



**ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT**  
**PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE**

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**COMMISSIONERS OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY**

James R. Guy, President  
Eric Colvin, Commissioner  
Michael L. Hewitt, Commissioner  
Todd B. Morgan, Commissioner  
John E. O'Connor, Commissioner

**NEWS RELEASE** *for Immediate Release*

**No. 2022 – 169**

**September 9, 2022, 8:30 a.m.**

**Department of Recreation and Parks Earns National Accreditation**

*Mark of distinction recognizes commitment to the highest level of service to the community*

**LEONARDTOWN, MD** - The Department of Recreation and Parks joined the ranks of elite park and recreation agencies across the country by earning accreditation through the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). This distinguished accomplishment was awarded during the 2022 NRPA Annual Conference.

CAPRA accreditation is the only national accreditation for park and recreation agencies and is a measure of an agency's overall quality of operation, management and service to the community. This mark of distinction indicates that an agency has met rigorous standards related to managing and administering lands, facilities, resources, programs, safety and services.

As part of the accreditation process, the Department of Recreation and Parks had to demonstrate compliance with 154 recognized standards and document all policies and procedures. Often the process helps identify efficiencies and heighten areas of accountability, all of which translate into higher quality service and operation to benefit the community.

"National Accreditation is a highlight for our department and recognizes the hard work and commitment of our staff. We look forward to the rigor of accreditation that insures accountability and high standards for our citizens and community." – Arthur Shepherd, Director

The process for accreditation involves a formal application, self-assessments, a site visit by a team of trained visitors that results in a written report, and a hearing with the commission to grant accreditation. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's visitations were held virtually. Once accredited, the agency must uphold the standards by submitting an annual report and is reviewed again in five years.

The Commission comprises representatives from NRPA, the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration, the National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials, the International City/County Management Association, the Academy for Leisure Sciences, the Armed Forces Recreation Network and the Council of State Executive Directors.

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Commissioner President Randy Guy said, "The hard work and commitment to excellence by our Recreation and Parks staff is noteworthy. Receiving the accreditation is a tremendous achievement for the department and our county's residents."

For more information about CAPRA accreditation, visit [www.nrpa.org/CAPRA](http://www.nrpa.org/CAPRA).

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