

# VPD planning traffic checkpoints

By Dennis K. Brown

Vanceburg Police Chief Joe Paul Gilbert has announced that the Vanceburg Police Department (VPD) will be conducting periodic traffic safety checkpoints within the city to check motorists for compliance with state motor vehicle laws, including statutes related to driving under the influence.

Chief Gilbert said the checkpoints are part of the department’s ongoing effort to keep roadways safe.

“Our goal is not to inconvenience drivers, but to make sure everyone on the road is operating safely and legally,” Gilbert said. “We want to prevent impaired driving, ensure vehicles are properly insured and registered, and confirm that children are safely restrained.”

Gilbert noted that motorists should expect brief stops when passing through a checkpoint. Drivers are asked to have their license, registration, and proof of insurance readily available.

## Designated Checkpoint Locations

According to VPD policy, checkpoints may be conducted only at approved locations, and must be authorized by the Chief or Assistant Chief of Police. Locations designated for checkpoints in the City of Vanceburg include:

- KY 59 in front of the Community Center
- KY 59 and Howard Shelton Drive intersection
- KY 59 and KY 1149/Washington Street intersection
- KY 59, KY 08, and KY 2525 intersection
- KY 08 and KY 3037 intersection
- KY 08 between Car Wash and Slate Street
- Court Street and Front Street intersection
- Bruce Street and Front Street intersection
- Main Street and Second Street intersection
- Court Street and Second Street intersection
- KY 09 and Howard Shelton Drive intersection

The policy requires that at least two officers be present, that emergency lights be used, and that nighttime checkpoints utilize wands for visibility.

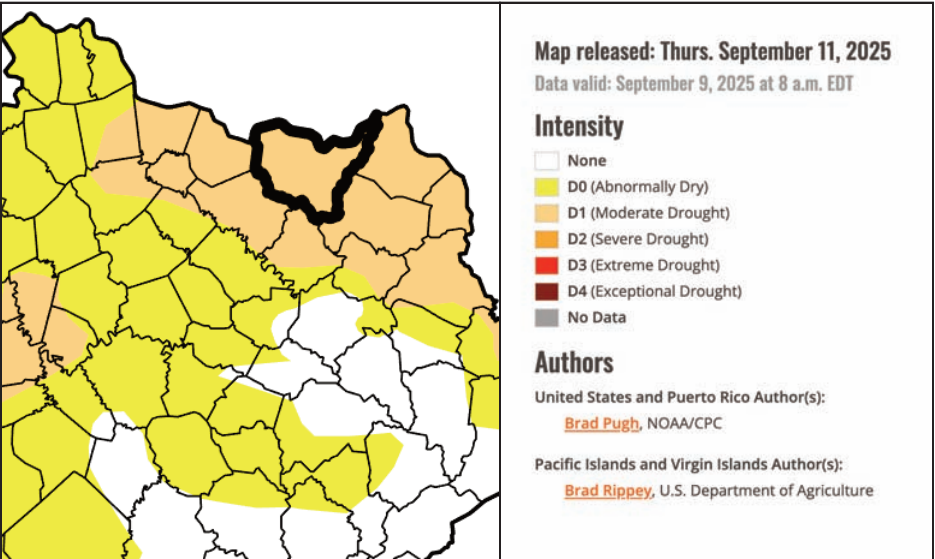
## Why Checkpoints Are Publicized

Like the Lewis County Sheriff’s Department and KSP, Vanceburg Police are required by law to publicize checkpoint locations in advance. The requirement stems from rulings by the Kentucky Supreme Court and the US Supreme Court, which upheld the constitutionality of checkpoints but required them to be publicized to protect motorists’ rights under the Fourth Amendment.

The public notice helps ensure transparency while also serving as a deterrent. Police agencies report that publicizing checkpoints has not reduced their effectiveness; in fact, it may encourage drivers to think twice before operating a vehicle after drinking.

Chief Gilbert emphasized that safety is the department’s top concern.

“We want the public to know we’re out there working for their safety,” he said. “Our officers are committed to protecting citizens and keeping impaired and unsafe drivers off the road.”



US Drought Monitor/LEWIS COUNTY HERALD  
All of Lewis County is in the Moderate Drought category according to the US Drought Monitor map released Thursday. The next chance of rain in the area, according to the National Weather Service, is this weekend.

## PLANT BOARD

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projects forward.

He noted that infrastructure improvements come with a significant price tag, and outside grants can ease the burden on customers.

“We know the needs are there, and we want to be aggressive in seeking every opportunity for funding,” he said. “The ARC program is competitive, but we believe these are strong applications that will benefit the community for decades to come.”

The superintendent also updated the board on several other matters. Preparations are underway for a surplus property auction at Stacy Cooper’s auction yard, which will be advertised in THE LEWIS COUNTY HERALD.

Work continues on updating the utility’s Personnel Policy, with the board scheduled to review proposed revisions

in November and a vote expected before the end of the year. Stone said the goal is to have the new policy in place by January 1, 2026.

Stone said he met with representatives of AEP Energy Partners to discuss the potential of behind-the-meter storage as a way to help curb peak power demands.

While the technology could hold promise, Stone cautioned that the cost and timing of peaks remain concerns, though advances in forecasting may eventually make it a worthwhile option.

“With AI and better weather forecasting, there may be an opportunity, but we will need to understand more of the details before making such a large investment,” Stone said. “They also gave an update on market activity and what forecasters are looking to happen over the next few years.”

Stone reported that the utility’s annual audit is nearly complete, with results expected to be ready for the October or November meeting.

He also noted that the Buffalo Trace Area Development District has submitted an application on the utility’s behalf for the Kentucky Water and Wastewater Assistance for Troubled or Economically Restrained Systems (KY WWATERS) Program.

Stone said the focus on new projects, policy updates, and financial oversight demonstrates the board’s commitment to both stability and progress.

“We are constantly working to maintain reliable service for today while planning for the needs of tomorrow,” he said. “These projects represent real investments in the safety, health, and future of our community.”

# Burn Ban remains in effect

By Dennis K. Brown

A Burn Ban has been declared in Lewis County until further notice.

Judge Executive George Sparks issued the Executive Order Sunday prohibiting all outdoor burning in Lewis County.

“Our primary concern is for the safety of our citizens and first-responders, and the protection of property,” Sparks said.

A lack of rain in recent weeks has produced dangerously dry conditions which pose an increased risk of wildfires and grassfires caused by open burning. The order will remain in effect until conditions improve.

Lewis County joins other Kentucky counties



that have issued burn bans because of the dry conditions and enhanced fire condition advisories issued by the National Weather Service.

County burn bans are issued by the judge executive and are enforced by local law enforcement. Those who violate a ban can be charged with a misdemeanor.

Penalties include fines up to \$100 for the first offense and up to \$250 for subsequent offenses.

Visit [ready.gov/wildfires](https://ready.gov/wildfires) to prepare for wildfires and learn how to make a plan to stay safe.

To report a wildfire, call 911 or contact the Kentucky Division of Forestry at 606-783-8625.

## COUNCIL

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Blankenship said he had talked with Plant Board Superintendent Bill Tom Stone and said the utility company would be willing to work with the city

## SCAM

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using a known phone number.

Consumers can report suspected scams to their mobile carrier by forwarding the message to 7726 (SPAM) and can also file a report at ReportFraud.ftc.gov.

to allow utility connections to RVs.

He added there have been some concerns expressed on the matter but added state legislation limits the time RVs can remain set up at certain locations.

Blankenship added the request ties in to efforts to improve recreational activities in the area.

No action was immediately taken on the request.

Richard Evans, with Vanceburg Fire and Rescue, updated members on

work being done to test water hydrants in the city to ensure they are operational.

Members set trick-or-treat in the city for Friday, October 31, from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. The same date and times are traditionally followed countywide.

Follow the QR code or visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=am0xeGlz5wY> to access a video of the meeting.



# COVID vax guidance shifts

By David Higgins

Guidance around COVID-19 vaccines has once again shifted after the US Food and Drug Administration approved updated shots for the fall season, but for a more limited group than in prior seasons.

These changes, announced on X by Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy Jr., raise new questions about eligibility and availability of COVID-19 vaccines for children.

How does the new guidance differ from before?

The FDA revoked the emergency use authorizations for COVID-19 vaccines, a status used during public health emergencies that made it possible to provisionally approve vaccines swiftly during the pandemic. The agency also limited its approval to only people at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19 infection, such

as those over 65 or with underlying health conditions. But for children, it is even more complicated.

The FDA approved two updated mRNA-based vaccines – Moderna’s vaccine for children 6 months and older and Pfizer’s vaccine – both targeting a new variant called LP.8.1, for children 5 years and older. The agency also approved an updated version of the protein-based Novavax vaccine targeting a strain of the virus called JN.1 for children 12 years and older. But all three approvals are limited to children at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19 infection.

Previously, all children 6 months and older were able to receive either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, with the Novavax vaccine available for anyone 12 years and older. These changes mean it may be significantly more difficult for infants and young children to get vac-

inated, even though they remain at higher risk for complications from COVID-19 compared with the general population.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention no longer routinely recommends COVID-19 vaccines for healthy children ages 6 months to 17 years. The decision to take this approach bypassed the CDC’s normal independent review panel, creating concerns about credibility.

The bottom line is that with these FDA changes, fewer vulnerable children may end up vaccinated against COVID-19 because of supply constraints, parental confusion or provider uncertainty.

David Higgins is an assistant professor of pediatrics at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. This article is republished from The Conversation, a platform for journalism by academics.

# Health/Career Fair is October 9

By Dennis K. Brown

Area residents will have the opportunity to take advantage of low-cost health screenings and connect with employers and community resources during the Community Health & Career Fair, scheduled for Thursday, October 9, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Central Elementary School in Vanceburg.

The event will feature a Health Fair from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Laboratory screenings, including cholesterol, liver and kidney function, electrolytes and calcium, thyroid, and blood sugar, will be available for just \$30.

Screenings must be paid at the event by cash or check, and participants are reminded to fast for 12 hours prior to testing. Free screenings will also be offered, including blood pressure, body mass index, skin cancer, hearing, nutrition education, balance and strength assessments, sleep screening, and colonoscopy education.

Pre-registration is recommended for laboratory screenings by Wednesday, October 1. Registration forms are available at PrimaryPlus in Vanceburg and Tollesboro, the Lewis County Judge Executive’s Office, or online at MeadowviewRegional.com.

The Career Fair portion of the event will run from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and will provide job seekers the chance to meet with local employers, training programs, and community resource organizations. Attendees can learn about full-time and part-time opportunities, receive on-site resume and interview assistance, and capture a free professional headshot.

Lewis County Judge Executive George Sparks encourages residents to take part in both sides of

the event.

“This is truly a great opportunity for our citizens,” Sparks said. “The health screenings alone are a tremendous value, and I hope people will take advantage of them to stay on top of their health. The career fair is just as important, giving job seekers and employers a chance to connect right here at home.”

Sparks added that the event reflects the county’s commitment to both community health and economic develop-



ment.

“We are fortunate to have so many partners working together to bring this to Lewis County. I encourage everyone to come out and participate,” he said.

The event is sponsored by Meadowview Regional Medical Center, Fleming County Hospital, PrimaryPlus, Lewis County Judge Executive’s Office, Kentucky Career Center – TENCO, and Local 248.

For more information, call 606-759-3114.

## Happy 98th Birthday Rena Dunigan



Family, friends, and neighbors are joining together this week to celebrate the 98th birthday of a beloved aunt, friend, and community member, **Rena Dunigan**, whose life has been a testimony of faith, music, and service.

Born **September 12, 1927**, on Quicks Run in Lewis County, Rena is the daughter of the late Rev. Sam and Erma Dunigan.

From an early age, her life was shaped by music and ministry. Alongside her sister, Betty, Rena shared the gospel in song throughout the tri-state area, blessing countless congregations with their heartfelt performances. The sisters also co-hosted a long-running radio program, *The Way of the Cross*, on local station WFTM, which aired for more than 50 years. On their final broadcast in 2015, the City of Maysville honored their dedication by declaring **July 11 "Rena Dunigan Day."**

Beyond her musical contributions, Rena faithfully served as **Sunday School Superintendent for the Kentucky Christian Holiness Conference for 22 years**, guiding generations in their walk with Christ. Known for her boundless energy, she even counted mowing her own yard as a favorite hobby until just a few years ago. Today, she continues to find joy in simple pleasures – receiving letters, sharing stories, and spending cherished time with family and friends.

Those who know Rena best say her love for the Lord is at the very heart of her life. Her greatest hope, she often says, is to see all of her loved ones reunited in Heaven one day.

As she celebrates 98 remarkable years, the community gives thanks for Rena’s enduring faith, her unwavering kindness, and the light she continues to shine.