



GREY CLOUD ISLAND

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2026



DO YOU KNOW THE NEW SCHOOL BUS RULE?

With school back in session, it's a good time to review school bus safety rules, especially in light of an important update made during the 2025-26 legislative session. Minnesota law now requires drivers to stop at least 20 feet from a school bus whenever its red lights are flashing, regardless of whether the stop arm is fully extended or not. The law clarifies that activation of the red light system itself is the signal for all drivers to stop.

- Old rule: Stop required only when red lights were flashing and the stop arm was fully extended.
- New rule: The flashing red lights alone trigger the stop requirement, even if the arm is not extended.

This applies to vehicles behind a school bus as well as vehicles going in the opposite direction on any undivided road. Also, the law adds language stating that flashing amber lights mean a school bus is in the process of stopping and will soon flash its red lights, giving drivers ample warning to stop instead of passing.

The penalty for passing a school bus with red lights flashing is a minimum \$500 fine. More serious violations, such as passing with a child outside the bus, can lead to higher fines, jail time or criminal charges.

Back-to-school time also means more pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles at drop-off and pick-up times. Thank you for staying alert to help keep our students safe!

NUMBER OF INCIDENTS

7

CONNECT WITH WCSO!

Our Facebook page has frequent updates on staff accomplishments, public safety reminders and fun community encounters. This month we'll post emergency preparedness tips. Check it out!



WC26041871 DOMESTIC ASSAULT

5XXX PIONEER ROAD S

At 9:22am on Aug. 17, deputies arrived at a home where a resident said his adult daughter had punched him in the face after a confrontation over a needle found outside her bedroom door. The daughter, who had a history of drug use and causing damage to the home, then left on foot. While deputies were speaking with the father and the suspect's grandmother, another deputy found the daughter walking nearby and detained her. A search found a jar with several different kinds of narcotics, glass pipes and a kitchen knife, all of which were seized. The daughter claimed her father had hit her, causing her to strike him. However, deputies could find no marks or injuries on her, while her father had a visible injury that deputies photographed for evidence. The daughter was taken to Washington County Jail to face charges of 5th degree possession of narcotics and domestic assault. Deputies encouraged the residents to seek an order for protection, which ultimately might force the daughter to seek help for substance abuse issues.

MESSAGE FROM THE SHERIFF

Part of what makes the Washington County Sheriff's Office special is this agency's commitment to creating an environment where our team members have the chance to learn, grow and develop their skills throughout their careers here. We also take pride in fostering leaders within our ranks.

Good leadership doesn't require a title per se, but the opportunity for formal promotion does arise. In the past year, as we anticipated several retirements, we began the process of inviting deputies to apply for promotion to sergeant. It says a lot about our organization that we had 12 internal applicants in the three-step selection process. Each applicant completed a written exercise to demonstrate prioritizing, decision-making and problem-solving; a presentation to the Command staff and one outside community member, county employee or law enforcement professional; and, finally, an interview with the Chief Deputy and myself.

This selection process is demanding, but the results are that we have two outstanding new sergeants. The most recent received his sergeant's stripes in early August: Sgt. Ryan Corniea, who joined WCSO in 2018. During his eight years with the Sheriff's Office, Sgt. Corniea has served as a general patrol deputy and the Mahtomedi contract deputy, as well as a team lead on the SWAT Tech Team and as a deputy with the Community Impact Unit. As a sergeant, he will be assigned to the patrol division.

In January, Deputy Justin McDonough was promoted. Sgt. McDonough has 19 years of law enforcement experience, 15 of which have been with Washington County. During his time at WCSO, Sgt. McDonough has been both a general and Hugo contract deputy, member of Honor Guard and SWAT Team, Mahtomedi SRO and WC Narcotics and DEA task force officer. Sgt. McDonough now leads the patrol division's Lower St. Croix Valley contract cities.

Please join me in congratulating Sgts. Corniea and McDonough on their outstanding accomplishment!



In service,

Sheriff Dan Starry

Incident #	Incident Description	Incident Date	Location	City
WC26044047	DISTURBANCE	08/28/2026 11:00:26 PM	10XXX GREY CLOUD ISLAND DR S	GREY CLOUD ISLAND
WC26043444	FIRE	08/25/2026 07:06:28 PM	54XX 99th St S	GREY CLOUD ISLAND
WC26042570	CITIZEN/PUBLIC ASSIST	08/21/2026 07:35:54 AM	58XX Pioneer Rd S	GREY CLOUD ISLAND
WC26042358	NOISE COMPLAINT/DISTURBANCE	08/19/2026 09:40:10 PM	108XX Grey Cloud Island Dr S	GREY CLOUD ISLAND
CG26035711	ASSIST OTHER AGENCY	08/17/2026 09:22:41 AM	58XX Pioneer Rd S	GREY CLOUD ISLAND
WC26039212	MEDICAL	08/03/2026 04:27:46 PM	Mississippi River	GREY CLOUD ISLAND
WC26039072	WELFARE CHECK	08/03/2026 12:49:52 AM	97XX Grey Cloud Island Dr S	GREY CLOUD ISLAND