

BERN TOWNSHIP



in the news.....

FALL 2023

There is a New Chief in Town

Effective as of June 17, Bern Township Police Chief Wesley R. Waugh officially retired from law enforcement after more than 43 years of service.

Chief Waugh began his career with the Pennsylvania State Police in 1979. During Chief Waugh's tenure with PSP, he served in many different capacities in Somerset, Greensburg, Dushore, Tunkhannock, Butler, Reading, Schuylkill Haven, Hazleton, Harrisburg, and Hershey.

After serving as the commanding officer of Troop N, Hazleton, Chief Waugh was promoted to the rank of Major in 1997, directing the Bureaus of Emergency and Special Operations, Technology Services, and Research and Development. Chief Waugh is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and holds a Master of Science in Administration of Justice. He currently is instructing public safety administration topics at the collegiate level.

In 2012, Bern Township hired Chief Waugh to lead the department, which he did for the past eleven years.

We wish Chief Waugh and his family the best of luck in future endeavors, and thank him for his decades of dedicated service! If you need him, he can be found on the Chesapeake Bay living the dream!

We are happy to announce that Brett A. Forry has been selected to lead the Bern Township Police Department moving forward. Chief Forry is a Tulpehocken area native and a Penn State graduate. Prior to Chief Forry's start with Bern Township, he worked for Blue Marsh Lake as a Park Ranger and was a Probation Officer for Berks County.

(Continued on Page 3)

Welcome our New Township Detective

We are happy to announce that on July 3, 2023 the Bern Township Board of Supervisors promoted Patrolman Joshua Santos to the position of Detective. Santos is a Fleetwood native and has over 12 years of full-time law enforcement experience. He obtained his Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from Albright College.

Prior to Santos's start with Bern Township, he proudly served in the 28th Infantry Division of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard at the rank of Sergeant. Santos also completed a nine-month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Santos started his law enforcement career with the Loudoun County Sheriff's Department in Virginia where he was part of the Rapid Response Unit. He then found his way back to Berks County where he worked for the Upper Macungie Township Police Department before being hired in January of 2018 with Bern Township.

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BERN TOWNSHIP

1069 Old Bernville Road
Reading, PA 19605

Hours: Mon-Thur 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Fri - 8:30 am to 12 pm

Phone: (610) 926-2267

Fax: (610) 926-9028

www.berntownship.org

TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS

Brian S. Eveland	610-587-0077
Irene Reed	610-926-7621
Jeff Thompson	610-371-9411
Dan Tobias	610-375-1664
Boyd C. Wagner	610-372-2121

SUPERVISORS MEETING

1st Tuesday of the Month - 7:00 pm

Township Staff

Brian Potts	Manager
Diane DeJesus	Secretary / Treasurer
Brett Forry	Chief of Police

Township Contacts

LTL Consultants 610-987-9290	Building Inspector / Zoning Officer
Lori Hozza 610-916-9919	Municipal Authority
Jamie Jamison 610-916-8955	Tax Collector
Systems Design 610-916-8500	Sewage Officer
Kevin Hinkle For emergencies call 911	Emergency Management

Non-Emergency for Police, Fire, Rescue & Medical
610-655-4911

Township Monthly Meetings

Planning Commission	2nd Tuesday at 7:30 pm
Municipal Authority	4th Wed. at 11:00 am
Solid Waste Commission	Meeting dates as needed
Zoning Hearing Board	Meeting dates as needed
Recreation Board	Meeting dates as needed

POLLING PLACES

1st Precinct	Bern Township Municipal Building
2nd Precinct	Ontelaunee Grange Hall
3rd Precinct	Greenfields Fire Co. Social Hall

TRASH COLLECTION INFO

Bern Township Trash Collection Districts:
Greenfields / Riveredge Acres

Orchard Hill Area

(West Leesport & Rick Road)

Bern Manor Area

(Prison Road, Kercher & Mull Ave, Burdan Drive)

Willows Area

(Cathy & Christina Drive, Almark Way)

Northwest Area

(Ziegler, Park Roads, Brossman Court,
Robby Drive)

About Bern Trash Collections:

*Every week - six (6) 35 gallon bags or cans per household, one (1) bulk item per week allowed
NO items containing Freon, automotive tires, hazardous waste, oil or epoxy paint cans or construction material. Please use lids on cans.*

Collection Dates:

Sept. 5, 11, 18, 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30;

Nov. 6, 13, 20, 27; Dec. 4, 11, 18, 26;

Jan. 2, 8, 15, 22, 29; Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26;

Mar. 4, 11, 18, 25; Apr. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

CALL 610-926-2267 the day of collection to report a missed trash collection - messages can be left on the answering machine until midnight

RECYCLING COLLECTION INFO

About Bern Recycling Collections:

Every other week. Please use lids on cans.

DO NOT USE PLASTIC BAGS!

Place #1 and #2 plastics, tin, Bi-metal and aluminum cans in your recycling container.

*NO GLASS. Place newspapers in paper bags or bundle. Cut cardboard and place in paper bags or bundle. **Items NOT collected for recycling:** glass, paint cans, tires, styrofoam, plastics #3 thru #7, batteries or large appliances.*

Collection Dates:

District #1:

Sept. 8, 21; Oct. 5, 19; Nov. 2, 16, 30;

Dec. 14, 29; Jan. 11, 25; Feb. 8, 22;

Mar. 7, 21; Apr. 4, 18

District #2:

Sept. 14, 28; Oct. 12, 26; Nov. 9, 24;

Dec. 7, 21; Jan. 5, 18; Feb. 1, 15, 29;

Mar. 14, 28; Apr. 11, 25

CALL 610-926-2267 the day of collection to report a missed recycling collection - messages can be left on the answering machine until midnight

Bern Township



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New Chief in Town (Continued From Page 1)

Chief Forry started his law enforcement career with the Penn State University Police before being hired in 2003 with Bern. In 2011, he was promoted to the rank of Sergeant where he supervised 8 patrol officers. In 2018, he became the Detective Sergeant and handled criminal investigations in addition to his supervisory responsibilities. He is with the Township for 20 and a half years.

In addition to the normal police supervisor responsibilities, Chief Forry was also an Assistant Team Leader for the BCERT Crisis Negotiations Team and a cross-sworn Berks County Detective.

Chief Forry is married to Heather, who works as a Registered Nurse for the Veteran's Affairs Hospital. Their daughter recently graduated High School and will be playing soccer for Penn State University come Fall. Chief Forry's son enlisted in the United States Coast Guard in 2021 and is currently assigned to Jonesport Maine as a Machinery Technician 3rd Class.

Please join us in welcoming Chief Forry and wishing him and his family the best of luck! ❖

Township Detective (Continued from Page 1)

In addition to normal police responsibilities in Bern Township, Santos is a member of the Berks County Emergency Response Crisis Negotiations Team and is a cross-sworn Berks County Detective with the County Drug Task Force.

Please join us in congratulating Detective Santos and wishing him the best of luck in his new position. ❖

Please help to support your newsletter by purchasing ad space. Please call 610-926-2267 for information. We thank the businesses that have supported your newsletter

Welcome our New Sewage Enforcement Officer

For those of us that do not have public sewer systems and instead have on-site sewage systems such as septic systems, cesspools or holding tanks, we have important news for you.

Berks Enviro Tech has been the township's consultant for many years in helping residents and businesses with the on-site sewage systems. However, as of August 1, 2023, they unfortunately have closed their doors and have gone out of business.

The township has hired Systems Design Engineering, Inc. to take the duties of helping property owners with their on-site sewage systems. This company has four certified individuals with many years of experience. The company is located in Bern Township at 1032 James Drive, Leesport, PA 19533. If you need their services, they can be reached at 610-916-8500.

We are pleased to add Systems Design Engineering, Inc. to our consultant panel and look forward to working with them. ❖



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Our Cosmetology Clinic is open for business **Every Friday and Every 2nd and 4th Thursday..... We open at 8:15 & 12:15**

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Bern Township

Fall Curbside Collection Schedule

The residential curbside collection of leaf and yard waste begins on Monday, October 18 and continues until Friday, December 10. Be prepared and plan ahead so that you do not miss the opportunity to have your material collected.

Please follow these helpful tips:

Do not place branches, sticks or other yard waste in your leaf piles.

- LEAF PILES WILL NOT BE COLLECTED IF THERE ARE STICKS IN THEM.
- Place leaves in one pile at the curb, away from mailboxes and flower beds OR place leaves in biodegradable bags at the curb.
- Garden waste must be placed in biodegradable bags.
- Plastic bags will not be collected.
- Collections will not be made on rainy days.
- Branches and sticks are to be bundled. Bundles should not exceed 4 feet in length and not exceed 40 pounds.
- Place your material at the curb or street line **before** the scheduled collection week for your area.

You do not need to call the township to request collections in the fall unless you are using biodegradable bags. The Road Department will make collections per the following pre-set schedule:

Monday, Oct. 18 to Friday, Oct. 22
Greenfields Precinct

Monday, Oct. 25 to Friday, Oct. 29:
Schuylkill Precinct
Grange Precinct
County Precinct

Monday, Nov. 1 to Friday, Dec. 10:
Greenfields Precinct
Schuylkill Precinct
Grange Precinct
County Precinct

Please take your live Christmas tree to the Township Drop-Off area on Hilltop Road.

The road department **WILL NOT** return after December 10. **PLEASE PLAN ACCORDINGLY!**

If you are not sure which precinct you are located in, please refer to the recycling flyer that was sent out at the beginning of this year. If you cannot find it, visit our website, stop by the township building to get another copy or call the township to ask. ❖

Recycling Dumpster

Please be advised that the recycling dumpster behind the township building has been removed and that service is now discontinued.

Too often we were finding trash, construction debris and recyclables placed on the ground when the container was full. There were a few occasions when the road crew had to go into the neighbor's properties to clean up after thunderstorms had scattered the recycling on the ground. The road crew also constantly had to pull trash and debris out of the container. This took up valuable time and prevented the road crew from accomplishing the tasks that they are here to do. We had the dumpster scheduled to be emptied every week, but due to the volume it was not enough.

We encourage you to use the county recycling facility on Hilltop Road if you have additional household recyclables to dispose. ❖

Township Receives Grant From DEP

Bern Township submitted a grant application to DEP in October of 2022 for funding to improve our recycling program. We received a letter from DEP on July 1 stating that our grant application has been approved. We thank DEP for providing financial assistance to our community.

The grant award is for \$311,057.00. This money will be put towards a new backhoe and a grapple bucket for our wheel loader. The funding will also allow us to make our yard waste site on Hilltop Road secure by installing fencing, gates, a camera monitoring system, a key card system to operate the gates and a computer and software program to administer the access cards. The center will also be expanded to increase the capacity of yard waste that it can hold.

We have been subject to illegal dumping at the center and the associated costs have risen by 123% in just three years. So, unfortunately, we will have to institute a restricted access system at the center and issue key cards to residents. There will be a small cost for the key cards. While the DEP grant covers most costs for this project, the township will also need to provide funding to complete the work required for the new center.

DEP will be sending us a contract to sign in the near future. We will begin planning the work after the paperwork is completed. ❖

Bern Township

Animal Rescue League

The Animal Rescue League of Berks County has been selected as your municipality's Animal Control provider for 2023. As the county's largest and busiest shelter with a dedicated Animal Control Team on-call 24/7/365 days a year, the ARL is uniquely positioned to handle the management of stray domesticated animals found within Bern Township, as well as providing a resource for handling dangerous, rabid, injured, or ill domesticated animals; help with dog bite cases; timely police assistance; and proven methods to address the outdoor community cats to control the population. We're pleased to offer professional animal control services and animal-holding services to residents. As part of the contract with Bern Township, the ARL will provide the following:

- Animal-holding services for stray domestic animals regardless of behavior, medical or capacity status. No extra charges for veterinary care or condition of the animal. Limited, emergency-only transportation available for aggressive or severely injured domestic animals. We pursue contact of owner.
- Community access to reduced-price microchips, vaccines, or spay/neuter clinics. ARL pursuit of animal-related grants to expand these services and offer them at low cost or free to eligible municipal residents.
- Comprehensive and targeted spay/neuter, vaccination and microchipping programming to control and reduce the free-roaming community cat population. Outcomes can include adoption or Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR).
- Access to an ARL representative during business hours for community members regarding humane law, animal control and non-cruelty concerns. The ARL unburdens local police departments and municipal township answering services from these calls and offers your residents access to a representative during business hours, 7 days a week. When the call volume is high, please be sure to leave a message.
- Emergency overnight service, 24/7/365 days a year, including nights and holidays. No extra charges for veterinary care or condition of the animal. Limited, emergency-only transportation is available for aggressive or severely injured domestic animals or by request of a police officer. We pursue contact of the pet's owners.

- Enforce Dog Law with Pennsylvania State Certified Humane Law Officers, including dogs at large, dog bites, dog licenses, and cat/dog vaccinations.
- Support state health department with investigation/confirmation of dog/cat bites/scratches; and implementation, compliance, and completion of home/shelter quarantines.
- Priority access to owners who wish to surrender their pets (\$50 fee charged directly to owner).
- Pickup of rabid, seriously injured, diseased or dangerous domestic animals. Testing of rabid domestic animals.
- Emergency response by an ARL representative 24/7/365 days a year, including holidays.
- **Removal and transport of animals following evictions or involved in accidents are not included in this agreement.**
- **Transporting, for animal-holding services for stray domestic cats and dogs regardless of behavior, medical or capacity status, is not included in this agreement.**

To learn more about the Animal Control Services provided by the ARL, please visit <https://berksarl.org/animal-control-service-areas>. To request a service, please contact 610-373-8830 ext. 205 or email pethelp@berksarl.org.

In addition to the Animal Control Services, ARL's Department of Animal Protection provides animal cruelty and humane investigation to companion and farm animals throughout Berks County. If you or someone you know witnesses or suspects an animal is being abused or neglected, contact the ARL immediately at 610-373-8830 ext. 400 or submit a complaint at <https://berksarl.org/animal-cruelty-and-humane-investigation>. ❖

Communication Information

The township sends email blasts to inform the residents about current issues of the day. All email addresses are kept confidential. If you would like to sign up for this service, please call the township building at 610-926-2267 to provide your email address and street address. You can stay informed of road closings, emergency alerts, trash and recycling schedule changes, and other items. ❖

Bern Township

Berks County Recycling News:
www.co.berks.pa.us/swa

Electronic Waste & Tire Recycling:
Tuesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays
8:00 am to Noon **Fees apply for tires**
County Recycling Center
1316 Hilltop Road, Bern Township

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Date:
Pre-Registration Required
October 21, 2023
Berks County Agricultural Center
1238 County Welfare Road, Leesport

Paper Shredding:
Pre-Registration Required
October 14, 2023
Berks County Agricultural Center
1238 County Welfare Road, Leesport

Please visit www.co.berks.pa.us/swa for more information.

Please note – latex paint is not a hazardous material and should not be brought to the county hazardous waste collections. Dry latex, water based, or acrylic paint can go in the trash. Follow these steps to get rid of it safely: If there is less than an inch of paint in the can, remove the lid and air dry. 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. Throw the can of dried paint in the garbage. Remove the lid, but do not take the paint out of the can. ❖

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Winter Season is Approaching!

We are already past the halfway point of 2023. Does it seem like yesterday that we were shoveling snow? That time is approaching again to the objection of our backs and muscles. During times of snowfall, the road department will start plowing the streets when the accumulation reaches two (2) inches or more. We ask that residents cooperate by removing vehicles from the streets if possible in order for the road crew to properly clean the streets with plows. With less vehicles on the street, the roads can be cleaned faster as the plow trucks do not have to weave in and out of parked cars and the end result will be a cleaner street.

The road crew has the task of cleaning the Township streets of snow to make them as safe and as clear as possible. Sometimes, there is enough snow that piles are created along street edges as there is nowhere else to go with it. Please be aware that as the road crew cleans your streets, they are faced with the same situation at their homes as well and they have sidewalks and driveways waiting for them also. While they are paid to do their jobs, there are many instances where they arrive to work at 2:00 am or 3:00 am to begin the task of making your streets clear in the best manner that they can. Please keep this in mind the next time you see the plow truck coming down your street.

During snow emergencies, all vehicles must be moved off the designated snow emergency routes. The emergency routes are marked by street signage. If vehicles are on the emergency routes during a snow emergency, the police department will have the right to have the vehicle towed at the owner's expense. The Township makes every effort to call snow emergencies early enough in a snowfall in order to give residents as much time as possible to move vehicles.

Please remember to move any basketball devices away from the street so the snowplows do not hit them. If you have a fire hydrant in front of your house, you are responsible to shovel it open so that firefighters can get to it quickly if there is a fire.

Finally, please remember to keep your trash and recycling containers out of the street during snowfalls so that they are not mistakenly plowed away or struck by plows. Also, please do not throw snow back into the street after they have been plowed. This creates an unsafe condition in the street. ❖

Bern Township

BERN TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY NEWS

BTMA's Forms for Automated Clearing House are available on the Bern Township website, berntownship.org, or by requesting a form at the office either by phone, in person or by email.

If the form is completed and returned by the 20th of the month, your next BTMA bill can be deducted from your account on or around the due date of that next bill. The auto payment can be from a savings or checking account.

E-mail Delivery of Your Bill – A few customers have called and said they have not received their emailed bill. BMTA has discovered recently with their own emails that when there are security updates on your computers that the updates send some email addresses, especially if they are from a business, to your junk mail. If you right click on the email you can opt to never block sender. This should allow the email to go to your inbox next time. BTMA can resend the bill if you call and ask.

Please **do not reply or send messages** to the address your bill is coming from, BTMA does not monitor the Gmail account our bills are sent from. The address was set up strictly to send bills. Btma@comcast.net is the BTMA's correspondence email used continuously throughout the day.

BTMA has been awarded a Commonwealth of PA Financing Authority Grant. The grant is being used to build two sewer pump stations to replace the two flow meters that record sewer flow to the Reading Regional Airport Authority. The present flow meters do not record accurately due to low flows or getting clogged with rags resulting in higher inaccurate flows to the sewer plant. Higher flows mean higher bills BTMA pays to the RRAA. The grant amount awarded was \$210,366 which will cover the majority of the costs.

The various sinkholes that opened in the **West Shore Development** right after the rainfall that caused major flooding in the Berks County Area have been fixed. This was a major repair of a manhole that sunk and tilted. The hole has been filled with stone and a layer of geofabric for extra protection so hopefully this area does not open up in the future. BTMA would like to thank the residents involved for their patients during the repair to the manhole and the filling of the sinkhole. Repaving will not

be done immediately as settling of the area will need to occur before final paving can be done.

BTMA Rates are posted on the Bern Township website (berntownship.org) under BTMA. Included are all the rates for both water and sewer plus fees related to any other services performed by the BTMA staff. ❖

Bern Township Receives Award

We are happy to announce that Bern Township is the recipient of the 2023 Low Volume Road Project of the Year Award issued by the Berks County Conservation District. This award was for the township's effort on installing a stormwater project for Washington Road.

A low volume road consists of fewer than 500 vehicles traveling on the road each day. Significant flooding took place in this area in 2018 and there was damage to residences since the drainage pattern went through their front yards. The township staff designed a new drainage system to take the water a different way directly towards the Schuylkill River and applied to the Conservation District for a Low Volume / Dirt / Gravel Road Grant in February 2021 for funding to install the system. The township also had to apply to DEP for a permit to install the system, which was received.

The Conservation District approved the township's grant application in June of 2021 and provided \$47,010.00, while the township's in-kind costs for the road crew labor and equipment were valued at \$55,088.00. The road crew installed the system in August of 2022. The project involved the installation of storm piping, storm drains, swales, perforated roadway shoulder drainage piping and installing an asphalt overlay on the roadway to make it higher so water could not flow over it. We were pleased to see the system worked well during the July 9 storm this year.

We thank the farmer for granting an easement to the township so that we could make this happen. We thank the residents involved for their patience and understanding through the whole process. We thank the road crew for their hard work to install the system. Most of all, we thank the Berks County Conservation District for providing the funding to make the project a reality. ❖

This Fall, Don't Leave the Leaves

Keep leaves out of streams and rivers by keeping them out of the streets and away from storm drains.

Although leaves seem "natural" and harmless, excess leaves pose a threat to the health of our surface water. Leaves in the gutter in front of your house are on the fast track to our streams and rivers. When it rains, leaves are washed into storm drains and directly into the nearest stream or river. Once they get into the water and begin to decay, leaves release nutrients that contribute to that green stuff you see on the surface of our local streams and ponds, e.g. algae. Excess algae makes recreation unpleasant, plus decomposing algae uses up oxygen in the water which, in turn, suffocates fish.

Raking leaves into the street the weekend, or even day, before the Bern Township Road Department comes by with the vacuum is the best timing. The longer that leaves lay in the street, they become crushed by car tires and get rained on making a rich "nutrient tea" that flows along the gutter into storm drains. So, the fewer leaves in the street or the less time that they lay in the street, the better.

Some options to raking your leaves to the street for township collection include using your mower to chop the leaves into small particles and apply them directly to your lawn to enrich it, or place them in your flower gardens as a winter mulch. You can also bag your leaves and take them to the Bern Township Drop Off Center, for Bern Township residents only, on Hilltop Road next to the County Recycling facility. ❖

Store your Garden Hose

Remove your garden hose from your outside faucets before freezing temperatures arrive. This will help prevent the freezing and breaking of the pipe that is located within the wall of the house. Turn the valve closed on the inside of the house, if there is one, to keep the water away from the faucet portion in the wall.

Some folks turn on their hose bib faucet in the spring to find water leaking out of the wall. Practice this tip so that you can avoid water leaks and damage. ❖

Important news inside that affects YOU!



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