



ANNUAL REPORT 2025



BERKELEY COUNTY COMMISSION





is West

Virginia's second oldest county and is governed by a five-member County Commission. The five Commissioners are elected to six-year terms of office. The Commission President is the presiding officer of the board at meetings and hearings. Each member of the Berkeley County Commission must be elected from a different Magisterial District of Berkeley County. There are six Magisterial Districts in the County.



Commission Responsibilities

- Generating revenues to fund the county's capital and operating budgets as well as other county departments and agencies.
- Own and maintain county property.
- Lay and disburse county levies based on assessed property values.
- Provide for the health, safety and general welfare of County residents and visitors.
- Adopt various orders, ordinances and regulations as authorized by the West Virginia Legislature.
- Convene as members of Board of Review and Equalization to consider appeals of property values for assessment of property values.
- Convene as members of Board of Canvass in the review of election results and certification of the election.
- Appoint individuals to various County boards, commissions, authorities and public service districts.
- Appoint Fiduciary Commissioners to oversee and settle certain estates.

Commission Meetings

Regular public meetings of the County Commission are held in the Commission Chambers, Suite 205, 400 W. Stephen St., Martinsburg, WV 25401. Meetings of the Commission can be viewed online via YouTube and Facebook.

Meeting agendas for the County Commission and other boards and commissions are posted on the County website - BerkeleyWV.org

Individuals can sign up to receive emails containing public meeting notices, agendas and other information on the County website.



**COMMISSION PRESIDENT
G. EDGAR "EDDIE" GOCHENOUR**

is a lifelong resident of Berkeley County and resides in Gerrardstown. He is a graduate of Musselman High School and attended Shepherd University. Elected in 2020, he is serving his first six-year term. A retired fire chief, Gochenour also served as the director of the Berkeley County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management.



**COMMISSIONER VICE PRESIDENT
R. STEPHEN (STEVE) CATLETT**

is a lifelong resident of Berkeley County and resides in Hedgesville. He is a graduate of Hedgesville High School and the University of Richmond. Steve retired as executive director of the Martinsburg-Berkeley County Parks and Recreation Board after 45 years of service. He was elected to a six-year term in 2022.



**COMMISSIONER
JAMES P. WHITACRE**

is a lifelong resident of Berkeley County and resides in the Martinsburg area. He is a graduate of Martinsburg High School and attended Shepherd University. Jim has worked as a contractor/excavator since 1982. Reelected in 2020, he is currently serving his second, six-year term.



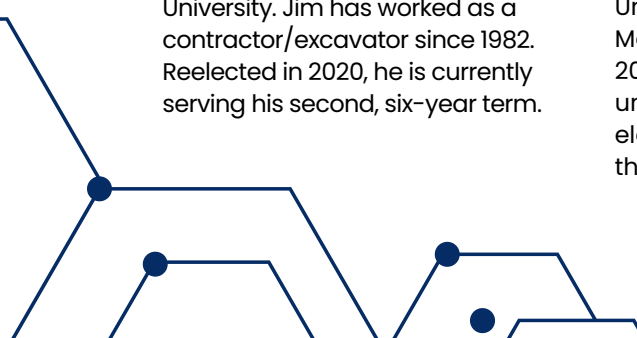
**COMMISSIONER
H.D. BOYD**

is a lifelong resident of Berkeley County and resides in Martinsburg. A business owner, H.D. is a graduate of Hedgesville High School and West Virginia University. H.D. served on the Martinsburg City Council from 2014 to 2016. Elected to an unexpired term in 2022, he was elected to a full six-year term on the County Commission in 2024.



**COMMISSIONER
JOHN HARDY**

is a longtime resident of Berkeley County, and lives in Martinsburg. A graduate of Jefferson High School, a business owner for more than 30 years, Hardy was elected to a six-year term in 2024 after serving in the West Virginia House of Delegates for six years.





WELCOME FROM COMMISSION PRESIDENT G. EDGAR “EDDIE” GOCHENOUR

As President of the Berkeley County Commission, you can be proud of the progress over this past year to enhance public safety as part of the commitment to protect the quality of life in Berkeley County. As outlined in this report, County leaders continue to make Quality of Life and Quality of Public Service initiatives a top priority as we work together to identify and develop new parks and recreation sites, build upon public safety services and improve our county government facilities. Berkeley County is a great place to be.

Please take the time to review this report. We welcome your feedback!

Sincerely,

G. Edgar “Eddie” Gochenour
Commission President

BUDGET/FINANCE

Levy Rate

Approved County Levy Rate of 13.39 for the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year, which began on July 1, 2025. The Levy Rate has been reduced or remained unchanged by the County Commission for eight consecutive years.

County Budget

2025-2026 Budget Estimate of \$54,394,403 includes funding for 68 uniformed law enforcement positions and police social workers and 38 paid firefighters, as well as allocations requested by the County constitutional officers, departments, offices and various agencies.

County Audit

Completed Fiscal Year 2024 Audit with zero findings.

Impact Fee

County commissioned study of demand for public facilities and services generated from new development as part of taking necessary steps to implement collection of impact fees on new development to offset costs of providing public facilities and services to new land development under the Local Powers Act as amended by the West Virginia Legislature in 2024. The collection of fees is projected to begin in second half of 2025, with proceeds supporting growth-related capital improvements for public services, including utility infrastructure, schools, parks and recreation and police, emergency, medical rescue and fire protection facilities.

2025 TAX LEVY RATES BERKELEY COUNTY, W.VA.

Arden, Falling Waters, Gerrardstown, Hedgesville, Hedgesville Town, Martinsburg, Mill Creek, Opequon Districts				
TAX CLASS - Rural Districts	I	II	III	IV
State Current	.0025	.0050	.0100	
County Current	.1339	.2678	.5356	
School Current	.1940	.3880	.7760	
School Excess Levy	.2295	.4590	.9180	
School Bond	.0480	.0960	.1920	
Total Rural Districts Rate Per \$100 Assessment	.6079	1.2158	2.4316	
TAX CLASS - Municipal Districts	I	II	III	IV
Town of Hedgesville				
State, County, School Rate	.6079	1.2158		2.4316
Municipal Rate	.0599	.1198		.2396
Total Town of Hedgesville Rate per \$100 Assessment	.6678	1.3356		2.6712
City of Martinsburg				
State, County, School Rate	.6079	1.2158		2.4316
Municipal Rate	.1186	.2372		.4744
Excess Levy	.0525	.1050		.2100
Total City of Martinsburg Rate Per \$100 Assessment	.7790	1.5580		3.1160

FIRST RESPONDERS

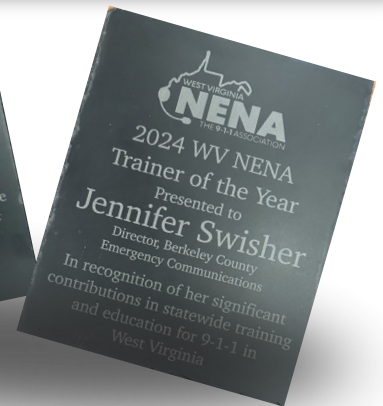
Law Enforcement

Funding allocated for new Police Social Worker position in addition to appropriation for 68 full-time law enforcement deputies for Law Enforcement Division of the Berkeley County Sheriff's Office. New social worker position assists with sworn law enforcement officers with crisis intervention. Awarded \$138,138 in grants, including funds for department radios (\$16,138), and SWAT Specialized Driving Training (\$55,000) and Specialized Training (\$67,000).



Emergency Communications

"Triple ACE" accredited agency, the Berkeley County Department of Emergency Communications is the primary answering point for 911 calls requesting emergency assistance from residents and visitors of Berkeley County. The department's Emergency Telecommunicators answered more than 75,000 emergency and non-emergency calls annually.



Emergency Management

Awarded \$107,740 in grant funding for operational expenses (\$100,915) and \$6,825 for completion of Commodity Flow Study.

Completed Commodity Flow Study (2024) for highways and railways in the County in ongoing development of plans for emergency situations.

House on Wheels Fire Safety Program presented to more than 3,000 school-age children at public and private schools in collaboration with Berkeley County Fire Department and Martinsburg Fire Department.



Collaborated with Berkeley County Schools, law enforcement and other partners to present various safety and emergency preparation classes and programs for schools and the community at-large, including Safety Awareness Training, Basic Family Emergency Preparedness, Active Shooter Preparedness and Stop the Bleed.

Participated in regional exercises to practice planning and skill development and to identify areas of improvement as part of effort to enhance ability to carry out mission of prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery.



Fire Department

Funding allocated for 15 additional paid firefighters by the by Berkeley County Commission and Berkeley County Fire Service Board, increasing staffing to 38 for assignment at the five volunteer fire company stations of Berkeley County: Back Creek Valley Volunteer Fire Company, Baker Heights Volunteer Fire Department, Bedington Volunteer Fire Department, Hedgesville Volunteer Fire Company and South Berkeley Volunteer Fire Company.

First-ever Berkeley County Fire Service Training Academy resulted in the graduation of 15 new fire-fighter recruits in June 2025. The 15-week training academy included courses in Swift Water Rescue, HazMat Tech, High and Low Angle Rope Rescue, EMT Basic, West Virginia Firefighter I & II.



The recruiting class of 15 newly hired firefighters graduated on June 27, 2025

Department responded to 8,350 calls in 2024, including structure fires, motor vehicle accidents, rescues and extrications, hazardous materials incidents, swift water rescue calls, fire alarms, and medic assists.

House on Wheels Fire Safety Program presented to more than 3,000 school-age children at 25 public and private schools in collaboration with Martinsburg Fire Department and Berkeley County Office of Emergency Management.

Participated in Career Days for middle and high school students.



Firefighter recruits complete training skillsets as part of first-ever Berkeley County Fire Department Training Academy.

Chief Martin Roberts



Lt. Steven Shawyer II



Lt. Timothy Siebel

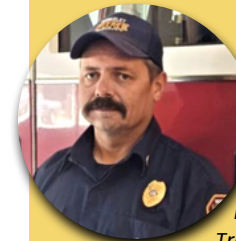
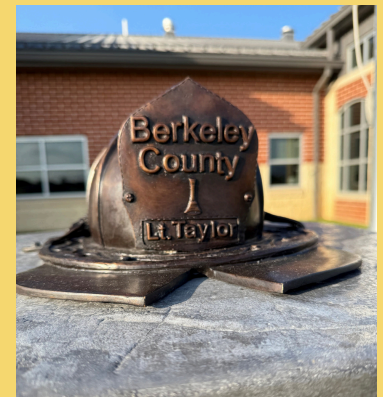


Lt. Justin Shank



Lt. Thomas Gorman

IN MEMORIAM - LT. JEREMY TAYLOR (March 11, 1976–November 26, 2024)



Memorial paid for by the graduates of the inaugural Berkeley County Fire Department Training Academy.

COURTHOUSE

Energy Conservation

Courthouse judicial center building earned ENERGY STAR designation for 2024. Installation of an ice-enhanced chiller plant and highly efficient boiler technology helped boost rating from 75% to 82% more efficient than similar buildings nationwide. Built for production of woolen goods that began in the 1890s, the two historic mill buildings are part of the Berkeley County Courthouse complex located in the 300, 400 and 500 blocks of South Raleigh Street in Martinsburg.



Records Management

Awarded \$10,000 in grant funds for the Berkeley County Circuit Office in County matching funds, for personnel cost to index digital images of historic chancery and law case files, administrative appeals, special boxes and domestic case files.



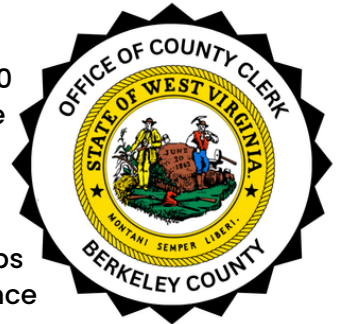


Courthouse Consolidation

Completed Berkeley County Courthouse consolidation and relocation initiative with relocation of remaining divisions of the Berkeley County Clerk's Office to 400 West Stephen Street from historic courthouse building at 100 West King Street in October 2024. Daily courthouse services at historic West King Street site come to an end on October 11, 2024 after approximately 245 years at location.

Elections

Awarded more than \$200,000 in grant funding for purchase of Electronic Poll Books, supplies and accessories and purchase of handicap signage and aluminum ramps for polling locations to enhance ADA access.



Judiciary Expansion

Completed renovation of historic County Jail building at 420 South Raleigh Street in the 1st quarter of 2025 to comply with directive by the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals to provide additional state circuit courtroom space for the 27th Judicial Circuit. In January 2025, Berkeley County officially became part of the 27th Judicial Circuit with Morgan County. Additional Magistrate Judge, Family Court Judge and Circuit Court Judge positions were added to due to increases in caseload. Renovation of County Jail was completed by Waynesboro (Pa.) Construction Co., Inc., which was awarded an \$808,534 project. The architect was Crabtree, Rohrbaugh & Associates.



The historic Berkeley County Jail building at 420 S. Raleigh St., was renovated to serve as a judicial annex.

Community Engagement

Never “Cry Wolf” False Alarm Public Outreach

Public Service campaign launched to urge residents and business owners to take steps to reduce false alarms at their property to reduce calls for service placed handled by first responders. Law enforcement, fire and EMS personnel in Berkeley County are dispatched to more than 50,000 calls annually, including approximately 4,000 false alarms and hold-up alarms each year.

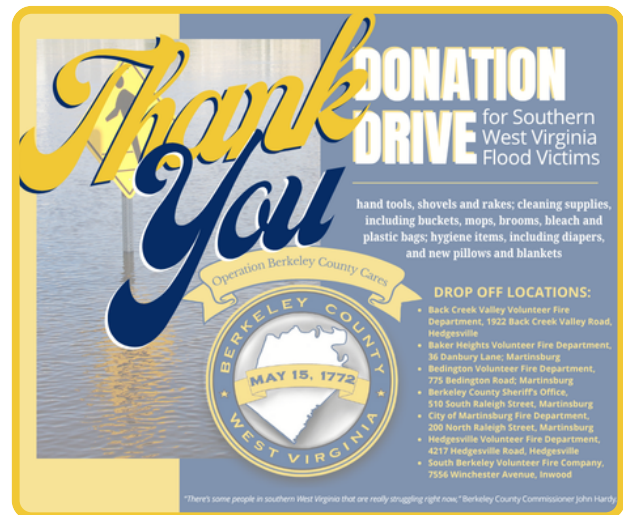


Building Safety Month Media Campaign

Month-long public safety-focused outreach initiative launched in May 2025 to promote building safety and building safety and fire prevention officials in the construction industry who work to ensure safe construction of buildings.

Operation Berkeley County Cares

The Berkeley County Commission, working in collaboration with Berkeley County's five volunteer fire departments, collected and delivered donations for Southern West Virginia flood victims. In addition to establishing drop-off locations countywide, "Operation Berkeley County Cares" staged a special collection event at the Spring Mills Walmart where donations of hand tools, cleaning supplies and hygiene items were accepted. The severe weather struck multiple southern West Virginia counties, flooding dozens of homes and businesses and left thousands of people without water service, and resulted in at least three deaths.



COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

Awarded grant funding for staffing (\$1,205,644), including Peer Recovery Coach and CATALIST program positions, video equipment, training and \$625,644 from the West Virginia First Foundation for personnel and equipment in collaboration with the Berkeley County Sheriff's Department.

Day Report Center

85 DRC Participants Graduated
Conducted 24,169 Drug Screens



Recovery Services

QRT		JOTIPP
Doors Knocked	256	Substance Abuse Prevention Curriculum Presented in 8 schools
Survivors Reached	77	18,142 Students Engaged
Families Reached	27	109 Referrals
Survivors Accepted Services	40%	Home Confinement
Naloxone Distribution	422	

Home Confinement
\$2,757,614 Incarceration Cost Avoidance

Community Service

The Community Program received 255 referrals for the program in Fiscal Year 2024-2025

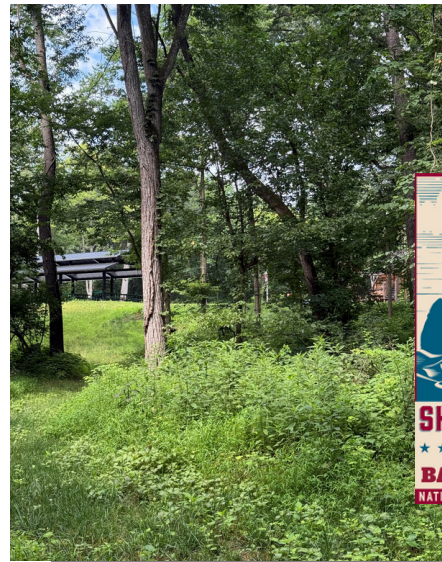
SERVICE	HOURS OF SERVICE
Roadside Litter Cleanup	4,213
County Recycling Center	1,094
Goodwill	867
Nonprofit Organizations (Miscellaneous)	702
Humane Society	593
County Fairgrounds	224
South Berkeley Little League	150

Ribbon cutting held to celebrate completion of 19,175-square-foot addition, and 400-square-foot renovation to Day Report Center (DRC)

PARKS & RECREATION

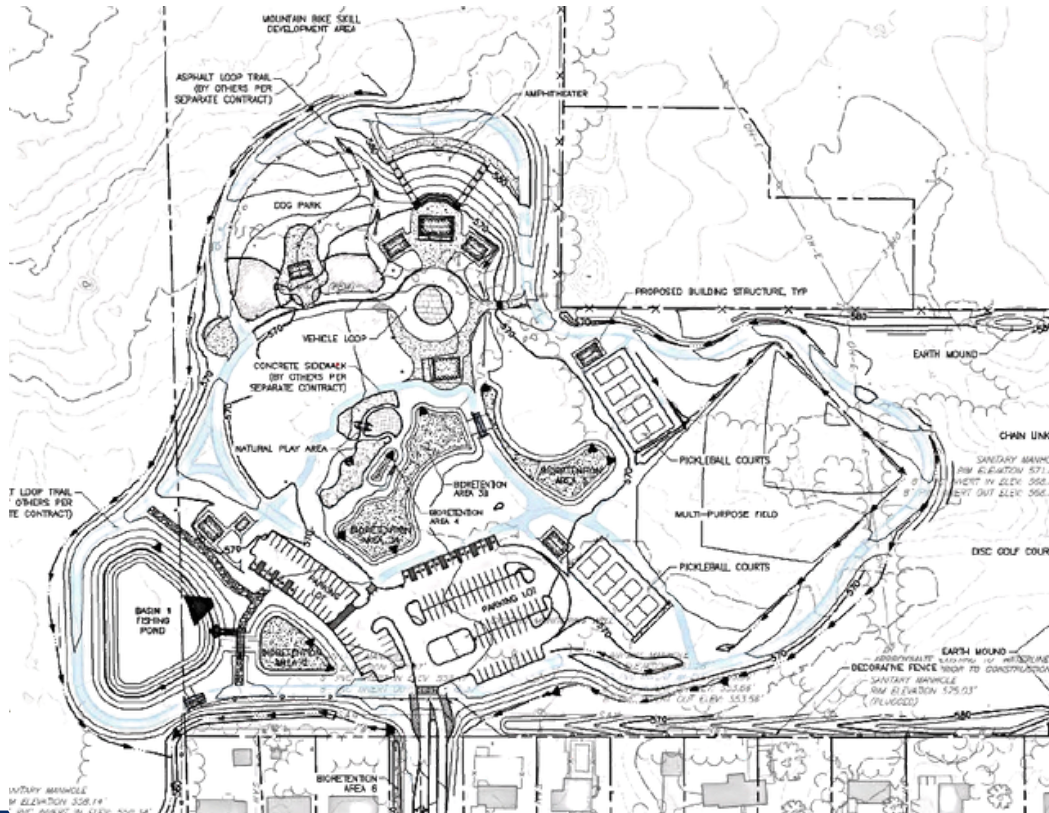
Hoke's Run Battlefield Park

Berkeley's first Civil War park opens in second quarter of 2025 in northern Berkeley County. The Berkeley County Commission and the Martinsburg-Berkeley County Parks Recreation Board partnered with the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation to establish Hoke's Run Battlefield Park off WV 901.



Inwood Park

Project was awarded \$144,425 Chesapeake Bay Trust grant award in June 2025 for constructing bioretention to manage runoff in new 31-acre recreation site near Musselman High School. Additional funding sources include: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (\$1,125,000), West Virginia Division of Highways (\$653,246), West Virginia Governor's Office (\$800,000) and more than \$3.2 million in county-provided funding. Phase I of recreation site development is projected to be completed in 2026.



ARTS, CULTURE & HISTORY

Museum Commission

The Museum Commission embarked upon initiative to retain architectural/engineering services for museum project. Space for artifact storage identified through assistance and resources provided by the Berkeley County Commission. Established in 2023, the mission of the Museum Commission is to advise the Berkeley County Commission on development of a regional culture and history museum for Eastern West Virginia and encourage collaboration in promotion of history education and historic preservation.



Apollo Civic Theatre

County officials participated in a January 2025 ribbon-cutting celebrating the installation of a new marquee for the theater in historic Downtown Martinsburg. The county allocated \$245,000 toward the long anticipated project, which replaced a marquee that was lost during a severe thunderstorm in 1987.



ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Handcraft Services

Announced in August 2024, healthcare linen production complex south of Martinsburg in Berkeley County will serve hospitals in seven states within the Mid-Atlantic region, creating 220 jobs by 2026 as a result of \$59 million investment. Operational testing is projected for Fall 2025. Natural gas utility improvements for project made possible through Berkeley County Commission and Berkeley County Development Authority and Tax Increment Financing.



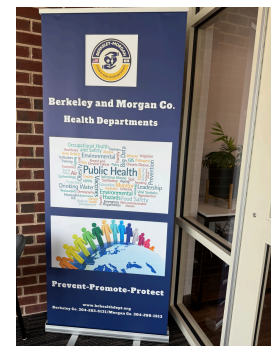
Tax Increment Financing

Boundaries of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district is expanded to include CMC Steel site, adding future tax revenues to the TIF pool in collaboration with the Berkeley County Development Authority. Growth in property taxes created by new economic activity in the TIF districts can be used for public infrastructure such as utility, transportation and other improvements, reducing the financial impact on taxpayers countywide.



Health Department

Approximate 4,000 square foot expansion of facility completed in May 2025. The expansion project was awarded to Lantz Construction Co., in May 2024. Project funding included \$608,000 Community Development Block Grant obtained by the Berkeley County Commission, and additional allocation of general county funds. The project architect was Crabtree, Rohrbaugh & Associates.



WVU Medicine announces \$200+ million investment to construct new patient tower at WVU Medicine Berkeley Medical Center, increasing bed capacity from 190 to 316 and eliminate semi-private rooms. Project also includes replacement linear accelerator for cancer treatment, redesigned emergency department flow, and the addition of up to 450 parking spaces accessible by a parking bridge and shuttle service.

Comprehensive Plan 2026

At the beginning of 2025, the Planning Department, working in collaboration with The Berkley Group consulting firm, began the process of updating the Berkeley County Comprehensive Plan. Community engagement efforts included focus group meetings with a range of community stakeholders and public workshops. A community survey received more than 800 responses. Work sessions with the Berkeley County Planning Commission are slated to be held in the coming months before the 2026 plan update is completed. The county comprehensive plan is required to be updated at least every 10 years in accordance with West Virginia state law.



Totals for 2024

2021: Permits 2,882; Fees Collected \$1,667,632
 2022: Permits 3,055; Fees Collected \$2,323,686
 2023: Permits 3,106; Fees Collected \$1,410,448



FY 2024-2025 Approved Site Plans					
Project	Single Family	Town	Multi-Family	Commercial	Acreage
ARDEN					
Meadow Crest	25	4			9.64
Provident 79 WVA Laundry				1	16.73
5 Star Auto Spa				1	1.46
BCPSWD Ind. Zone Tank				1	1.00
Southside Towns		12			1.30
Total	25	16		3	30.13
FALLING WATERS					
Marlowe Solar				1	33
Hang 10 Car Wash				1	1.23
Foxtails Mills		99			14.37
FW Industrial Center - Lot 6				1	3.35
Leatherman RV & Boat Storage				1	2.32
Nessle Junction Sec. 2	4				11.27
Patriot FCU - Spring Mills				1	1.71
Marlowe Ice Cream Shop				1	1.15
Cardinal Pointe Sec. 7		80			40
Total	4	179		6	108.40
HEDGESVILLE					
Heffle Motor Company				1	5.45
Wawa - Hedgesville				1	2.27
Total				2	7.72
MILL CREEK					
Tractor Supply - Inwood				1	5.17
Sheetz #143 Inwood				1	1.10
Fargo Properties				1	0.52
Boyd's Crossing Sec. 3 Ph. 2					
Total	0	0		3	6.79
OPEQUON					
Lightdale Apartments			72		3.60
BFS - Warm Springs				1	2.00
Rustoleum Truck Docks				1	2.00
Bridle Creek Ph. 7		94			21.00
BW Quality Growers - Spring Valley				1	53.72
Total	0	94	72	3	82.32
COUNTY-WIDE TOTALS	29	289	72	17	235.36



CONNECT WITH BERKELEY COUNTY GOVERNMENT

About Berkeley County

Located at the northern gateway to the Shenandoah Valley, Berkeley County, West Virginia is the state's fastest growing County and second-largest by population.

Approximately 70 miles from Washington, D.C., Berkeley County is in the eastern region of The Mountain State, adjacent to Western Maryland and Northern Virginia.

In transition from a rural to suburban area, Berkeley County is comprised of 321 square miles. The current population estimate for the County is 136,287.

Established on May 15, 1772 by an act of the Virginia House of Burgesses, Berkeley County, then a part of Virginia, was carved from neighboring Frederick County. The County is named in honor of Norborne Berkeley, Baron de Botetourt, Royal Governor of Virginia.

Revolutionary War Gen. Adam Stephen, the County's first sheriff, laid out what became the County seat along Tuscarora Creek and named it Martinsburg in honor of his friend, Colonel Thomas Bryan Martin. The current population estimate for Martinsburg is 19,407.

Since the arrival of the earliest colonial settlers in the 1720s, Berkeley County has been at the epicenter of engagement, growth and community.



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Berkeley County?

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Berkeley County's agencies, boards
and commissions?



Scan the QR code below or go to
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and subscribe with an email address to
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public alerts, meeting notices and more!



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Berkeley County Commission
400 West Stephen Street, Suite 201, Martinsburg, WV 25401
Phone: 304-264-1923 | Fax: 304-267-5049

Prepared by the Berkeley County Office of Strategic Planning & Communications for the Berkeley County Commission in collaboration with the Office of the County Administrator, and various county departments and offices, including Building Permits and Inspections, Community Corrections, Emergency Communications, Emergency Management, Fire and Planning.