

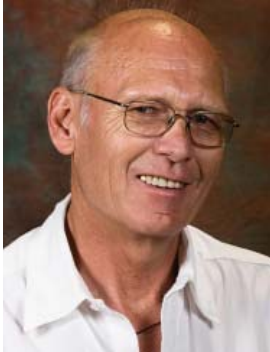


The Source for Seniors

Kent County Senior Millage Minder

about the Kent County Senior Millage
Fall 2009

Millage Survey Results



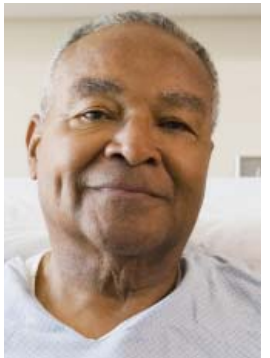
Thank you to all Kent County residents age 60 and older who completed a Millage Needs Survey over the summer. The feedback will help the Millage Review Committee determine future funding.

The majority of those who responded reported being healthy, volunteering in the community, living on their own or with a spouse, and expecting to remain their own home over the next five years.

Survey findings of those who responded:

- 58% do not know where to turn if they face a financial crisis that risks their ability to stay in their own home
- 24% have been unable to fill a prescription within the past year
- 24% have lacked enough money to purchase groceries at least one time in the past year

For more detailed information on survey results, visit www.aaawm.org and click on "KCSM survey results" in the "What's New" box.



Millage Funding for 2010

A projected \$500,000 shortfall in tax revenue means organizations will see a reduction in 2010 funding which starts January 1.

"Providers are being asked to evaluate the clients they are currently serving and look for ways to spread the limited services to as many seniors as possible," says Jackie O'Connor, Assistant Director at Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan, the agency that distributes Millage funds.

"Reserves were used to prevent organizations from taking a funding cut for 2009. Cuts for 2010 are unfortunate, but necessary," states O'Connor.

The funding process for 2010 is underway and will be complete in mid-November. Agencies requesting funding

were made aware of reductions and have been asked where they would like to see those cuts made.

"The Millage distribution is a big task, but it is so rewarding to realize how many of our seniors receive life saving, life enhancing services with these tax dollars," says Kent County Commissioner and member of the Millage Review Committee, Harold J. Voorhees Sr.

"The 2010 distribution process will be even tougher realizing that the needs are increasing and this year our resources will be decreasing. We will do our utmost to continue the services provided through the Kent County Senior millage."

The Millage Minder is published quarterly by the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan.
For more information contact (616) 456-5664

Priority Services- in-home and nutritional services help the most frail and needy elders (including their family caregivers) maintain independence in their own homes

Supportive Services- strengthen and sustain priority services to lengthen the time frail individuals can remain living at home in a safe environment

Access Services- guide older adults and their caregivers to appropriate senior services

Preventive and General Services- include health promotion, disease prevention, first line support and volunteer opportunities

Emergent Needs- address needs typically based on weather emergencies, including home heating assistance

Flu and Pneumonia Shots

Millage funded flu and pneumonia vaccines will be available for those age 60-64 who do not qualify for Medicare or Medicaid funded shots.

“Vaccinations against influenza and bacterial pneumonia are among the safest, most effective, and lowest cost measures available to us in our efforts to prevent the spread of these diseases in our communities,” says Jim Byrne M.D. Priority Health Vice President and Chief Medical Officer and a member of the Kent County Millage Review Committee. “Complications from these infections may result in otherwise avoidable hospitalizations and even deaths.”

While all seniors are advised to get a flu shot, experts believe older adults to be less vulnerable to the H1N1 strain. Seniors should discuss the H1N1 vaccine with their physician.

For more information on the Millage funded flu and pneumonia vaccinations, contact:

AngelCare 245-8899
Catherine’s Health Center 336-8800

For more information on influenza, visit www.flu.gov or contact the Kent County Health Department.



Ridelink Wins Award

Ridelink recently received a 2009 STAR Search Senior Transportation Service Award from the Beverly Foundation. The award includes a \$5,000 grant to help meet transportation needs for seniors in Kent County.

Ridelink is a collaboration of five senior transportation providers (ACSET- Latin American Services, American Red Cross, Hope Network Transportation, Senior Neighbors and United Methodist Community House) and is coordinated by The Rapid and the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan. Ridelink provides one central number for seniors to call and rides are coordinated based on capacity and location.

“This is a great honor for Ridelink and the agencies involved,” says Sandra Ghoston-Jones, Contract Coordinator at Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan. “The additional funds will further transportation options for seniors in Kent County.”

Ridelink

1-866-425-3848

Millage Service Eligibility

To qualify for Senior Millage services, persons must be at least 60 years old and a resident of Kent County.

Cost sharing may be required for individuals whose incomes are above \$21,660 or couples whose combined income is above \$29,140. Cost share fees are based on income and vary depending on service type.

Donations are always accepted and are put back into programs, allowing additional seniors to be served.

Furnace Repairs

Cool summer temperatures translated to fewer funds being used for fans and air conditioners over the summer. The remaining dollars have been re-allocated to help older adults with furnace repairs.

Seniors who need assistance with their furnace can contact Home Repair Services for more information. Services may require a cost-share.

Home Repair Services

241-2601

The purpose of the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan is to provide older persons, including those in the greatest economic need, with an array of human services designed to maintain independence and dignity in their homes and communities.