

ROCKLAND TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

Rockland Township
Mailing Address:
41 Deysher Road
Fleetwood, PA 19522
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TOWNSHIP OFFICE HOURS:

Monday thru Friday
9:00AM—4:00PM

(NOTE: The Township Office will be closed between 12:00 Noon—1:00PM for lunch. In addition, there will be times when the office will be closed due to illness, vacation, etc.).

ALL OTHER TIMES BY APPOINTMENT ONLY.

MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Tuesday, NOVEMBER 2, 2021
Polls open at 7:00AM and close at 8:00PM. The Township Office will be closed for the Municipal Primary.

The 2022 budget meeting scheduled for Thursday, October 29, 2021 at 2:30PM has been cancelled and rescheduled for WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2021 at 4:30PM.

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Website: www.co.berks.pa.us/Muni/Rockland

September 2021 Edition

MESSAGE FROM TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR MICHELE ALBRIGHT

Welcome Fall, Rockland Township.

I hope this newsletter finds all Rocklander's happy, healthy and safe. Fall is upon us, which means kids have gone back to school, roadwork has resumed, and vacations are over. I'm certain we've all noticed more traffic on the roads and thanks to summer rain storms, more roads requiring repair. Besides regular traffic volume, add school buses, college / university and high school students driving to school to the roads. Besides repairing roads, you'll find state and municipal road projects underway.

What does this mean for all of us driving on the roads? Logic, common sense and courtesy need to be used.

Road work may create obstacles, road closures and you will find barricades and signage redirecting your route. Evidently there is a situation which may cause danger to your vehicle and to the driver. Signs and barricades have been set up for your safety. Yet some drivers find the need to drive through these signs. Pennsylvania drivers who ignore closed road barriers and signs in construction areas, flooded areas and other hazardous conditions will face penalties. Under the law, motorists who drive around or through signs closing a road will have two points added to their driving records and will pay a fine. If the violation results in a need for emergency responders to be called, the fine increases, plus the violators will be held liable for repaying costs of staging the emergency response. Too often, motorists decide their immediate needs outweigh the safety warning signs and ignore them - it's not worth it.

One of the easiest things to be is kind and courteous. Does it exist on our roads? Motorists seem to be in such a hurry and everyone seems to be late for somewhere they need to

be. Have you ever driven route 12 or 222 and find while signaling from one lane to the next, there is a driver speeding up from behind and won't let you in. Have you ever needed to turn into a parking lot or a road but you can't because it's blocked by a lineup of cars. Have you tried to drive the posted speed limit and find you have a tail of a dozen cars who are dying to pass you. With the roads busier and higher volume, it's time for all Rockland motorists to set an example and drive with courtesy. This means that you share the road responsibly, give the right of way and do not take actions that can cause trouble or risk for others. Ways you can set an example: use your turn signal (drivers behind you cannot read your mind, you have a signal use it); focus on the road and be aware of your surroundings - if there was a storm (wind or rain), there is potential for broken branches and tree limbs on the road - animals are crossing the roads too - you don't want a deer running into you; respect pedestrians, cyclists and service vehicles such as USPS, courier services, trash removal trucks, school buses (passing a school bus picking up/dropping off children is equal to going through a red light); do not block intersections, cross walks and driveways or shop entries; stop at stop signs; slow down at yellow lights (yellow does not mean speed up); drive the speed limit; maintain a safe distance between other vehicles; slow down and move over to the side of the road for emergency vehicles rushing to an emergency and when driving two lane roads, move into left lane when stopped vehicles are on the right shoulder.

Together, let's make Rockland safe.

Michele Albright, Township Supervisor

MESSAGE FROM TOWNSHIP ROADMASTER

In light of the growing risk of damage to trees by invasive insects (such as the Emerald Ash Bore and Spotted Lanternfly), property owners are reminded to regularly inspect trees on their property for potential hazards. Structural defects are best detected in the late fall, winter and early spring when there are no leaves on the trees. Defects caused by diseases are best detected in late summer and early fall when dead branches are obvious. In order to have a tree fully evaluated, it is recommended that a Certified Arborist be contacted to examine the tree.

It is the responsibility of the property owner to remove dead trees located on private property. Property owners can be held liable for injuries or damage to the property of others if they fail to remove a tree that falls under reasonable foreseeable circumstances. Dead trees or branches within the right-of-way of a Township road that the Board of Supervisors finds to constitute a hazardous or dangerous condition to the use of the roadway or those which impair the use or maintenance of the public road or street, may be removed by the Township pursuant to the Second Class Township Code Section 2325.

In advance of the winter season, here are a few reminders from the Township road crew.

PARKING—When a storm is forecasted, please move vehicles to off-street parking whenever possible and keep vehicles off the street until plowing is complete. Parked cars along roadways or in the cul-de-sac area of developments can be both a hazard and a hindrance to snow removal efforts. Please assist our road crew by eliminating the need for return trips to properly clear snow where the vehicle was parked.

CLEARING DRIVEWAYS—DO NOT shovel, blow or push snow from driveways onto roadways. This practice is illegal and hazardous. Plows travel in the same direction as normal traffic flow; this will likely result in the unavoidable problem of already cleared driveways being covered with snow. The best solution to avoid this situation is to wait until the streets have been cleared before clearing driveways. To minimize the amount of snow pushed in front of your driveway, put shoveled snow on the right side of the driveway.

DAMAGED MAILBOXES—Unless a Township vehicle actually strikes your mailbox, the Township cannot offer reimbursement or repairs. Mailboxes are installed at your own risk within the right-of-way. Please be sure your mailbox is sturdy and does not stick out into the roadway. Call your local Postmaster for installation guidelines.

Michael Pott, Roadmaster

RECYCLING INFORMATION – UPCOMING PROGRAMS

THE RECYCLING CENTER (cardboard, mixed paper, aluminum and tin cans and plastic bottles) AT 1316 HILLTOP ROAD, LEESPORT IS OPEN DAILY FROM 8:00 AM UNTIL DUSK. CENTER MAY CLOSE FOR SHORT PERIODS OF TIME TO PROCESS MATERIALS, AS DEMAND REQUIRES.

ELECTRONIC RECYCLING CENTER

1316 Hilltop Rd., Leesport, PA (Bern Twp)

- *Open every Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday (8:00AM–Noon)
- *All visitors must wear a mask and remain in their vehicle while on site.
- *All electronics should be in the truck of your vehicle or bed of pickup truck.

TIRE RECYCLING CENTER

1316 Hilltop Rd., Leesport, PA (Bern Twp)

- *Open every Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday (8:00AM–Noon)
- *All visitors must wear a mask and remain in their vehicle while on site.
- *Automotive tires only! Fees apply.

**BERKS COUNTY SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY
PAPER SHREDDING EVENT**

- *Free to all Berks County residents
- ***PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED.**
- *NOTE: ABSOLUTELY NO PLASTIC BAGS WILL BE ACCEPTED.
- DATE: **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2021**
- TIME: **8:00AM - 2:00PM**
- LOCATION: Berks County Agricultural Center
1238 County Welfare Road, Leesport, PA 19533

**BERKS COUNTY SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY
HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION PROGRAM**

- *Free to all Berks County residents
- ***PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED.**
- *NOTE: ABSOLUTELY NO LATEX PAINT WILL BE ACCEPTED.
- DATE: **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2021**
- TIME: **8:00AM - 2:00PM**
- LOCATION: Berks County Agricultural Center
1238 County Welfare Road, Leesport, PA 19533

FOR ADDITIONAL RECYCLING INFORMATION, INCLUDING LISTS OF ACCEPTABLE ITEMS AND FEE SCHEDULES, PLEASE CONTACT:

BERKS COUNTY SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY
www.co.berks.pa.us/swa
610) 478-6362

MESSAGE FROM LYONS VOLUNTEER FIRE CO.

By this time, most of you should have received our annual fund drive donation letter. We appreciate all the support the Rockland Township citizens have given us in the past. With the COVID-19 pandemic still with us, our fundraising efforts are still very limited. Please consider a donation to this important revenue source. All funds received from our fund drive go exclusively to our fire equipment account to be used only to maintain and purchase fire and rescue equipment for our community. A big thank you to all of you that have already responded.

Reminder — Reflective address signs are still available for only \$15.00. They are a tremendous help in locating your house during an emergency to aid police, fire and ambulance. Reflective sign forms are available at the Township Office or call 610-682-7936 and leave a message to order.

Please remember to replace the batteries in your smoke and CO alarms and keep them up to date. Smoke alarms older than 10 years should be replaced.

Our volunteers remain dedicated to serve the citizens of Rockland Township 24 hours a day — every day! Professional services with volunteer forces.

Fundraising Update — Weekly Wednesday night bingo has begun in our banquet hall at 6:00PM sponsored by our Ladies Auxiliary and firefighters. Food available. Fun for all ages while supporting our volunteers.

Watch for another drive-thru homemade chicken pot pie sale coming in November. Details to come soon.

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CORNER

Wow I can't believe we are in the final days of summer! I hope everyone had a great summer and is looking forward to some cooler weather. I wanted to take a moment to thank everyone for your responses to my survey from the last newsletter! Those results will benefit me tremendously should a major emergency occur in Rockland Township! With the fall season quickly approaching and cooler temperatures also approaching I know some people will be doing some cleaning up of their yards in the way of controlled burns. I just wanted to remind everyone that the Rockland Township Burn Ordinance is posted on the Rockland Township website. I recommend before you perform a controlled burn you look at the ordinance to make sure you are in compliance. Some other tips you should be following while conducting a controlled burn are to never let the burn unattended, make sure you have a water source within a close proximity of the fire, keep the pile to a manageable size, do not burn if there is red flag warning in effect, or a fire weather watch in effect, and finally keep the pile as far away from any structures as possible. If the fire begins to get out of control call 911 as soon as possible before it gets even more out of control. As Smokey Bear says **ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT WILDFIRES!** If you have any questions related to burning a brush pile, please feel free to reach out to me! One last thing as you also see in this newsletter the Lyons Volunteer Fire Company sells address signs to hang on your mailbox. I can't stress how important those are for responders to find the correct house in an emergency situation. I highly recommend purchasing one if you have not already done so to help responders locate your house in the case of an emergency!

Stay Well,
Derick Wartzluft, Rockland Township EMC



- RULE 1: ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT WILDFIRES.
 - RULE 2: ALWAYS BE CAREFUL WITH FIRE.
 - RULE 3: NEVER PLAY WITH MATCHES OR LIGHTERS.
 - RULE 4: ALWAYS WATCH YOUR CAMPFIRE.
 - RULE 5: MAKE SURE YOUR FIRE IS COMPLETELY OUT BEFORE LEAVING IT.
- WWW.SMOKEYBEAR.COM**

ALL TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS INVITED!

**COMMUNITY
FIRE SAFETY DAY**

HELD AT

LYONS VOLUNTEER FIRE CO. #1

FIRE STATION—LYONS, PA
INFO—610-682-7936

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2021

10:00AM — 2:00PM

FIRE PREVENTION MATERIAL AVAILABLE

FREE FIRE HELMETS FOR KIDS

SMOKEY BEAR WILL BE HERE

TOPTON AMBULANCE & STATE POLICE WILL BE HERE
MEDEVAC HELICOPTER @ 10:30AM

NEW THIS YEAR — KIDS FIRE SAFETY SMOKE TRAILER

Displays and demonstrations of jaws of life and fire extinguishers
FOOD STAND WILL BE OPEN—HAVE LUNCH WITH US!

Talk to your volunteer firefighters and see your fire equipment!

VISIT US ON FACEBOOK

2021 ELECTION INFORMATION—IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

October 18, 2021 — Last day to REGISTER before the November election

October 26, 2021 — Last day to apply for a mail-in or civilian absentee ballot

November 2, 2021 — Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted mail-in & civilian absentee ballots (*MUST BE RECEIVED BY 8:00PM)

NOVEMBER 2, 2021 — MUNICIPAL ELECTION Polls are open from 7:00AM — 8:00PM

1st Precinct Polling Location: Rockland Township Municipal Building, 41 Deysher Road, Fleetwood, PA 19522
2nd Precinct Polling Location: The Real Church, 33 Lyons Road, Fleetwood, PA 19522

- * Absentee ballots or mail-in ballots must be obtained directly from the Berks County Voter Registration Office.
- * The Township Office will be closed on November 2, 2021 (Municipal Election).

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Berks County Election Services (Berks County Voter Registration Office)
Berks County Services Center, 633 Court Street, 1st Floor, Reading, PA 19601
Phone: (610) 478-6490, Website: www.co.berks.pa.us/elections

SENATOR BOB MENSCH'S OFFICE (24th District—Senator-Majority Caucus Chair)

As State Senator for the 24th Senatorial District, I want to remind you that my office is available to offer state-related services for you and your family. Below are some services that may be of interest to you. If you have any questions about state matters or issues, please do not hesitate to contact my Red Hill office at 215-541-2388 or my Lansdale office at 215-368-3117 or visit <https://www.senatormensch.com/> and a staff person will assist you.

- * You can stay updated on timely information by following me on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/PASenatorBobMensch/>), Twitter (@SenatorMensch), and Instagram (SenatorMensch). You can also sign up to receive my e-newsletters at <https://www.senatormensch.com/enewsletters/>
- * I recently re-introduced my Designated Essential Family Caregivers (EFCs) in Long-Term Care Facilities legislations, which was assigned as Senate Bill 190 for the current legislative session. Currently, my bill is in the Aging and Youth Committee, which passed it unanimously last session. I will continue to provide updates as they occur on this important piece of legislation in my e-newsletters and on social media.
- * Some other legislation I have introduced includes my Medical Assistance for Workers with Disabilities bill—Senate Bill 156, First-time Homebuyers Savings Accounts—Senate Bill 157, and Providing the ability for a voter to electronically cancel their permanent absentee voter status—Senate Bill 93.
- * The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians age 65 and older; widows and widowers age 50 and older; and people with disabilities age 18 and older. The income limit is \$35,000 a year for homeowners and \$15,000 annually for renters, and half of Social Security income is excluded. Spouses, personal representatives or estates may also file rebate claims on behalf of claimants who lived at least one day in 2020 and meet all other eligibility criteria. Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program claimants now have the option to submit program applications online with the Department of Revenue's [myPATH](https://myPATH.pa.gov) system. Filing online leads to fast processing, easy direct deposit options and automatic calculators that will help you apply for your rebate. Visit myPATH.pa.gov to file your application.

It is an honor to represent you in the 24th District and I look forward to hearing from you. Sincerely, Bob Mensch Senator, 24th District Majority Caucus Chair

MESSAGE FROM THE BRANDYWINE COMMUNITY LIBRARY:

Take advantage of the free resources, books, movies, and programming the Brandywine Community Library provides by stopping in to get a library card. Signing up for a library card provides access to materials, technology and educational programming that transforms lives and strengthens our community. Visit us online at www.berkslibraries.org/branch/brandywine or in-person to see what's new. Fall programs include story times for littles and preschoolers, Saturday fun for elementary age, events for teens and homeschool/virtual students, book clubs and more. The library is open Monday and Tuesday 10-7, Wednesday and Thursday 10-5, Friday 10-4 and Saturday with curbside from 9-4 with in person library browsing from 10-3. Masks are required when entering the building.

Heather Wicke, Library Director

REPRESENTATIVE RYAN MACKENZIE'S OFFICE

(134th District—Pennsylvania House of Representatives R-Berks/Lehigh)

Providing Support for Our Local Veterans

Veterans have sacrificed greatly to preserve our freedoms. I would like to thank all those residing in the 134th Legislative District who have served, and they need to know that my office is always open to assist them with any state-related issue or concern.

Several years ago, I authored a law that was designed to waive state business startup fees for military members who transition to the civilian workforce from the United States Armed Forces, including reserve units, and the National Guard. The program is known as "Startups for Soldiers," and it eliminates the filing fees to register a new business when the registration documents are signed by a veteran or reservist and submitted with proof of the veteran's or reservist's status. In the year 2020, I am pleased to report that the program helped 3,111 individuals and saved them \$350,395 in business and professional licensing fees.

To further assist local veterans and their families, I host veterans assistance appointments every month at my district office, located at the Lower Macungie Township Administration Building, 3402 Brookside Road in Macungie. Veterans or their dependents can schedule an in-person meeting with a service officer from the American Legion to discuss issues and have questions answered about compensation, pensions, death benefits, education, and health care. Veterans do not need to be a member of the American Legion to receive this free service.

Any veteran interested in scheduling an appointment should call my office at 610-965-9933.

NATE'S CORNER

In July 2021, Rockland Township received federal funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to help deal with pandemic-related and other allowable expenses. Under the ARPA, Townships will have until December 31, 2024 to obligate the funds and until December 31, 2026 to actually spend them. Townships may use the funds for expenses in four specific categories. One of these categories is to make necessary investments in water, sewer and broadband infrastructure. The COVID-19 public health emergency has underscored the importance of universally available, high-speed, reliable and affordable broadband coverage, as millions of Americans rely on the internet to participate in, among critical activities, remote school, healthcare, and work. Recognizing the need for such connectivity, the ARPA provides funds to local governments to make necessary investments in broadband infrastructure. It is estimated that tens of millions of Americans live in areas where there is no broadband infrastructure that provides download speeds greater than 25 Mbps and upload speeds of 3 Mbps, and rural areas have disproportionately lacked sufficient broadband infrastructure. The guidelines for use of these funds states that proposed broadband projects should target unserved and underserved areas, prioritize last-mile connections, and provide download speeds of 100 Mbps and upload speeds of 20 Mbps, and these projects should be coordinated regionally. The ARPA treats users as "unserved or underserved" if they lack access to a wireline connection capable of reliably delivering at least minimum speeds of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload as households and businesses lacking this level of access are generally not viewed as being able to originate and receive high-quality voice, data, graphics, and video telecommunications. As an elected Township official who will be tasked with voting on how the ARPA funds should be spent/invested, it would be helpful to get a better understanding of how many households or areas of the Township would qualify as an "unserved or underserved" as defined by the ARPA. Therefore, please feel free to contact the Township Office via email at rocktwp1@ptd.net or via phone at 610-682-6311 to provide information to elected officials regarding download and upload speeds for your location in the Township or to provide general comments/input on using ARPA funding for investments in broadband infrastructure.

Nathan Ohlinger, Vice Chairman

ROCKLAND TOWNSHIP

41 Deysher Road, Fleetwood, PA 19522

Phone: 610-682-6311

Website: www.co.berks.pa.us/Muni/Rockland

Email: rocktwp1@ptd.net

**PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
READING, PA
PERMIT NO. 560**

Elected and Appointed Township Officials

Board of Supervisors:

David Wartenluft—Chairman
Nathan Ohlinger—Vice Chairman
Michele Albright

Township Secretary/Treasurer:

Karen Krall

Township Roadmaster:

Michael Pott

Planning Commission Members:

Richard Mazich—Chairman
William Fredericks—Vice Chairman
William McFadden
Nathan Roush
Nancy Ogden

Elected Auditors:

Elizabeth Coffin —Chairman
Jerry Keller—Secretary
Scott Ballantyne

Zoning Hearing Board:

William Schellenberger—Chairman
Robert Sodaitis
Brian Barrell
Jenifer Geisinger (Alternate)
Robert Ralston (Alternate)
Duane Bennetch (Alternate)

Emergency Management Coordinator:

Derick Wartenluft

Township Solicitor:

Jim Smith, Smith Bukowski, LLC

Township Zoning Officer/Code Enforcement Officer:

Adam Bender, Mack Engineering
P.O. Box 88
Blandon, PA 19510
(484) 529-2930

Township Building Code Official(s)/Inspector(s):

LTL Consultants, Ltd.
One Town Centre Drive, P.O. Box 241
Oley, PA 19547
(610) 987-9290

Jim Franey (Contractors Inspection Services, Inc.)
5029 Apple Lane
Mohnton, PA 19540
(610) 775-2269

Township Sewage Enforcement Officer:

LTL Consultants, Ltd.
One Town Centre Drive, P.O. Box 241
Oley, PA 19547
(610) 987-9290

Tax Collector:

Mollie Prey
(610) 987-6019

Township Engineer:

LTL Consultants, Ltd.
One Town Centre Drive, P.O. Box 241
Oley, PA 19547
(610) 987-9290