



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

*"Protecting Idaho through Safety, Accountability,
Partnerships And Opportunities for Offender Change"*

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Governor

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Reader's View

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This week's escape from the North Idaho Correctional Institution (NICI) concerned many citizens near Cottonwood. I understand the fear an escape generates. It is very taxing on the community, especially for those who live closest to the facility. Our primary concern in any incident is always that of community safety. For us, one escape is too many.

I want you to know what actions the Idaho Department of Correction is taking to prevent future escapes. The Department immediately launched a serious incident review to determine what went right and what went wrong the day Inmate Jones escaped.

The report will include recommendations on what steps can be taken to prevent escapes from NICI in the future. One question I specifically asked the team to review is if another fence or more security is needed.

Another question the review will explore is why the automated telephone notification system (VINE) continued to call citizens again and again. The repeated phone calls served to heighten fears. We're working to make certain that issue is fixed. We'll share the information on both those questions and next actions with the community when the review is completed.

The Cottonwood facility continues to serve Idaho as a shining example of how people can change their lives with guidance and education. The majority of the men who go to NICI receive treatment, a GED and then are released back to the community on probation.

NICI remains a proud part of the Cottonwood community. Thank you for being our partner in protecting Idaho through safety, accountability, partnerships and opportunities for offender change.