



EAST NOTTINGHAM TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2007

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Letter from the Staff



Much of this newsletter is focused on community. It addresses how townships are structured, who manages the township, and issues that are important to the residents of the township. If you look at the township directory published in the winter newsletter, you will see a lot of people that work hard to make our township a great place to live, but it represents only a portion of the tasks required to keep things running smoothly. You also might notice, that sometimes names are repeated from one committee to another showing us that we need more community members to get involved in the township.

The township administration deals with many issues from residents on a daily basis – complaints, compliments, requests for services, questions on policies – it is a lot of work, and the township is growing! Whether you are new or old to the township, we live here now and should all do the best job we can to make this community one that we love. Everyone has great ideas, so please take the time to share them with your community. Attend township meetings, get to know your Supervisors, stop in the township building and get to know the faces of the staff. If you see a void, volunteer to fill it. You may question what you can contribute, but remember everyone has a useful skill. Sometimes interest and commitment are what is needed most. There are many volunteer positions available on township committees and the need will only get bigger. If you are interested in keeping ENT a great place to live, contact the newsletter staff or the township office for more information.

to help you better understand this form of local government. Before discussing townships, though, it's probably best to start with an overview of Pennsylvania's entire local government system, which is divided into four types of political subdivisions: cities, counties, boroughs, and, of course, townships.

Pennsylvania's founder, William Penn, established these units of government, which share the same basic statutory powers and public service responsibilities. Under law, the commonwealth's political subdivisions are divided into classes, which are based strictly on population. Currently, there are nine classes of counties, four classes of cities, and two classes of townships.

Pennsylvania has 1,456 townships of the second class, which encompass more land and have more residents than any of the state's other political subdivisions. An elected board of supervisors, whose members serve six-year terms and must live in the township, governs your community. Each board has a chairman, but this person has no more power than the other supervisors.

Townships are the oldest form of municipal government in the United States and have a deep-rooted history in Pennsylvania, with some dating back to the 1600s. In the early days, township supervisors primarily oversaw the maintenance of local roads. And while this continues to be one of their top priorities, township supervisors today have many more responsibilities. Jacks of all trades, township supervisors in the 21st century are hands-on local leaders who must be well-schooled in a wide range of complex issues, such as land use management, budgeting, transportation planning, and environmental concerns.

And because they live and may even work in the communities they represent, township supervisors are on call around the clock. In fact, it is not unusual for supervisors to field phone calls from residents during dinner and to plow roads into the early hours of the morning.

Township supervisors hold public meetings at least once a month, and it is at these sessions that they discuss the issues and make the decisions that have the most impact on you and your neighbors. Under the law, citizens have the right to address the board about matters before it. When deciding on a course of action, the supervisors will weigh your concerns along with their responsibilities under state and federal laws.

"Township government is the government closest to the people," says Richard Hadley, president of the Pennsylvania State Association of Township

If you have a question or comment, please contact the editor at enteditor@zoominternet.net.

Townships Today: News from PSATS

As many as 5.4 million Pennsylvanians live in townships, and you're one of them. But what do you really know about the place you call home? Do you know the names of your township supervisors? Have you ever been to one of their meetings? Do you know where the township building is and have you ever visited it?

If you are shaking your head "no," you are not alone. Townships remain a mystery to some people, despite the fact that nearly half of the state's population has put down roots there. So what exactly is a township? Well, here is some valuable information

Supervisors and a supervisor for Cranberry Township. "Residents can speak up at a township meeting and have a profound impact on what happens in their community. This happens every day in Pennsylvania because township supervisors are responsive to the needs and concerns of their neighbors."

To help with the administrative side of running a local government, most townships have full or part-time secretaries, secretary-treasurers, or managers. And depending on their size, they may also have additional staff, including road workers, police officers, zoning and code enforcement officers, engineers, and park and recreation professionals, to help with the township's day-to-day operations.

Still, despite their popularity with Pennsylvanians, townships have come under fire in recent years. Special-interest groups claim that the Commonwealth has too many local governments and would be better served by a centralized system of fewer, bigger governments. This, however, goes against the grain of what the public says it wants. According to a survey of registered Pennsylvania voters by the Lincoln Institute of Public Opinion, 80 percent of the respondents said that their local government should not be replaced with a countywide government.

Rural Living



Living in a rural area has its advantages – peace and quiet, friendly neighbors, and fresh air, but it is certainly not immune to crime. Remote and isolated areas have always faced a special vulnerability to crime because of relatively unprotected, and sometimes poorly lit, properties and infrequent law enforcement patrols. High-value construction equipment used in the building of new houses in ENT creates more visibility to burglars and vandals for the building sites and their neighbors. But here are some simple steps to lessen the chances of becoming a target of burglary:

- Keep machinery and vehicles near the residence in a visible, well-lighted area. Lock all vehicles.
- Keep valuable tools, lawn equipment, and portable machinery in sturdy outbuildings or bins and secure them with locks.
- Keep all doors (house, barn, sheds, etc.) closed and locked when not in use. Close your garage doors when you leave the house.
- Make your home look\$ and sound\$ occupied. When you are away, leave your drapes and shades in their normal position. At night, leave on an inner light and use automatic timers to turn lights and radios on and off.
- Install deadbolt locks on the doors of your residence; secure sliding glass doors with a "Charley Bar" and install locks on all windows.
- Do not leave keys to your house or buildings

hidden outside, and do not leave messages for visitors posted on your door.

But nothing can do as more for crime prevention than community involvement. A representative from the Pennsylvania State Police says during a crime investigation, an important question is "Did you check with your neighbor to see if he or she observed anything?", but the answer many times is, "I don't know my neighbor." One of the most important steps to crime prevention is to know your neighbors.(.) Know the cars they drive so you are alerted when a strange car shows up occasionally.(.) Make a mental note of work schedules, watch over your neighbors' property and inform them of any suspicious activity. Also, summer vacations can leave your residence unoccupied for long periods of time so be sure to notify your neighbors when you will be away and do not advertise your absence to the entire community – make sure the property is maintained during your absence, mail and newspapers are removed on a regular basis, and place outside lights on a timer to light the property.

Many of our subdivisions might consider a Neighborhood Watch program. This community crime prevention program is one of the most effective and inexpensive methods to dramatically reduce the burglary and break-in rate in your neighborhood. Below is a checklist for what your neighborhood will need when establishing a Watch:

- A person or group of people committed to starting a Neighborhood Watch to initiate the program.
- A list of what issues initially need to be addressed in your community.
- A means of communicating with the residents, e-mail, fliers, telephone trees.
- A meeting agenda to keep things on track.
- A map of the community with spaces for names, addresses, and phone numbers of all households.
- A sign-up sheet for those interested in becoming block or building captains.
- Brochures or other materials on topics of interest.
- Facts about crime in your neighborhood. (These can be found in police reports, newspapers, and residents' perception about crime. Often opinions are not supported by facts, and accurate information can reduce fear of crime.)
- A crime prevention officer to discuss crime issues in the neighborhood and to help train members.

Remember to involve everyone – young and old, single and married, renter and homeowner. Your group may conclude that an organized Watch is more than you need or is too much work, but it is still worthwhile to just gather with your neighbors for a discussion about crime. Stress that a simple group of neighbors can look out for each other's families and property, alert the police to any suspicious activities or

crime in progress, and work together to make their community a safer and better place to live.

If **Whether** you choose to organize or not, take the opportunity to meet each other and understand just how important knowing your neighbors can be! For more information and brochures, visit www.ncpc.org and select publications.

Is your community interested in starting a Neighborhood Watch? If so, let us know so we can track interest and perhaps involve the Pennsylvania State Police in an educational presentation. Contact us by e-mail to enteditor@zoominternet.net.

Getting the Lead Out

If you want to get rid of an old computer, VCR, or video game system, and do not want to dump it in an landfill, where it can leach lead, mercury, and other toxins, then check out **Use It Again, PA!**, a new online resource center for electronics reuse and recycling. Located at www.useitagainpa.org, it is a searchable guide to businesses that rent, repair, or sell used electronics statewide.

The billions of pounds of electronic waste, or "e-waste," that will end up in landfills and incinerators over the next few years poses a serious threat to the environment and public health, says the Clean Air Council, a statewide environmental organization. "Electronic equipment nearly always includes a toxic component, such as cadmium, lead, mercury, or a combination of them," council program director Emily Linn says. "When electronics are buried in a landfill or burned in an incinerator, toxics are released into the air, land, and water. Exposure to them can lead to serious brain and nervous system damage, developmental delays and birth defects in newborn children, and cancer."

Use It Again, PA! will help you find local electronic recyclers, national donation-based charities, and industry take-back programs, and provides general information on electronics recycling and reuse, current legislation, and the harmful effects of e-waste on the environment and public health.

Consider the following facts provided by the state Department of Environmental Protection:

- By 2007, there will be from 315 million to 600 million obsolete computers in the United States, about 75 percent of which will be stored in households, offices, and warehouses.
- Those obsolete computers contain more than 1 billion pounds of lead, 1.9 billion pounds of cadmium, 1.2 million pounds of chromium, and nearly 400,000 pounds of mercury.
- Consumer electronics, including digital cameras, computers, VCRs, TVs, and cell phones, account for 40 percent of the lead found in landfills.

Electronics recycling is available locally. SECCRA will hold its annual electronics recycling day on September 8, 2007, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the SECCRA Community Landfill on Route 926 in Chatham. Electronics such as televisions, stereos, calculators, computers, and cell phones and will be accepted and personnel will be on hand to help you unload your items. This event is free for all who reside in SECCRA's service area. Visit www.seccra.org for more information.

The Chester County Solid Waste Authority also holds events at different sites throughout the year. The CCSWA will hold its next hazardous household waste and computer recycling event on October 6, 2007, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Government Services Center in West Chester. Visit www.chestercountyswa.org for more information.

The Oxford Fair is Back in Town!



Labor Day Weekend
Thursday, August 30 thru Monday, September 3

The Oxford Area Recreation Authority (OARA) brings back the excitement and family fun of **The Oxford Fair** to the Oxford Area Regional Park on Locust Street. In addition to food, rides, and entertainment, this year exhibitors can compete for prize money and ribbons in such categories as vegetables, home produced products, floral exhibits, and antique farm equipment. It promises to be a fun time for all!

For details on the fair, visit the website, www.theoxfordfair.org. The OARA is looking crafters, food vendors, and volunteers. So if you would like to sell your goods or just lend a helping hand at the Oxford Fair, please contact the appropriate committee below. Thank you for your interest!

The Oxford Fair
Attn: Craft/Vendor Coordinator
P. O. Box 254
Oxford, PA 19363
Vendor@TheOxfordFair.org
410-608-4276

The Oxford Fair
Attn: Food Coordinator
P. O. Box 254
Oxford, PA 19363
Food@TheOxfordFair.org

The Oxford Fair
Attn: Volunteer Coordinator
P.O. Box 254
Oxford, PA 19363
Volunteer@TheOxfordFair.org

The Chester County Department of Emergency Services provided the following information for safe summer grilling.

With the warmer weather approaching, outdoor cooking will increase. Charcoal and gas fueled grills cause almost 1,000 structure fires a year and an additional 3,500 related outside fires. Gas grills have a higher fire risk than charcoal grills. Leaks and breaks in the gas cylinder or hose are the leading causes and account for nearly half of the gas grill fires. Combustibles too close to heat and unattended cooking are the two leading causes for charcoal grill home structure fires. Half of all gas grill and charcoal grill home structure fires start on an exterior balcony or unenclosed porch. It is important to remember to grill outside and well away from your home.

- Gas and charcoal BBQ grills must be used outdoors. If used indoors, or in enclosed spaces, such as tents or garages, they pose fire hazard and possible asphyxiation and carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Keep the grill well away from siding, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- Keep children and pets away from grilling area as well as traffic areas.
- Remove all grease buildup.

Charcoal Grills



- Purchase the proper starter fluid and store the container out of reach of children and away from heat sources.
- Never add charcoal starter fluid when the coals have already been ignited. Never use any flammable or combustible liquid other than charcoal lighter fluid.

Gas Grills



Check the gas cylinder hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year. A light soap and water solution applied to the hose will quickly reveal escaping propane by releasing bubbles. (This must be done while the tank is

on). If you determine your grill has a gas leak, by smell or the presence of bubbles during the test and there is no flame:

- Turn off the gas tank and grill.
- If the leak stops, get the grill serviced by a professional before using it again.
- If the leak does not stop, call '9-1-1'.
- If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call '9-1-1'. Do not attempt to move the grill.
- All gas cylinders manufactured after April 2002 must have overfill protection devices (OPD). Their triangular shaped hand wheel identifies these.
- Use only UL listed equipment.
- Never store propane gas cylinders in buildings or garages. If you store a gas grill inside at any time, disconnect the cylinder and leave it outside.

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2007 Meeting Dates	
Supervisors	Monday, August 13
Planning Commission	Monday, August 27
	Monday, Sept. 10
	Monday, Sept. 24
	Monday, Oct. 8
	Monday, Oct. 22

All meetings are at 7 pm at the Twp. Bldg.

Visit Us on the Web
www.eastnottingham.org



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