



Community Newsletter

ROSSTWP.ORG

Fall 2026

CHIMNEY FIRES

Prevention Starts Before the First Fire

As the hot days of summer are winding down, many homeowners are looking forward to cooler temperatures and using their fireplaces and wood-burning stoves. While these appliances can provide warmth and comfort, they can also create a serious fire hazard if chimneys are not properly maintained.

Chimney fires often occur when creosote—a highly combustible substance produced by burning wood—builds up inside the chimney. If the creosote ignites, temperatures can become extremely high and potentially damage the chimney or spread fire to the surrounding structure.

HOW CAN YOU PREVENT A CHIMNEY FIRE?

- Have your chimney inspected and cleaned regularly. A qualified chimney professional can identify dangerous buildup, cracks, or other problems.
- Burn only properly seasoned, dry firewood. Wet or unseasoned wood produces more smoke and can contribute to creosote buildup.
- Don't burn trash, cardboard, or other materials that are not intended for your fireplace or wood stove.

- Keep the damper open while the fire is burning to allow smoke and combustion gases to properly exit the home.
- Use a properly fitted fireplace screen to prevent sparks and embers from escaping into the room.
- Never leave a fire unattended, especially when children or pets are present.

KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS

A roaring or unusually loud fire in the chimney, excessive smoke, falling debris, or a strong burning smell can indicate a chimney fire. If you suspect a chimney fire, evacuate the home and call 911. Do not attempt to extinguish the fire yourself.



ELECTRIC AGGREGATION PROGRAM UPDATE

Ross Township's electric aggregation program will end in December 2026. After reviewing current electricity market conditions and supplier pricing, the Township's energy consultant, Energy Alliances, Inc., recommends allowing the current program to expire rather than locking residents into rates that may be higher than Duke Energy's default rate this winter.

Electricity supply rates can vary seasonally. From October through May, Duke Energy offers a lower supply rate for electricity usage above 1,000 kilowatt-hours, which may make its default rate a more cost-effective option during the winter months.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR RESIDENTS:

- The Township's electric aggregation program will end in December 2026.
- All accounts currently enrolled in the program will automatically return to Duke Energy's default generation supply.
- **No action is required by participating residents.**

Ross Township and Energy Alliances, Inc. plan to revisit the aggregation program in the spring of 2027 to evaluate opportunities for a new agreement before the summer months.

For questions or additional information, please contact the Township's energy consultant, Energy Alliances, Inc., at (513) 794-5555.

ROSS TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Fall Update

The Ross Township Police Department continues to focus on traffic safety, professional training, community engagement, and securing additional resources to better serve our residents.

TRAFFIC SAFETY GRANT

Our department received grant funding from the Ohio Traffic Safety Office to help reduce serious and fatal crashes throughout Ross Township.

During 2026, our officers participated in several traffic safety mobilization campaigns, including **Distracted Driving Awareness Month, Click It or Ticket, the July 4th Holiday Mobilization, and Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over.**

Through these grant-funded enforcement efforts, officers worked **186 hours of overtime** and conducted **217 traffic stops**, resulting in:

- 60 speeding citations
- 100 other citations and warnings
- 10 distracted driving citations
- 8 seat belt/child restraint citations
- 11 driving under suspension/no operator's license citations
- 3 OVI arrests
- 2 felony arrests

These proactive traffic enforcement efforts have contributed to Ross Township recording **zero fatal crashes in both 2025 and 2026 to date.**

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community outreach continues to be an important part of our mission. Throughout the year, our officers have participated in numerous events and activities, including **Liberty Home Oktoberfest, an American Legion visit with K9 Doro, National Night Out, the Ross High School Homecoming Parade and Dance, Fish with a Cop, the Ohio Township Association Meeting, Butler County Chiefs of Police Association Meeting, Coffee with a Cop, Critters & Cruisers Car Show, and the Butler County Sheriff's Office 9/11 Tribute,** just to name a few.



Through these events and partnerships, our department has had the opportunity to connect with **thousands of residents and community members throughout Ross Township and Butler County.**

INVESTING IN OUR OFFICERS

Training remains a priority for the Ross Township Police Department. So far this year, our officers have completed approximately **195 hours of specialized and professional training.**

Recent training has included:

- **Sgt. Liddil** – Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT) training
- **Officer Back, Officer Hamblin, and Officer Watson** – Active Shooter Response Training
- **Officer Martin** – Close Quarters Concepts Training
- **Sgt. Liddil and K9 Blitz** – Successful recertification as a K9 team

Continued training ensures our officers remain prepared, knowledgeable, and ready to respond to the wide variety of situations they may encounter while serving our community.



MORE THAN \$342,000 IN GRANT FUNDING

Did you know that during **Chief Robert Gerhardt's two-year tenure**, he has secured more than **\$342,000 in grant funding** for the Ross Township Police Department?

These grants have helped provide equipment, training, traffic safety initiatives, and additional resources for the department. Most importantly, this funding helped make it possible to **add an additional full-time police officer to our streets**, increasing our ability to serve and protect the Ross Township community.

We are proud of the progress our department continues to make and appreciate the ongoing support of our residents, township leadership, community organizations, and local partners.

ROSS TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

A Commitment to Fiscal Responsibility



Firefighter Simon conducts oil and filter change on E101-repairs and preventative maintenance done in-house saves thousands of dollars each year and ensures our apparatus are ready to go at a moment's notice.

The Ross Township Fire Department recognizes that we have a responsibility not only to provide the highest level of emergency services possible, but also to be good stewards of the tax dollars entrusted to us by you – our customers.

We recognize that fiscal responsibility and customer service go hand in hand. The taxpayers of Ross Township make it possible for us to provide these services, and we have an obligation to ensure that their investment is managed carefully, efficiently, and responsibly.

Over the past several years, we have worked diligently to manage increasing costs while maintaining the services our residents depend on. Like many organizations, we have experienced significant increases in the cost of equipment, apparatus, insurance, training, maintenance, and other operational expenses. Despite these challenges, we remain committed to making thoughtful and responsible financial decisions.

One example of our fiscal responsibility is applying for grants to replace aging or outdated equipment. This year we were able to replace the following equipment with grant money:

- Mobile radios for the apparatus
- Rope rescue equipment
- Turnout gear
- Gas meters
- Knox Key secures

The fire department also received grants that will go toward EMS supplies & equipment and cover the



Rope Rescue equipment purchased with a grant from Duke Energy; this replaced nearly 20-year-old rope & gear—well beyond its recommended service life.



Chief Johns & Firefighter Baker accept a grant "check" from Ross Community Foundation used to replaced aging gas meters.

cost of the Fire & Emergency Service Instructor course for one of our Lieutenants.

Our approach to apparatus and equipment replacement is one example of this philosophy. Proper planning allows the department to anticipate future needs, establish replacement schedules, and avoid making costly emergency purchases. Investing in equipment at the appropriate time can also help prevent increased maintenance costs and protect the reliability of our emergency response capabilities. In the very near future, we will have to replace a 12-year-old medic unit and a 29-year-old engine—equipment that well exceeds our budget, but equipment we must replace to ensure we can deliver the service you deserve and keep our personnel safe.

Fiscal responsibility does not mean simply spending less. It means spending wisely. Our goal is to ensure that every dollar entrusted to YOUR Fire Department is used in a manner that provides the greatest possible benefit to the residents of Ross Township.

We appreciate the continued support and trust of our community. Our commitment is to remain transparent, responsible, and forward-thinking while providing the dependable fire and emergency services our residents deserve.

Thank you for your continued support of YOUR Ross Township Fire Department.

MIAMI ERIE YOUNG MARINES – RED RIBBON WEEK

Each October, the Miami Erie Young Marines participate in Red Ribbon Week, a nationwide campaign dedicated to raising awareness about drug prevention and encouraging youth, families, schools, and communities to promote healthy, drug-free lifestyles.

As part of Red Ribbon Week, the Miami Erie Young

Marines will be placing red ribbons on appropriate light posts and/or trees in downtown Ross. The ribbons will serve as a visible reminder of our community's commitment to drug prevention, healthy choices, and supporting our youth.

For more information please contact Miami Erie Young Marines at (513) 828-5783.



4055 Hamilton Cleves Road
Fairfield, Ohio 45014

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ROSS TOWNSHIP CONTACTS

TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES:

Donald Bennett W 513-863-2337x114 C 513-713-2043

Andrea Hatten..... W 513-863-2337x113..... C 513-905-9578

Russell A. McGurkin..... W 513-863-2337x110 C 513-413-8840

FISCAL OFFICER:

Julie Joyce-Smith
W 513-863-2337x112

ADMINISTRATOR:

Laurie Kile
W 513-863-2337x111

NON-EMERGENCY:

Police Chief Robert Gerhardt..... W 513-863-2337x130

Fire Chief Chris Johns W 513-863-3410x150

Road Superintendant Paul Bulach W 513-863-2337x180

Police Department..... W 513-863-2337
4055 Hamilton Cleves Rd.

Fire Station #1..... W 513-275-1463
2565 Cincinnati-Brookville Rd.

Fire Station #2..... W 513-863-3410
1308 Ross Millville Rd.

SCHOOL NUMBERS:

Ross Local Schools

District Offices 513-863-1253

Morgan Elementary 513-738-1986

Elda Elementary 513-738-1972

Ross Middle School 513-863-1251

Ross High School 513-863-1252

Private Schools

Stephen T. Badin High School 513-863-3993

St. Joseph Elementary 513-863-8758

St. Peter in Chains 513-863-0685

Queen of Peace Elementary 513-863-8705

OTHER IMPORTANT NUMBERS:

Butler County Building & Zoning 513-887-3205

MRAA 513-738-1392

Rumpke..... 800-828-8171

EMERGENCY DIAL 911