

## September 2024: Drones at the Door, Clear to Clear Encampments Now



### From the Director's Desk

## Drones at the Door

The coming infestation has not yet hit your neighborhood. Perhaps sooner than later citizens will be wondering if that frequent buzzing sound outside is a large mosquito. They will be especially disturbed to discover a drone hovering outside their bedroom window. That citizen will not know if the drone is surveillance by their HOA, the police, a peeping pervert or just a delivery package preparing to land next door.



I met recently with [AirspaceLink](#), a group that offers to help “safely integrate drones into the community” that includes developing regulations, and routes for local governments to manage their airspace so that carriers such as Amazon have established flight plans, and hobbyists have clear rules to follow. They are working with COGs in California and Texas to develop regionally coordinated drone integration for members who want to get ahead of the buzz. The company registers drones and manages liability for their clients as well as managing and enforcement of no-fly zones. The practice is called “strategic de-confliction,” which includes mapping and monitoring restricted airspace such as public utilities, parks, USFS wilderness, FAA controlled airspace as well as temporary closures for events and festivals. Drones remain a novelty for most of us, and the idea that they may soon be ubiquitous kind of blew my mind. Then I travelled through Idaho this summer.

Officials are beginning to understand the public safety risk and opportunity they pose. Two articles in the Idaho Statesman on August 4th highlight the impact that drones are just beginning to have. One involved an escape from a “maximum-security” prison in Idaho aided by a cellphone dropped from a drone. [The Statesman reports that prisons across Idaho have confiscated more cell phones and other contraband this year than at any time in the past decade due to drone drops.](#) The article quotes administrators who say that the aged walled compounds, akin to medieval castles built for physical isolation were never envisioned to keep out drones or to contain prisoners “armed” with smart phones.

The truth is that not much of our built-landscape was either. Wait until kids start ordering pizza deliveries to the middle school. Sheriff’s offices and homeland security are already aware that bad actors are planning to use drones to execute terrorism and civil disturbances. The New York Times reports that for the war in [Ukraine](#), armed drones are commonplace today, including the practice of “swarming.”

On the bright side, the other Statesman story (reprinted from the Star Tribune) shows the other side of the drone revolution; [“the Mayo Clinic has signed a deal with Zipline to begin offering prescription deliveries beginning in 2025.”](#) The article notes that many details are “up in the air.” Zipline proports to be the world’s largest drone delivery company already making such deliveries across Africa, and in the U.S. “since 2021.” Their latest line of drones, the [Platform 2](#) (pictured) can carry 8 lbs. of weight and fly 60 mph (twice as fast as those middle schoolers zipping around your neighborhood on ebikes these days). Delivery of prescription drugs to those who are immobile could be a humanitarian breakthrough. Get ready for commercial delivery drones because the [FAA already granted Amazon drone delivery use in Texas](#) this past April.

In an era where many law enforcement agencies are grappling with shrinking manpower, drones are also offering a powerful solution to augment their capabilities. By providing a bird’s-eye view and rapid situational awareness, drones help officers locate suspects, assess risks and respond to incidents more efficiently and safely. Manitowoc sheriff’s deputies responded to a call about a reckless driver who, upon being spotted by a lieutenant, sped away and ultimately crashed their vehicle. You can watch the [video](#) see how the department used a drone with thermal capabilities to resolve the situation.

Indeed, as touchy as people feel about door knockers, what about the drone at their door? Privacy issues will be as prickly as public safety issues. Public officials experience technological and market innovations retroactively and subsequent policy disturbances often require many years to iron out. If you want a breakdown on the legal details of drone permitting privacy and other issues, [this is a great primer.](#)

## Supreme Court Solves Homelessness Problem for Cities



Following up from our [April Newsletter](#) story “Cruel Outcomes,” when we reported that the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court had threaded the needle allowing cities to regulate encampments, stopping short of allowing cities to ban camping and sleeping outdoors.

Those earlier rulings also made the responsible party clear-- the public, specifically the City of Boise or any local government that aims to clear public spaces of indigents, forcing an awkwardly compassionate interim since the 2008

ruling *Martin v Boise*, which established that municipalities could clear the homeless from a street only proportional to the number of beds locally available. Those earlier cases put in motion hundreds of efforts across the country to convert old hotels and construct facilities such as [New Path Boise](#), a 40 unit “housing first” community. Many would argue that building more shelters for the homeless is still not addressing underlying causes. In Denver, Mayor Mike Johnson just celebrated his first year in office extolling his bold House 1000 which also turned one year old this summer. The initiative he boldly promised would “end homelessness.” [Westword wrote a month-by-month chronology of the first year of House 1000.](#) It is a must-read chronology of high-profile policy deployment. Amid significant controversy over cost and social justice, the City of Denver touts moving 1,800 people indoors, of whom 200 have left the city, and 500 now are in permanent housing. Now, Denver will not be legally compelled to that approach.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruling on June 28th severed the linkage between clearing homeless and

social responsibility. *Grants Pass v Johnson* also denies homeless protections under the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment when it "[cleared the way for cities to enforce bans on homeless people sleeping outdoors in public places... overturning a ruling from ... appeals court that found such laws amounted to cruel and unusual punishment when shelter in place is lacking,](#)" as reported by the Associated Press. Oddly enough, the first actions from that ruling occurred in California where immediately following the *Grants Pass v Johnson* decision, California Governor Gavin Newsom issued an Executive Order requiring state agencies to clear homeless camps, and called for cities to do the same. It was a bold move after having dedicated \$24 billion in recent years, according to the Los Angeles Times, "[to clean up encampments, move Californians off the streets and sidewalks and convert hotels and motels into temporary shelters, among dozens of other initiatives.](#)" The response appeared to be a sudden pivot by the Governor. Covering that story, the New York Times stated 180,000 people were homeless in California in 2023, most of whom were also unsheltered pointing out that the problem of visible poverty camped on the streets doesn't exist in New York City which guarantees a "[right to housing.](#)" Perhaps the silver lining will be a renewed focus on the social determinants of poverty and homelessness. A right to housing, what a concept.

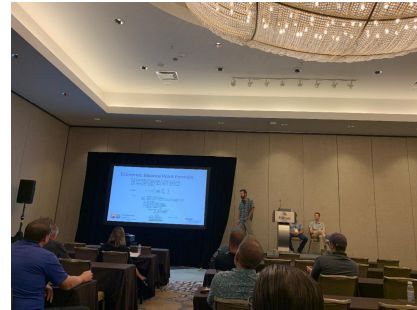
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## Justin Wiseman Shines at Energy OutWest Conference

We are excited to share that Justin Wiseman, one of NWCCOG's standout Energy Program professionals, recently presented at the [2024 Energy OutWest Conference](#), presenting in two engaging and informative sessions:

- Heat Pump Tips and Tricks with Timothy Dykhuis
- Heat Pump Integration in the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) with Timothy Dykhuis, Ken Hall, and Ryan Trujillo

Energy OutWest, Inc. (EOW) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting energy conservation, renewable practices, and technological advancements in environmental services. Their biennial conference is a key event for professionals in the weatherization field to learn, share, and advance their skills.



Emily Hoskins, NWCCOG's Energy Outreach Manager, expressed her enthusiasm: "It was so much fun seeing Justin present on Air Source Heat Pump integration in the Weatherization Assistance Program at the Energy OutWest Conference. It was clear that he was one of the most (if not THE most) knowledgeable people in the room on the subject matter, and he represented NWCCOG's Energy Program well! We are so proud of him!" Tyler Treganza added: "It was a great presentation." He noted that a state inspector even commented that Justin was the best presenter at the conference.

Justin's contributions to the Energy OutWest Conference are a reflection of his expertise and dedication, and NWCCOG is proud to have him represent the organization on such an important platform.

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## Upcoming SHIP Medicare Presentations

Join our Vintage Department for an upcoming Medicare presentation!

Topics will include Medicare benefits, updates to drug coverage for 2025, and there will be a Q&A at the end. These are in preparation for Medicare Open Enrollment October 15 – December 7. It is the one time of year to make changes to your drug plan or sign up for an Advantage plan. Insurance companies mail out updates for their plans in September, so we encourage those who have Medicare to open all correspondence



**MEDICARE PRESENTATIONS**

9/17 Steamboat Library 7pm-8:30pm  
 9/18 Summit County Community & Senior Center 5:30pm-7pm  
 9/24 Avon Library 5:30pm-7pm  
 10/8 Vail Library 12pm -1pm  
 10/10 Kremmling Library 1pm-2pm  
 \*Lunch & learn contact library for reservation  
 10/11 Fraser Library 11:30am-12:30pm  
 \*Lunch & learn contact library for reservation  
 11/7 Pitkin Senior Services 1pm-2:30pm  
 11/8 Basalt Library 11:30am-12:30pm  
 \*Lunch & learn contact library for reservation

Presented by Jonnah Glassman your local Medicare SHIP Coordinator (State Health Insurance Program) FREE & Unbiased

**We will cover** Medicare basics, Medigap & Advantage plans, updates to 2025 Drug plans, and options to prepare you for **Open Enrollment** October 15th- November 7th.

**All are Welcome!** Whether you are new to Medicare or have been on Medicare for years & want to understand your benefits or options for **Open Enrollment** this fall.



Reach out for more information  
 Jonnah Glassman 970-315-1328  
 JGlassman@NWCCOG.org

with insurance companies, so they don't miss these updates. One-on-one Medicare Counseling is available with one of our SHIP Counselors. To book an appointment, scheduling will be up on our website YourVintage.org in October, or you can call the Senior Center in your County to sign you up for an appointment as well.

For more questions, please contact the SHIP Medicare Coordinator Jonnah Glassman [JGlassman@NWCCOG.org](mailto:JGlassman@NWCCOG.org), 970-315-1329.

## COG Quirks: Birthday Adventures in Slovenia



Vintage Director Erin celebrated her July birthday in Slovenia this year with an all-women adventure group called [Explorer Chick](#). Erin says "This was a trip of a lifetime! I went hut-to-hut hiking in the Julian Alps, fly fishing and rafting on the stunning Soca river, e-biked into Italian wine country, and formed friendships with other rad, adventurous women. I'm so grateful to celebrate another year in such an incredible and memorable way."

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