

Vermont League of Cities and Towns 2015 Overview
Serving and Strengthening Vermont Local Government

The Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that is owned by its member municipalities and directed by a 13-member Board of Directors comprising municipal officials from across the state, elected by the membership.

VLCT's mission is to serve and strengthen Vermont local government. All 246 Vermont cities and towns are members of VLCT, along with 136 other municipal entities, including villages, solid waste districts, regional planning commissions, and fire districts.

Vermonters use local government services – including highways, police, fire, recreation, libraries, sewer, and water – on a daily basis. In large part, volunteer elected and appointed municipal officials lead these local governments.

VLCT provides the following services to its member cities and towns to help them provide their citizens with quality services at affordable costs:

- **Legal, consulting, and education services.** VLCT's Municipal Assistance Center (MAC) provides training, information, and assistance to municipal officials to help them carry out their roles and responsibilities. In 2015, attorneys and staff responded to nearly 3,500 inquiries from municipal officials about their statutory duties and about best practices in municipal governance. More than 1,300 people attended 16 workshops on topics ranging from municipal budgeting to solid waste management, and training for selectboard members, auditors, and land use officials. Additionally, MAC conducted 10 on-site workshops at municipal offices covering Open Meeting Law compliance, financial fraud prevention, effective property tax appeal hearings, as well as other topics. Attorneys provided 28 municipalities with legal review of ordinances and policies, financial assistance, and other specialized consulting services. Many municipalities have received technical assistance on water quality and stormwater management related to the recent passage of Vermont's Clean Water Act. All handbooks, technical papers, model documents, and past newsletter articles – more than 1,000 documents – are available on VLCT's website.
- **Advocacy representation at the state and federal levels to ensure that municipalities have the resources and authority needed to serve their citizens.** VLCT is a leader in the education property tax debate, enhancing local voter authority in governance decisions, municipal efforts to clean up Vermont's lakes and rivers, and securing revenues for town highway and bridge maintenance programs. Municipalities will face significant challenges in the 2016 legislature as limited financial resources at the national and state level continue to force more demand for services at the local level. VLCT also publishes a *Weekly Legislative Report* that details legislative issues affecting municipal government. It is available free of charge on the VLCT website.
- **Opportunities to provide purchasing of needed services at the lowest cost.** Members may purchase municipal unemployment, property, and casualty and workers' compensation insurance coverage for town operations. The **VLCT Employee Resource and Benefit (VERB) Trust** continued to assist towns navigate their way to Vermont Health Connect and, where appropriate, to secure health insurance through the marketplace. When substantial municipal damages occur as a result of weather events, the value to our members of **VLCT Property and Casualty Intermunicipal Fund (PACIF)** is quite clear, as members benefit from the broad coverage, excellent re-insurance, and prompt service and claims payments provided. The two Trusts are responsible for \$24 million in municipal tax dollars spent for insurance and risk management services in 2015.

To learn more about the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, including its audited financial statements, visit the VLCT website, www.vlct.org.