresses Her Range. When Zahra Tholley (’25) walked across the stage last year to receive her degree in Visual Communication and Digital Media Arts, she carried far more than a diploma. She carried years of energy, creative exploration and an award-winning business idea she had been nurturing long before graduation day. Bowie State gave her the tools and platform to blend her love of the arts with her budding entrepreneurial concept.

Tholley, a native of Accokeek, Maryland, is a joyful spirit who directed a team of 16 cast and crew members in what she says was the culminating project of her undergraduate journey.

“I performed my senior thesis, called Express Your Range, at the Fine & Performing Arts Center. It was a multimedia project that revealed the pressures of beauty standards within the dance community.” Her installation of theater, film, dance and creative direction was a showcase of her vision and lived experiences. Tholley used her technical skills to deliver a powerful message of representation, confidence and freedom to encourage people to accurately express themselves, and her message didn’t end at graduation.

She combined her practical experience and entrepreneurial vision to create ZEERANCE dance Apparel, an inclusive dancewear line for dancers of all skin tones. “My goal is to make tights to match every complexion. So, I had a strategic business mindset while I was part of the BSU dance community. I used a skin analysis tool and a quiz to make tights colors to BSU dancers.”

During senior year, Tholley submitted her business idea to the Entrepreneurship Innovation Center’s (EIC) 8th Annual Bulldog Pitch Competition and placed her as a runner-up. The experience helped validate her idea while giving her valuable feedback from business leaders and entrepreneurs. It was a particularly impressive accomplishment, considering she was competing with 50 student venture applications from across all four academic colleges and the graduate program.

“A lot of my entrepreneurship skills were developed in the EIC. Although I’m a creative person, I really do like to incorporate what I’m doing with my business.” Tholley says her college experience was defined by classes, projects and people

who crossed her path, and she made connections campus-wide. One of her Bowie State friends started a group called the New Generation Artists Guild and asked Tholley to serve as its social media manager.

“At first, I didn’t think I could handle it, but I wanted to be there for her. I ended up having a lot of fun with it and I built up my graphic design skills.” In that spirit, she advises today’s students that chances to connect are everywhere at Bowie State. “Use your resources. If you’re writing an essay, go to the Writing Center. If you’re looking for job opportunities, go to the many events on campus like the annual visit by LAIKA Studios.” Even if a visiting company or organization doesn’t seem like it’s relevant, she says to be bold and go anyway.

“I spoke with the creative team from Major League Baseball when they came to campus, and it was amazing to learn about their opportunities.” She also shares more specific advice of creative majors. “Don’t be quick to get rid of your art. Keep it! It’s important to hold on to what you created as far back as your childhood, because you get to see your progress.”

As she moves into the professional world, Tholley continues building her business. She recently returned to campus to perform in senior capstone projects created by dancers who had been part of her 2025 senior thesis. Looking ahead, Tholley plans to continue growing her business while staying true to the creative vision she developed at Bowie State. “I learned to trust my instincts, embrace creativity and follow the threads of inspiration wherever they lead.” Tagged as: Entrepreneurship Innovation Center, Visual Communication & Digital, Media Arts, Bulldog Pitch, Competition Writing Center.

2026 ALUMNI DAY

Pomomkey High School is celebrating 38 years of PHSA, Inc. “Keeping the Legacy Alive” Saturday, August 15, 2026, from 1–6 p.m. Doors Open: 1 p.m. Food Sales: 1 p.m.–until. Program starts: 3 p.m. Roll Call of Classes. BYOB, donation \$5.00 at the door. Music provided by DJ Jackie Baker. Funds raised go toward the restoration of the Old Pomomkey High School Building. Contact: Elnora Milstead: 301-643-9834, Vera Merritt: 240-381-2217. We will be celebrating 2026 Alumni Day at Village Green Pavilion, 100 Walter Thomas Road, Indian Head, Maryland, 20640.

Cultivating Unlimited Talent to Host 5th Annual Back-to-School BASH in Prince George’s County

Community event will provide school supplies, wellness resources, and health screenings for local students and families

By CRISSY CRITTENDEN
Cultivating Unlimited Talent (C.U.T.)

PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY, Md. (July 27, 2026)—Cultivating Unlimited Talent (C.U.T.), a community-based non-profit organization, will host The CUT By N’Style 5th Annual Back-to-School BASH on Sunday, August 9, 2026, at Ritchie Station Marketplace in Capitol Heights, Maryland. The annual event brings together community partners, local businesses, corporate sponsors, and volunteers to support students and families as they prepare for the upcoming school year.

This year’s theme, “Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds: A Journey to Wellness,” reflects the event’s focus on the overall health, well-being, and academic readiness of children. Organizers expect more than 700 festival attendees and plan to offer backpacks, essential school supplies, family-friendly activities, and access to wellness resources, including vision, hearing, oral health, and other health screenings.

Event Details

Date: Sunday, August 9, 2026
Time: 12–5 p.m.
Location: Ritchie Station Marketplace
Address: 1610 Ritchie Station Court, Capitol Heights, MD

“Each year, I am inspired by the students and families who benefit from this event,” said Nate Crittenden, President and CEO of Cultivating Unlimited Talent. “It is an honor to continue supporting Prince George’s County families by helping students start the school year with the supplies, resources, and encouragement they need to succeed.”

C.U.T. is proud to continue its partnerships with NAI Michael Company, Pohanka Automotive, Mission of Love Charities, SLK Health Services, the Office of County Council At-Large Member Wala Blegay, Fulton Bank, and many other community supporters. Through the generosity of sponsors and partners, the Back-

to-School BASH continues to expand its reach and impact across Prince George’s County.

Event Highlights

- Free backpacks and essential school supplies for students in need
- Health and wellness screenings, including vision, hearing, and oral health assessments
- Family-friendly activities and community resources
- Support from local businesses, non-profit partners, corporate sponsors, and community leaders
- Expected attendance of more than 700 community members

Cultivating Unlimited Talent (C.U.T.) is a community-based nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting youth, families, and communities through programs, partnerships, and outreach initiatives that promote education, wellness, opportunity, and personal development.



All photos below are from 2024 event and are credited to Design By Valentine, LLC

Spotlight from A1

search, hands-on projects, and skill development,” he explains. “For faculty, it includes resources and support for managing student-led research projects and integrating AI into their teaching.”

The lab will also serve as a bridge to industry, helping ensure that what students learn aligns with evolving workforce needs.

A Hands-On Approach to AI

Capitol Tech’s approach to AI is rooted in application. The university’s emphasis on industry-focused learning gives students the chance to work directly with the technologies shaping today’s workforce.

The team is currently developing systems, tools, and workshops that will help users engage meaningfully with CAILIE and AI, whether they are just getting started or advancing into more complex work. And as AI continues to evolve, the team sees both opportunity and responsibility in preparing students to navigate it.

For those just entering the field, Agbo emphasizes the importance of strong fundamentals. “Learn Linux, networking, and programming,” she advises. “Then build something. Even small projects teach you more than passive learning.”

Shaheed offers a complementary perspective. “Trust but verify is a crucial approach to AI,” he said. “Ensuring that while leveraging AI for speed and data organization, the human user is ultimately responsible for outcomes.”

Together, their advice reflects a shared belief that AI is more about understanding technology than just learning how to use it.

Looking Ahead

With its fall 2026 launch on the horizon, CAILIE embodies Capitol Tech’s continued investment in the future of technology education, and its impact will soon be visible across campus and beyond.

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

I Was Cheated; I Delayed Claiming SS but Didn’t Get My Full Benefits

By RUSSELL GLOOR,
National Social Security Advisor at the AMAC Foundation,
the non-profit arm of the **Association of Mature American Citizens**

Dear Rusty: I’m 70 now and took my Social Security benefits at age 68. Social Security would not allow me to take all my increased percentage earned by waiting until age 68 to claim. My local Social Security office said I would get an increased amount but not my full age 68 amount because it was “not an option;” they said I could take it only the way “they said.” That’s our illegal government. **Signed: Feeling Cheated**

Dear Feeling Cheated: Regarding your comment that SS “would not allow” you to take all of your “increased percentage,” I assume you are referring to a Social Security rule which applies whenever benefits are claimed after full retirement age (FRA) but before age 70. That rule says that the Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs), which are earned when someone delays claiming until after their Social Security full retirement age, are applied only in January of each year. What that means is that whenever benefits are claimed mid-year after FRA but before age 70, only the DRCs earned through the end of the previous year are immediately applied, and any additional DRCs earned during the current year are not applied until January of the following year. The only exception to that rule is if someone applies for benefits to begin in the month they turn 70 (or after) when all earned DRCs are applied immediately.

So, if you applied for your benefits to begin when you turned age 68 mid-year in 2024 (but before the end of that year), you would initially only get DRCs earned through the end of the previous year (through December 2023), and the DRCs earned in 2024 wouldn’t have been credited to you until January 2025. Which means you now actually do get your full percentage of delayed retirement credits earned by waiting until age 68 to claim, but you did not get them all until January 2025. Essentially, those extra benefits earned from the beginning of 2024 to the month your SS benefits started were delayed until the beginning of the following year.

We run into this complexity fairly often here at our AMAC Social Security Advisory Service, which is why we counsel those who contact us about waiting longer to claim are aware of this rather obscure rule. Not to defend your local SS office, but they are required to pay benefits according to the established Social Security law. Thus, they were required to inform you that paying you the full age 68 benefits effective immediately when you applied was not an option. It wasn’t personal; they were just following the rules.

I know this explanation doesn’t dissuade you from “feeling cheated,” but I hope understanding how SS works in this case assures you it wasn’t personal—SSA applies the same rules to all beneficiaries.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation’s staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org.

The 2.4 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC] www.amac.us is a vibrant, vital senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. AMAC Action is a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing the membership in our nation’s capital and in local Congressional Districts throughout the country. And the AMAC Foundation (www.AmacFoundation.org) is the Association’s non-profit organization, dedicated to supporting and educating America’s Seniors. Together, we act and speak on the Association members’ behalf, protecting their interests and offering a practical insight on how to best solve the problems they face today. Live long and make a difference by joining us today at www.amac.us/join-amac.

COMMUNITY

Maryland Department of Transportation, Prince George’s County and Bowie State University Unveil Next Steps for Building a Dense, Vibrant Community Centered Around Transit

By PRESS OFFICER
Bowie State University

HANOVER, Md. (July 21, 2026)—Today Lt. Governor Aruna Miller and Prince George’s County Executive Aisha Braveboy announced the state and county’s selected development partners for the transit-oriented development planned around the Bowie State MARC Station. The Maryland Department of Transportation selected Mosaic Development Partners JV and Campus Apartments as the State’s Joint Development Partner. Prince George’s County selected BSU MARC Community Partners, LLC as the county’s development partner. The joint announcement marks the latest step to develop and transform state- and county-owned land around the MARC train station through a coordinated transit-oriented development initiative that will advance housing, connectivity, infrastructure improvements and long-term economic development opportunities. Together, the Maryland Department of Transportation and Prince George’s County control nearly 100 acres surrounding the station, creating one of the largest transit-oriented development opportunities along the MARC Penn Line and in Prince George’s County.

“Transit-oriented development is about access. Access to jobs, housing, education, healthcare, and the opportunities that help people build better lives,” Lt. Governor Miller said. “When we create vibrant, walkable communities connected by reliable transit, we make it easier for Marylanders to reach opportunity and for opportunity to reach every Maryland community.”

Mosaic Development Partners JV and Campus Apartments will lead a comprehensive master planning process for the broader station area, which includes the State’s 4.6-acre site along the northern side of the rail corridor. The Maryland Department of Transportation will contribute up to \$1.5 million to support the master planning work, including infrastructure planning and the evaluation of long-term redevelopment opportunities surrounding the station area. Key infrastructure elements will include an extended MARC platform, a new pedestrian bridge connecting the site to the Bowie State University campus and improved bike and pedestrian circulation throughout the area.

While embarking on the master planning effort, the team will also advance an initial project phase focused on new, affordable housing units through the Department’s Joint Development Program to begin activating the station area and catalyzing activity around this commuter rail station. The master planning effort will be coordinated with Prince George’s County and Bowie State University through a memorandum of understanding between the parties, which established a framework for advancing regional infrastructure, funding strategies and coordinated redevelopment of the broader station area.

“The Bowie State MARC station is a prime location along the MARC Penn Line for transit-oriented development, and I’m thrilled to have the state’s selected-development partner on board to build out our vision,” said Maryland Transportation Secretary Katie Thomson. “Thanks to Governor Moore and Lt. Governor Miller’s leadership, the Maryland Department of Transportation continues to work in partnership with County Executive Braveboy and Bowie State



PHOTO COURTESY BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

“I look forward to continued partnership with MDOT, Bowie State University and the State of Maryland to advance this transit-oriented development,” said County Executive Aisha Braveboy.

University President Dr. Breaux on creating a thriving and connected community for residents, students and employees.”

The County selected BSU MARC Community Partners, LLC, led by Gragg Cardona Souadi, as the master developer for the approximately 93-acre County-owned site adjacent to the Bowie State University MARC Station. The project represents one of the County’s most significant transit-oriented development opportunities and will transform the site into a vibrant, sustainable, intergenerational community that leverages the area’s transit connectivity, natural landscape, and proximity to Bowie State University.

The development team includes a diverse coalition of industry leaders, including WRE Innovations, Impact Capital Partners, L.A. Bolden, MCN Build, and LEO A DALY, reflecting the County’s commitment to partnering with women-owned, minority-owned, and County-based businesses.

The master plan envisions a dynamic mixed-use destination featuring multifamily and senior housing, single-family homes, retail and commercial development, office space, and innovation hubs designed to support entrepreneurs, businesses, and County residents. Guided by wellness and sustainability principles, the development will preserve the site’s natural beauty while creating walkable neighborhoods, public open spaces, and community amenities that promote healthy living and environmental stewardship.

Together, Prince George’s County and BSU MARC Community Partners share a vision to create a premier destination that expands housing opportunities, generates quality jobs, attracts new investment, and drives long-term economic growth while enhancing the quality of life for current and future residents while elevating the County’s economic footprint.

“I am very excited to announce the selection of the developer for the County owned property near the Bowie State MARC Station. This is another example of how my administration is laser focused on economic development. From the Sphere to Six Flags to the Blue Line Corridor to New Carrollton to Suitland and beyond, we

are elevating the quality of development throughout the County to bring the much-needed retail, housing and entertainment our residents deserve. I look forward to continued partnership with MDOT, Bowie State University and the State of Maryland to advance this transit-oriented development,” said County Executive Aisha Braveboy.

The Bowie State MARC Station is located on the MARC Penn Line, one of the busiest commuter rail lines in the region and is adjacent to the Bowie State University campus—Maryland’s oldest historically Black university.

“This transformative investment represents far more than a transit project. It is an investment in our students, Bowie State University, and the future of the region,” said Dr. Aminta H. Breaux, president of Bowie State University. “This development advances our vision for Bowie State to continue serving as an anchor institution that expands opportunity, strengthens communities and contributes to the economic vitality of our community. By creating a vibrant, walkable community anchored by Bowie State University and connected through reliable transit, we are expanding access to affordable housing, educational and career opportunities, and economic growth. We are grateful to Governor Moore, Lt. Governor Miller, Secretary Thomson, County Executive Aisha Braveboy and all our state and county partners for their shared commitment to this vision. Together, we are strengthening our campus, supporting our students, faculty and staff, and creating lasting benefits for the communities we serve.”

The significance of this transit-oriented development effort is further evidenced by the recent federal earmark of \$250,000 through Community Project Funds specifically to advance the Bowie State MARC Station Joint Development Project.

“MARC Train provides a critical connection that expands access to opportunity,” said Maryland Transit Administrator Holly Arnold. “Transit-oriented development around train stations creates communities that are more walkable, connected and accessible.”

The Bowie State MARC Station Joint Development project marks the Maryland Department of Transportation’s second awarded development in the 2024 MARC Penn Line Transit-Oriented Development Strategy and is a priority initiative, adding up to 42,000 annual MARC trips at full build-out. Redevelopment of both state-owned and private land at the Bowie State MARC station has the potential to support up to 670 construction jobs, yield more than 400 housing units and generate \$108 million in state and local tax revenue.

To learn more about Maryland’s transit-oriented development program and to see the MARC Penn Line Transit-Oriented Development Strategy, visit the Maryland Department of Transportation’s website.

To stay up to date on the County’s development project and receive the latest information please follow @RVAPGC on all social media or visit the Revenue Authority website.

Founded in 1865, Bowie State University is the first Historically Black College/University (HBCU) in Maryland and one of the ten oldest in the country. For more information, visit bowiestate.edu.

Driving When Severe Weather Strikes? AAA Has Tips for Staying Safe

Weather Can Change Quickly, So Be Prepared

By PRESS OFFICER
AAA

BALTIMORE (July 21, 2026)—Summer is the time to keep an eye to the sky and stay weather-aware. As many people in this part of the country are aware, strong thunderstorms and even tornadoes can strike quickly and fiercely. Dangerous, damaging storms can catch drivers on the roads, so AAA urges drivers and their passengers to be prepared and take appropriate safety precautions should they encounter severe weather while traveling in a vehicle.

“Storms are common throughout the summer, so chances are, drivers will encounter severe weather at some point while in their vehicles,” said Ragina Ali, AAA Club Alliance Public Affairs Manager in Maryland and Washington, D.C. “A vehicle can either be very a dangerous place to be, or a place of safety, depending on the weather conditions. The key is being prepared for severe weather and reacting the right way to what Mother Nature throws at you.”

AAA recommends drivers be weather-aware, always checking the forecast before heading out, loading a trusted weather app with live radar to their mobile phone, and activating severe weather warning notifications on the phone.

Heavy Rain and Flooding

Heavy downpours make it difficult to see while driving. AAA recommends regularly changing windshield wiper blades to keep drivers’ views as clear as possible. If visibility is severely limited during heavy rain, drivers should reduce their speed and if they can safely do so, pull off the road out of traffic lanes, turn on flashing hazard lights, and wait until the rain lightens.

Pooling water on roadways can cause hydroplaning and loss of vehicle control, so motorists should reduce their speeds and avoid using cruise control during rainy conditions. Roadways com-



PHOTO COURTESY AAA

“... As little as 12 inches of moving water can sweep most vehicles off the road. The slogan ‘Turn around, don’t drown’ is an important one to remember and follow.”

pletely covered by water are a particular danger.

“Avoid driving into floodwater,” warned Ali. “Flooding causes more deaths than any other storm-related event, and many of those deaths occur in vehicles. As little as 12 inches of moving water can sweep most vehicles off the road. The slogan ‘Turn around, don’t drown’ is an important one to remember and follow.”

Hail

Hailstorms hit with little warning and usually do not last long, but hailstones—frozen pellets of rain—can cause major damage in that short period of time.

There were more than 5,400 major hail events—producing hailstones at least one inch in diameter—across the United States in 2025, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and National Weather Service. Maryland also experienced several major hailstorms during the year. Although most hailstones are about the size of a pea or marble, severe thunderstorms can produce hail as large as a softball, capable of shattering windshields and causing sig-

nificant damage to vehicles.

“Hail of most any size can dent your car, and larger stones can smash your windows,” said Dean. “Fortunately, hail damage to a vehicle is covered by your comprehensive auto insurance policy, which covers physical damage to your vehicle not caused by a collision.”

To protect your car from hail damage, park your car in a covered spot, if possible, when thunderstorms are in the forecast.

If you’re in your car when a hailstorm hits and see a safe place close-by, such as a highway overpass (out of the lanes of traffic) or gas station or bank awning, drive to it as soon as you can. If no shelter is available and hail becomes large enough to cause damage, stop driving and pull off the road completely. Move away from car windows and cover your head with your arms or a blanket to protect yourself from any breaking glass.

Lightning

The National Weather Service reports that lightning strikes about 25 million times a year, killing an average of 20 people in the United States and severely injuring hundreds more.

If you are caught outside during a thunderstorm, seek shelter in a hard-topped vehicle, or a low area, such as a tunnel. If you are already in your car when a lightning storm begins, stay in the vehicle for shelter, but steer clear of fences, isolated trees, telephone poles, power lines and pipelines.

Lightning-caused damage to a vehicle is typically covered under the comprehensive portion of an auto insurance policy. Thunderstorms can sometimes have other impacts to vehicles, including:

- Damage caused by falling trees due to high winds. This kind of damage is typically covered by standard auto insurance policies. However, if the tree was known to be weak before the storm, the damage may not be covered.
- A wildfire that results from a lightning storm can cause damage to cars. Insurance coverage for wildfire, even if caused by lightning, is included in the comprehensive coverage of an auto insurance policy.

Tornadoes

According to preliminary data from NOAA/NWS, there were more than 1,500 docu-

mented tornadoes in the United States in 2025.

Tornado warnings mean danger is imminent. If a tornado is sighted, move to the safest place possible.

“If you are in your car and a tornado is close, abandon the vehicle and seek shelter in a storm shelter or sturdy structure,” said AAA’s Ali. “As a last resort, if no structure is nearby, take shelter in your vehicle—seatbelt buckled; duck down below windows; cover up with a blanket to protect you from glass/debris; and protect your head with your arms.”

Also when taking cover from a tornado, stay away from trees, signs or cars/machinery and avoid seeking shelter where they could fall on or blow over onto you. Most tornadoes travel southwest to northeast, so take that into account when taking shelter.

Finally, never seek shelter from a tornado under a highway overpass or bridge, as tornadic winds can be made stronger and create a wind-tunnel effect, putting you in danger of being swept away or killed or injured by flying debris.

Emergency Kit

AAA recommends that motorists create a spring/summer severe weather emergency kit to carry in their cars. The kit should include items such as nonperishable food/snacks and water, tool kit, flashlight, hand-crank or battery-powered radio, extra batteries, cell phone and charger, first-aid supplies, flares or reflectors, raincoat or poncho, a towel or blanket, and rain boots or an extra pair of shoes.

AAA provides automotive, travel, and insurance services to more than 65.2 million members nationwide, over 80,000 members in Washington, D.C. and more than 1 million members in Maryland. AAA advocates for the safety and mobility of its members and has been committed to outstanding road service for more than 100 years. AAA is a non-stock, not-for-profit membership corporation working on behalf of motorists, who can map a route, find local gas prices and electric vehicle charging stations, discover discounts, book a hotel, and track their roadside assistance service with the AAA Mobile app (AAA.com/mobile) for iPhone, iPad and Android. Visit www.AAA.com.

ENVIRONMENT

Vibrio on the Rise as Climate Warms the Chesapeake Bay

Infections are still relatively uncommon, but the costs of infection are severe

By TIMOTHY B. WHEELER
Chesapeake Bay Journal
bayjournal.com

One day last July, Vernon Spear scratched his forearm on a crab pot as he pulled it out of the Choptank River from his pier in Cambridge, MD. He put hydrogen peroxide on the tiny cuts, thinking that would disinfect them. That night, his forearm swelled up, and he spiked a high fever. The next morning, the fever was gone, and his arm didn’t hurt. But the wounds were bright red and oozing. Alarmed, his wife and son insisted that Spear go to the local emergency room.

The physician who saw him there immediately recognized that Spear was in imminent danger of losing his arm—and maybe his life—from a *Vibrio vulnificus* infection. He was rushed by helicopter to the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center in Baltimore, which specializes in treating severe injuries and critical illnesses.

Spear was fortunate: He survived and kept his arm. But he’s spent most of the past year undergoing treatment, including skin grafts, to restore his arm from what’s often called the “flesh-eating bacteria.”

Cases like Spear’s remain relatively uncommon, but their number is increasing because of climate change, scientists say. And as the Chesapeake Bay warms along with the rest of the planet, its mildly salty and nutrient-gorged waters offer prime habitat for the potentially deadly microbe.

Naturally occurring

Vibrios are naturally occurring bacteria found in warm, brackish coastal waters, including the Chesapeake and its tributaries. There are more than 80 vibrio species, and many play an ecological role. They recycle carbon and nitrogen in the estuary by breaking down chitin, the tough substance in the shells of blue crabs, insects and even tiny zooplankton.

But about a dozen species can make people ill, either through swallowing them or getting them in a wound. Nationwide, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates there are about 80,000 vibrio infections each year.

The majority are food-borne illnesses, mostly from eating uncooked oysters or other shellfish. In those cases, people can suffer diarrhea, stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting, fever and chills. The symptoms usually abate within a few days, but they pose more serious health risks for individuals with immune deficiencies.

Vibrio vulnificus, the type that infected Spear, can also enter the body through open wounds or even scratches exposed to bacteria-infested waters. When that happens, the infection can lead within hours to sepsis, a dangerous overreaction of the immune system that can kill human tissue, shut down organs and cause death if not treated promptly.

There were more than 400 vibrio cases—from all species—reported in Maryland and Virginia in 2025, according to the states’ health departments. But they are likely undercounted. Many people who get sick from eating vibrio-infested shellfish or fish probably weren’t ill enough to be hospitalized or even see a doctor.

“Food-borne illness overall is vastly underreported,” said Kelsey Holloman, food-borne disease epidemiology program manager for the Virginia Department of Health.

Reported cases increasing

In recent years, the number of vibrio infections reported in Maryland has more than doubled—from 100 in 2018 to 260 in 2025, according to the state Department of Health. This year, 72 cases had been reported by late June.

The vibrio case count in Virginia, though lower overall, has nearly doubled in the same period, from 86 infections reported in 2018 to 151 in 2025, according to the state Department of Health. By late June this year, 42 cases had been reported.

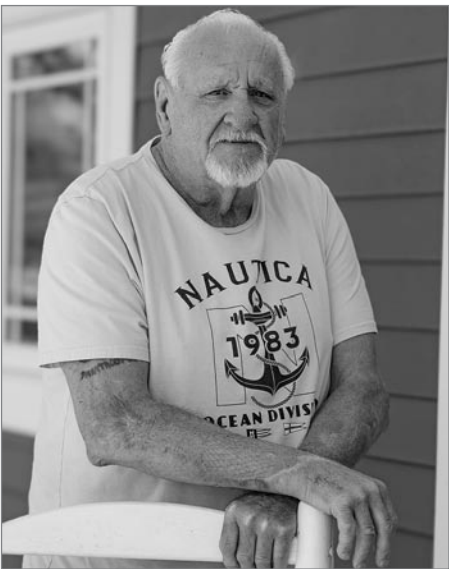
Improved testing technology accounts for some but not all of the increase, experts say.

“I think environmental conditions have changed,” said Dr. Clifford Mitchell, environmental health bureau director of the Maryland Department of Health.

“Vibrio do thrive in warmer waters,” Holloman noted, “so as the temperatures



TIMOTHY B. WHEELER/CHESAPEAKE BAY JOURNAL
University of Maryland scientist Rita Colwell (left) reviews Potomac River water sampling data with Vicki Judson of the Sycamore Island Canoe Club.



DAVE HARP/CHESAPEAKE BAY JOURNAL
Vernon Spear of Cambridge, MD, still bears a scar from a *Vibrio vulnificus* infection that put him in the hospital after scratching his forearm on a crab pot.

rise and stay warm longer, we would expect [cases] to increase.”

Over the past 30 years, driven by warming air, the average water temperature in the Chesapeake Bay has increased by 1.8 degrees, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

V. vulnificus, the so-called “flesh-eating” species, thrives when the water is warmer than 64 degrees and has salinity between 10 and 20 parts per thousand. Those conditions are met for at least part of the year throughout most of the Bay and the lower portions of its tributaries.

Add to that mix the elevated levels of nutrient pollution throughout the Bay, and conditions are optimum for vibrio to thrive.

“Vibrios are present in very, very low numbers in traditionally unpolluted waters. They’re part of the natural flora,” said Rita Colwell, a microbiologist and marine scientist with the University of Maryland who’s spent much of her six-decade career studying the bacteria.

“But as soon as we create eutrophic [low-oxygen] conditions and with increased temperature of the water,” she added, “that’s sufficient to change the composition of the microbial population.”

Temperature major driver

Warming water is the major driver of increased vibrio. The prime season for vibrio traditionally has been from May through October, but with coastal waters trending warmer, infections have been popping up earlier and later in the year. A *V. vulnificus* case occurred in April this year, the Maryland Department of Health reported.

Colwell’s research has focused in part on the vibrio responsible for cholera, a potentially life-threatening illness caused by consuming contaminated water or food. According to the CDC, 1 to 4 million people worldwide get cholera annually, and 20,000 to 140,000 die.

There are other illness-causing microbes in the water, too. Oysters can pick up norovirus and salmonella from contaminated water. People who eat them might experience stomach cramps, diarrhea and vomiting.

But vibrios are a special concern because they can proliferate in oysters and other seafood harvested from otherwise un-

tainted waters, and in places considered safe for swimming. Also, the consequences of an infection can be more severe, especially for people with underlying medical conditions.

A 2024 study found a 39% increase in the per capita incidence of vibrio infections in Maryland from 2006 through 2019, with the greatest increase from *V. vulnificus*.

All along the East Coast, another study estimated that wound infections from *V. vulnificus* grew eightfold, from 10 cases in 1988 to 80 in 2018. Florida has the most cases, but the northernmost case reported has shifted gradually northward. As sea waters continue to warm and vibrio spread to New York and beyond, the study warned that *V. vulnificus* cases could double in 20 to 40 years. In 2024, a Rhode Island resident died from an infection, that state reported.

Nationwide, 150 to 200 *V. vulnificus* infections are reported to the CDC annually. About one in five infected people die, sometimes within a day or two of becoming ill.

A handful of deaths each year

In Maryland last year, there were 14 confirmed cases of *V. vulnificus*, including an outbreak in Wicomico County tied to a crab feast. Three deaths were attributed to the infections. Virginia reported 11 confirmed cases in 2025, with one death. Infections from other vibrio species accounted for four other deaths combined in the two states.

To put those numbers in perspective, people are much more likely to die from a motor vehicle accident than from vibrio. The nationwide traffic fatality rate in 2024 was 11.5 per 100,000 people, compared with a total of 8 vibrio deaths in 2025 in a combined population of roughly 15 million in Maryland and Virginia.

While still relatively uncommon, the pain and suffering from a vibrio death are significant. The costs to society are also substantial. Infections from eating seafood contaminated with *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* impose about \$20 million annually in health care costs and lost income, according to one study.

Because *V. vulnificus* has such a high mortality rate, the health care costs and estimated lost income from illness and premature death are much greater—about \$238 million, the study added.

Shellfish safety precautions

Food-borne illnesses from vibrio and other microbes are also an economic risk for oyster growers, whose business depends on customers trusting their products’ safety. Federal and state agencies have laid out rules for the harvesting and handling of shellfish to prevent transmission of bacteria and other pathogens.

Farmed oysters can be harvested year-round, even in warm weather. But they must be landed in the morning from May through October, and they must be refrigerated within two to five hours of being pulled from the water, depending on time of year, to limit the chance that vibrio might proliferate.

JD Blackwell, owner of 38° North Oys-

Calendar of Events

Fort Washington Park Shoreline Clean-up

Date and time: Recurring monthly second Saturday, 9:30–11:30 a.m.: August 8, September 12, October 10, November 14, December 12, 2026

Description: Come put in some hard work to beautify Fort Washington Park’s landscape by cleaning up the shoreline from 9:30 –11:30 a.m.! Meet the park ranger at the lighthouse parking area. Gloves, trash pickers, and bags will be provided.

Cost: Free, Register on NPS Fort Washington Park website

Location: Fort Washington Park, 13551 Fort Washington Rd, Fort Washington, MD 20744

Contact: Cryss Kosasih, 771-208-1555

Great American Camp Out 2026

Date and time: Saturday, August 22, 2026–Sunday, August 23, 2026, 2 p.m.–10 a.m.

Description: Do you want to go camping, but don’t know where to begin? Designed for first time campers, this event gives families the opportunity to learn basic camping skills & connect with nature.

Cost: Free, Register on ParksDirect

Ages: All ages

Location: Patuxent River Park, 16000 Croom Airport Road, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Contact: 301-627-6074 patuxentriverpark@pgparks.com

Green Festival—A Family-Friendly Event

Date and time: Saturday, October 10, 2026, 11 a.m.–4 p.m.

Description: Prince George’s County Green Festival is back for a FREE day of outdoor fun, discovery, and community! Families and children can enjoy hands-on activities, interactive exhibits, music, and games in an engaging environment. While the kids play, parents can enjoy food trucks, connect with local vendors and community partners, discover County resources, and learn about programs and services available throughout Prince George’s County. Join us for a day filled with smiles, laughter, learning, and family memories in the making.

Location: David C. Driskell Community Park, 3911 Hamilton St, Hyattsville, MD

Contact: visit mypgc.us/greenfestival.

2026 GWRCCC Ron Flowers Annual Golf Tournament

Date and time: Wednesday, October 21, 2026, 8:30 a.m.–4 p.m.

Description: Join us for a day of golfing, networking, and celebration at the Ron Flowers Annual Golf Tournament, proudly hosted by the Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition (GWRCCC). This exciting event brings together industry professionals, environmental advocates, and community leaders for a fun-filled day on the greens—all to support clean energy initiatives and environmental sustainability. Whether you’re a golfer, a wine enthusiast, or simply coming for lunch and great company, there’s something for everyone!

Cost: Register on Eventbrite!

Location: University of Maryland Golf Course, 3800 Golf Course Road, College Park, MD 20742

Contact: gwrccc.org

29th Annual Jug Bay Run/Walk for Wildlife

Date and time: Saturday, November 7, 2026, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Description: Run alongside the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Driving Tour of the M-NCPPC/Maryland DNR. This mostly flat, paved, and dirt road course leads runners along the banks of the Patuxent River. Water stations are located along the racecourse.

Cost: Registration available starting September 1. Email PG-ParkRangers@pgparks.com for more info.

Location: Patuxent River Park, 16000 Croom Airport Rd, Upper Marlboro, MD 20722

Save the Date—Braveboy Climate Leadership Summit!

Date and time: Thursday, November 19, 2026

Description: Join us for the Braveboy Climate Leadership Summit, Prince George’s County’s annual signature gathering of leaders from government, business, nonprofit, faith, and education sectors committed to advancing climate action. Connect with changemakers. Explore innovative solutions. Strengthen partnerships. Help build a more resilient and sustainable Prince George’s County!

More details and registration information coming soon!

Location: Bowie State University – Martin Luther King, Jr. Center, 14000 Jericho Park Rd., Bowie, MD 20715

The Prince George’s Post

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AWARENESS IS KEY

FEATURE IMPACT

A stroke can happen to anyone at any age. In fact, every 40 seconds someone in the United States has a stroke, with approximately 800,000 people experiencing a stroke annually, according to the American Heart Association, making it a leading cause of death and serious, long-term disability. A stroke happens when normal blood flow in the brain is interrupted. When parts of the brain don't get the oxygen-rich blood they need, those cells die. However, many strokes may be prevented, treated and overcome by understanding the risk factors and taking steps toward managing them. “When a stroke happens, every minute matters,” said Dr. Adrian Jaquin-Valdivia, a stroke neurologist at HCA Healthcare and American Stroke Association volunteer expert. “The faster someone gets treatment, the better the chance of saving brain function. On average, nearly 2 million brain cells die every minute a stroke goes untreated. Early treatment improves survival rates and reduces disability.” Take control of your brain health with this information from the American Stroke Association.

Know the Warning Signs

Because strokes do not discriminate, knowing the signs is key. To help you recognize common warning signs and symptoms of stroke and take action in moments that matter, remember this simple acronym: B.E. F.A.S.T.

- B:** Balance loss – sudden difficulty with walking, dizziness or loss of balance or coordination.
- E:** Eye (or vision) changes – sudden vision loss or trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- F:** Face drooping – one side of the face droops or feels numb; a smile may look uneven.
- A:** Arm weakness – one arm feels weak or numb or drifts downward when raised.
- S:** Speech difficulty – a telltale sign of a stroke is slurred speech or trouble speaking.
- T:** Time to call 911 – If someone is having any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call emergency services immediately to jumpstart care. Be sure to check the time so you'll know when the first symptoms started.

B.E. F.A.S.T.					
Balance Loss	Eye (Vision) Changes	Face Drooping	Arm Weakness	Speech Difficulty	Time to Call 911

3 Steps to Help Recognize Stroke Signs and Risks for Better Outcomes



Photo courtesy of Shutterstock

Explore the signs by playing the interactive, web-based B.E. F.A.S.T. Experience to see what stroke symptoms may look, feel and sound like.

Take Steps to Protect Your Health

Approximately 80% of strokes are preventable, according to the American Stroke Association. Everyday choices – such as eating well, moving more, not smoking and keeping up with routine health screenings, along with managing risk factors with the support of a health care professional – can help lower stroke risk.

Manage Risk Factors

High blood pressure is the leading risk factor for stroke, according to the 2025 American Heart Association/ACC Guideline for the Management of High Blood Pressure in Adults. Controlling blood pressure through regular checkups, at-home monitoring, following your treatment plan and maintaining a healthy lifestyle can significantly reduce your risk of stroke and support overall brain health. Additionally, having a stroke or mini stroke, known as a Transient Ischemic Attack (TIA), increases the chances of having a second one. That's why identifying what caused your stroke and reducing your personal risk factors can help protect your health and reduce the risk of another stroke. To learn more about stroke risk factors and better understand the warning signs, visit [Stroke.org/StrokeMonth](https://stroke.org/StrokeMonth), where you can also access stroke support services and subscribe to the Stroke Connection e-newsletter for the latest resources.

Stopping the ‘SILENT KILLER’

How to Check, Prevent and Manage High Blood Pressure

FEATURE IMPACT

High blood pressure poses significant health risks for people of all ages, but there are effective ways to both prevent and manage this “silent killer” by working with a health care professional to make lifestyle changes. Hypertension, also known as high blood pressure, is when the force of blood flowing through blood vessels is consistently too high. This condition makes the heart work harder than normal and can damage arteries, increasing the risk of heart disease, stroke and other health problems. High blood pressure is the leading risk factor for stroke and heart conditions such as coronary artery disease, heart failure and atrial fibrillation. Strengthening evidence also shows high blood pressure is linked to risk of cognitive decline and dementia, which is why the American Heart Association is working to increase awareness and encourage people to manage blood pressure. Protect your heart and brain both now and in the future with this information and wellness advice.

Who Can Have High Blood Pressure?

Anyone can develop high blood pressure, which is why it's encouraged for everyone – in all age groups, including children and young adults – to have their blood pressure checked at annual physicals or wellness checkups. For those with a history of high blood pressure or risk factors for developing the condition, more frequent measurements may be recommended.



Photos courtesy of Shutterstock



Major risk factors for high blood pressure include excess weight, diabetes, high cholesterol, smoking, lack of physical activity, alcohol consumption and a diet high in sodium and low in potassium. Nearly half of adults in the U.S. have high blood pressure and many don't even know it. Of those with high blood pressure, about 75% don't have the condition under control. Because it typically shows no symptoms, it's often called a “silent killer.”

How is Blood Pressure Checked?

To get the best blood pressure reading, sit in a chair with support for your back with both feet flat on the ground. Use a validated, automatic, cuff-style, upper-arm monitor. Remove clothing over the arm that will be used and rest for at least 5 minutes. Extend your arm and support it at heart level while staying quiet and still then take multiple readings and record the results. Aim to measure at the same time each day. For most adults, a normal blood pressure reading should be less than 120/80 mm Hg.

What Happens After a High Blood Pressure Diagnosis?

Recognizing and taking quick action to control high blood pressure can significantly lower the risk of severe health consequences, including heart attack and stroke,

and improve overall health. If you've been diagnosed with high blood pressure, work with a health care professional to design a treatment plan that works for you. It may include lifestyle changes to your diet or activity levels or medication.

How Can High Blood Pressure Be Prevented or Managed?

Preventing high blood pressure is possible. Talk with a health care professional to create a plan that works for you, which may include small steps like eating a heart-healthy diet, staying active and maintaining a healthy weight. For those diagnosed with high blood pressure, maintaining a healthy weight by staying active (at least 150 minutes of moderate activity per week) and eating a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, lean protein and whole grains are important. Even losing 5% of your weight can help improve blood pressure. It's also important to reduce or avoid alcohol consumption and tobacco use. Consider stress-reducing activities, including meditation, breathing control or yoga. For many individuals, adhering to prescribed medications is essential to effectively control blood pressure and reduce the risk of serious health complications. To learn more about blood pressure management and how to check it properly, visit heart.org/bp.

