



**County of McHenry
County Administration**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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McHenry County Achieves Aaa Bond Rating

WOODSTOCK, IL – McHenry County is proud to announce an improvement in its debt rating to Aaa by Moody’s Investors Service. The Aaa rating (the highest rating available) will allow McHenry County to issue debt at the lowest possible interest rate as the organization has proven itself to be among the top tier of local governments in terms of financial strength both in Illinois and nationally. With the migration of Moody’s to the Global Ratings Scale (GSR) McHenry County was the only county of 102 counties in the State of Illinois to have its rating improved to a Aaa status, making it one of three counties in the State of Illinois sharing the honor (DuPage and Lake Counties are also rated Aaa).

McHenry County has been striving to reach Aaa rating since being identified as an organizational goal in its strategic plan in the early 2000’s. Moody’s issued the County’s first bond rating in 2002 at Aa3, then upgraded the County in 2003 to a Aa2, and adjusted the County in September of 2006 to a Aa2+. In June 2007, the County’s credit was upgraded to a Aa1 rating. “The County and its financial stakeholders were well positioned for this distinction. We established solid financial controls and healthy operating reserves using financial modeling tools and prudent fiscal management,” stated Finance and Audit Chairman Marc Munaretto.

“All County employees have contributed to the success of achieving this recognition by being aware and supportive of the direction the County Board has/is taking. We developed and continually use our financial model as a guide for decisions that involve the expenditure of County funds,” stated McHenry County Board Chairman Ken Koehler in regards to the increase in the bond rating.

The McHenry County financial policy is based upon the lessons McHenry County has learned from its past. A decade ago the County was in financial distress, having to reduce budgets by 15% across the board.

In reaction to this difficult financial time for the County, the McHenry County Board instituted a strong budget policy, debt policy and cash reserve policy in the early 2000's. To this day the County Board adheres to these policies faithfully. McHenry County has maintained a five month cash reserve since fiscal year 2004 and has ended every fiscal year since including fiscal year 2009 adding to the reserve. By growing the reserves and not utilizing them when the economy is struggling, the County has demonstrated strong, consistent financial control to Moody's Investors Service. With each new debt issuance, the County has proven its ability to continue strong financial management.

For more information, please contact Adam Lehmann at (815)334-0309 or aflehmann@co.mchenry.il.us.

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"McHenry County government is dedicated to providing the highest quality services for the health, safety, and welfare of the County's residents and communities. We foster representative and transparent government to ensure social, economic and environmental justice.