

Rockland Township
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ROCKLAND TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

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 PRIMARY

Tuesday, MAY 18, 2021
Polls open at 7:00AM and close at 8:00PM. The Township Office will be closed for the Municipal Primary.

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

March 2021 Edition

MESSAGE FROM TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR MICHELE ALBRIGHT

Happy Spring Rockland Township.

I hope this newsletter finds all Rocklander's happy, healthy and safe. We have all been challenged by the winter months and intense weather conditions. I would like to extend congratulations and thank you to the Rockland Roadmaster and crew for their hard work and sleepless nights to ensure roads were clear and safe to travel. The roads in our community have become a challenge to drive, due to volume and driving habits. Winter conditions as an added factor increased challenges. Thank you to drivers for their patience and precautionary skills.

In the September (2020) newsletter I brought to your attention that the Township is aware of current safety standards and courtesys by drivers, residents and visitors. We have been investigating ways to make our roads safer. The challenge is greater than anyone might realize. Many Rocklander's have responded to the Township with recommendations and concerns since the September newsletter. Thank you.

Use of any physical obstacles/barriers to mitigate dangerous driving such as speed bumps and stop signs or changing speed limits cannot be implemented since the roads in question are classified as State Roads. Rockland Township does not have the authority to install obstacles or barriers. We have notified and conversed with the proper authorities which governs and manages the State roads. We have reached out to local employers looking to begin a joint safety initiative. In discussions

with local employers about driving behaviors of employees, we have learned employers do not have jurisdiction outside of work hours.

This is what we have done. The Township purchased a monitor. This machine collects data, such as speed, volume of traffic and the time of day vehicles pass the monitor. The monitor is mobile, so we are able to collect data from multiple locations. The data we collect is then forwarded to the Pennsylvania State Police – based on details provided (speed, times of day violations are committed) the State Police is able to dispatch surveillance to Rockland Township and enforce the law on violators. The number of vehicles in one week sees anywhere from 10,000 to 13,000 motorized vehicles. Enforceable violations, therefore speeds above the tolerated speed settings, are high... 23% to 30% of the vehicles recorded are breaking the speed limit. Speeds recorded have reached 89mph.

Since the Pennsylvania State Police is surveilling our Township, violators are being stopped and fined. In time, the vehicles driving Rockland roads will realize speeding and poor driving habits are not acceptable behavior and will therefore opt to follow traffic laws and drive with courtesys.

Together, let's make Rockland safe.

Michele Albright, Township Supervisor

ROCKLAND TOWNSHIP'S STORMWATER ORDINANCE:

Did you know Rockland Township has a Stormwater Management Ordinance (SWM Ordinance) that also covers grading and erosion control? All "Earth Disturbance Activity" is regulated by the SWM Ordinance. Some activities are exempt. Other activities require a Minor Drainage Plan, and still others require hiring a qualified professional to prepare a Drainage Plan. This is dependent on the size and type of activity, the amount of impervious surface added and where the activity or surface is located on the lot. The Township's website (under the "Ordinances & Resolutions" and "Permits" tabs) contains specific information, or please call the Township Office, who may refer you to the Township Engineer, before undertaking any Earth Disturbance Activity.

Keep in mind, being exempt does not mean that stormwater and erosion controls need not be considered at all – it only means a written plan and written approval are not needed. Steps must still be taken so that: Natural drainage systems are preserved, existing drainage problems are not worsened, groundwater recharge is maintained, degradation of streams is prevented, and erosion and sedimentation is contained at the source. A permit could be required if any of these or other issues (as discussed in the SWM Ordinance) arise from an exempt Earth Disturbance Activity.

The SWM Ordinance defines Earth Disturbance Activity as: A construction or other human activity which disturbs the surface of land, including, but not limited to, clearing and grubbing, grading, excavations, embankments, land development, agricultural plowing or tilling, timber harvesting activities, road maintenance activities, mineral extraction, and the moving, depositing, stockpiling, or storing of soil, rock or earth materials. No Earth Disturbance Activity may proceed until either a determination is made by the Township that the project is exempt, or a Minor Drainage Plan or Drainage Plan is approved. So if you plan to build a garage, fill in a low spot in your front yard, eliminate a ditch by installing a pipe, make changes to your driveway, take down a bunch of trees to create lawn, clear and pave some extra parking, install a patio and pool area — you easily could need a permit.

Why all the concern about stormwater, grading and erosion? To some extent it is because both federal and state laws require it, but it's more than that. Federal, state and local regulations are all in an effort to protect Rockland Township's streams, neighboring property, and Township roads. Stormwater and erosion controls reduce flooding, improve groundwater recharge, prevent stream bank erosion, prevent pollution and reduce flooding of property, roads and bridges — and make for happier neighbors!

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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!

BERKS COUNTY SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION PROGRAM

- *Free to all Berks County residents
- *REGISTRATION REQUIRED
- *This is a drive thru event. All pre-registered participants must remain in their vehicle at all times.
- *NOTE: ABSOLUTELY NO LATEX PAINT WILL BE ACCEPTED. See article below for instructions for proper disposal of latex, water-based or acrylic paint.

DATE: Saturday, April 17, 2021
Governor Mifflin Intermediate School
600 Governor Drive, Shillington, PA

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

PAINT: LATEX, WATER-BASED OR ACRYLIC DISPOSAL FOR HOUSEHOLDS

SPECIAL DISPOSAL PROCEDURE: Latex, water-based or acrylic paint is not a hazardous material and should not be brought to the County's hazardous waste collections. Dry latex, water-based or acrylic paint can go in the trash. FOLLOW THESE STEPS TO GET RID OF IT SAFELY:

- 1) If there is less than an inch of paint in the can, remove the lid and air dry.
- 2) If there is more than an inch of paint in the can, mix the paint with cat litter and let it solidify. You can also use a paint hardener according to directions.
- 3) Throw the can of dried paint in the garbage. Remove the lid, but do not take the paint out of the can.

MESSAGE FROM THE BRANDYWINE COMMUNITY LIBRARY:

Brandywine Community Library is open for browsing. Curbside pickup is also available. Call 610-682-7115 to make an appointment. Email brandywinecl@berks.lib.pa.us to sign up for our monthly electronic newsletter to stay up on the latest library news and activities. You can find us on Facebook. Our website is www.berkslibraries.org/branch/brandywine.
Heather Wicke, Library Director

MESSAGE FROM LYONS VOLUNTEER FIRE CO.

The Lyons Volunteer Fire Co. No. 1 would like to thank all the residents for the generous support of our fund drive last year. Your donations help us to purchase and maintain our fire and rescue equipment to better serve our community. The year 2020 was very busy year for our volunteers. Our fire company answered a total of 295 emergency calls last year, with 150 of them in Rockland Township. Of that total, 40 were structure fires, 58 motor vehicle accidents, 16 fire alarms, 10 brush fires, 21 medical calls, 3 vehicle fires, 21 fire police requests, 51 hazmat calls, 43 trees down and public service calls, 5 water rescues and 27 miscellaneous calls. The total fire damage in Rockland Township was \$53,700.

With Spring right around the corner, we also remind all property owners to be careful when burning brush and debris piles. PLEASE DO NOT BURN ON DRY, WINDY, OR RED FLAG WARNING DAYS! A copy of the Township burning ordinance is available on the Township website.

Please watch the Merchandiser and our facebook page for upcoming fundraising dates and information. We can be reached at our station at 610-682-7936; please leave a message.

We would like to remind all residents that we still offer reflective address signs for only \$10.00, which are a great help in locating homes during an emergency.

Our dedicated crew of 30 volunteers remain ready 24/7 to serve our citizens in their time of need.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CORNER:

Wow what a winter we had this year. From the two feet of snow we received to the numerous littler storms we received, this was a winter for the record books. With that being said, thunderstorms to hurricanes, everyone needs to be weather aware this time of year. As a township we are ready to act no matter what mother nature throws on us. One of the biggest issues in Rockland Township are power outages. You never know when they could strike or how long they will last. With that being said, I have attached a piece of paper (insert in this newsletter) that I am asking any residents in Rockland Township who may need some extra assistance in the event of an emergency or natural disaster to complete it and mail back to the Township Building. You may ask well why do I have to fill this out? Well, the answer is quite simple. I would like to have a better understanding of our township residents who may require some extra assistance in the event of an emergency or natural disaster. So, in the event of a large-scale power outage throughout the township or even just a storm that went through and caused damage, I can check on those who may need some extra assistance. Lastly, I just want to remind everyone of a few safety reminders in the event a power outage is likely. Make sure you have flashlights and extra batteries, candles, and water. Also do not forget that if you are a resident who has any uninsured damage from a natural disaster, please reach out to me or the Township Building so I am made aware of it and can document it. If anyone has any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Rockland Township Emergency Management Coordinator
Derick Wartzluft
derickwartzluft@gmail.com

2021 PUBLIC TOWNSHIP MEETINGS

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETINGS

**All meetings begin at 7:00PM (unless noted otherwise)*

- APRIL 13, 2021
- MAY 11, 2021
- JUNE 8, 2021
- JULY 13, 2021
- AUGUST 10, 2021
- SEPTEMBER 14, 2021
- OCTOBER 12, 2021
- OCTOBER 29, 2021 — Budget Meeting (Begins at 2:30PM)
- NOVEMBER 9, 2021
- DECEMBER 14, 2021
- DECEMBER 28, 2021 — Year-End Meeting

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS

**All meetings begin at 7:30PM*

- MARCH 30, 2021
- APRIL 27, 2021
- MAY 25, 2021
- JUNE 29, 2021
- JULY 27, 2021
- AUGUST 31, 2021
- SEPTEMBER 28, 2021
- OCTOBER 26, 2021
- NOVEMBER 30, 2021
- *DECEMBER 21, 2021

*All meetings are held at the Rockland Township Municipal Building and are open to the public.
Check www.co.berks.pa.us/Muni/Rockland for updates and/or changes to meeting schedules.*

REPRESENTATIVE RYAN MACKENZIE'S OFFICE

(134th District—Pennsylvania House of Representatives)

MONTHLY SENIOR DAY STARTING

My district office in the Lower Macungie Township Administration Building will be offering a Senior Day, by appointment, on the third Wednesday of every month. Senior citizens living on fixed incomes are facing a lot of financial challenges. My staff can assist seniors with applications or provide more information on any programs that may be available to them at no cost, to help ease some of the stress. Please do not think you need to pay a third party for assistance with these forms.

One of the most popular programs for seniors is the Property Tax/Rent Rebate program. The 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. The deadline to file for the 2020 tax year program is June 30, 2021.

The Commonwealth also offers low-cost prescription assistance programs for older adults called PACE and PACENET. Eligibility requirements for the two programs vary slightly, but the underlying requirements are an applicant must be age 65 or older, be a Pennsylvania resident for at least 90 days, and not be enrolled in the state's Medicaid program. Yearly income requirements for PACE are \$14,500 or less for a single person and \$17,700 for a married couple. For PACENET, the yearly income limits are between \$14,500 and \$27,500 for a single person and between \$17,700 and \$35,500 for a married couple.

We can also help with programs from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) such as the reduced vehicle registration fee and handicap placards. Retirees with a total income up to \$19,500 could be eligible for a reduced vehicle registration fee of \$10 per year through PennDOT. We can file the paperwork for individuals who meet the criteria for a handicap placard and have been certified by an authorized provider.

Another program available to low-income families and individuals is the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) that offers a cash grant to pay for heating bills to those who qualify. Households in immediate danger of being without heat can also qualify for crisis grants. The cash grant is a one-time payment sent directly to the utility company/fuel provider to be credited on your bill.

There are several other services available to senior citizens. As always, seniors are welcome any time to come to the office for assistance, but I encourage older adults and their caretakers or family members to schedule an appointment for my monthly Senior Day to learn more. It will be held at my district office at the Lower Macungie Township Administration Building, 3402 Brookside Road in Macungie. Please call the office at 610-965-9933 to schedule an appointment as they are necessary.

MESSAGE FROM MOLLIE PREY, TAX COLLECTOR:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, THERE WILL BE NO TAX COLLECTOR SITTING HOURS AT THE TOWNSHIP BUILDING DURING CALENDAR YEAR 2021. Property owners are encouraged to mail real estate tax payments to the address on the face of the bill. Please mail payment in the form of a check or money order — no cash. If you desire a receipt, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope. If you have any questions, please contact Mollie Prey, 102 Orchard Rd, Fleetwood, PA 19522 at (610) 987-6019.

PA Department of Environmental Protection ON-LOT SYSTEM OPERATION & MAINTENANCE

Homeowner's Guide to Preventing Malfunctions

Homeowners can help prevent malfunctions and ensure the long-term use of their on-lot system by doing the following:

- Conserving water and reducing waste flow into the septic tank
- Having the septic tank pumped at least every 3-5 years, depending upon tank size and household size
- Avoiding putting chemicals in the septic system
- Not using the toilet to dispose of bulky, slowly decomposing wastes
- Inspecting the septic tank, pipes and drainage field annually
- Maintaining accurate records of the septic system (design, installation, location, inspections, pumping, malfunctions, repairs)
- Preventing run-off from downspouts, sump pumps and paved surfaces from getting into the septic system
- Keeping heavy vehicles, equipment and livestock away from septic system
- Not planting trees and shrubs over or close to the septic system

NATE'S CORNER

FORGEDALE BRIDGE?????

(PennDOT's Forgedale Road over Bieber Creek Bridge Replacement Project)

After hearing the results of the DOT in charge of the project and listening to all the reasons not to use "common sense and logic" to preserve Rockland Township, for the detour to be used during construction of the new bridge with no definite date to begin construction, and lots of confusion on all parts, no information can be shared with the residents of Rockland Township at this time. When more definitive information becomes available, it will be shared with the residents.

Nate Ohlinger
Township Supervisor

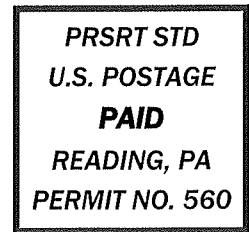
ROCKLAND TOWNSHIP

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

Email: rocktwp1@ptd.net



*NOTE: THERE WILL BE NO TAX COLLECTOR SITTING HOURS AT TOWNSHIP BUILDING DURING 2021 DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC!

Elected and Appointed Township Officials

Board of Supervisors:

David Wartzenuft—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 Wartzenuft

Township Solicitor:

Jim Smith, Smith Bukowski, LLC

Township Zoning Officer/Code Enforcement Officer:

Jackie Hollenbach, Mack Engineering
P.O. Box 88
Blandon, PA 19510
(717) 990-8448

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

ROCKLAND TOWNSHIP EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Important Information for Emergency Responders

Name: _____

Address: _____

Number of Persons in Residence: _____

Anyone in residence on oxygen? Yes / No

Anyone in residence need special assistance in the event of an emergency? Yes / No

Additional Comments: _____

It is important for Emergency Responders to have a list of residents who may require special assistance in the event of a disaster or emergency. This information will prove valuable for emergency responders to better assist you and so needed help can be provided quickly in an emergency. If you are a resident with a disability or other special needs, please complete this form and mail to: Rockland Township Emergency Management Coordinator, Derick Wartzluft, 41 Deysher Road, Fleetwood, PA 19522 or please email this information to rocktwp1@ptd.net. Thank you.