

BERN TOWNSHIP



in the news.....

FALL 2020

Flat Tax Period Extended

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania passed Act 15 of 2020, which took effect on April 20, 2020, that gave local municipalities the ability to revise the real estate tax payment periods.

During April 2020, the Berks County Commissioners approved revising the real estate tax payment period by extending the flat payment period until September 30, 2020. The real estate discount payment period was not altered.

During their monthly meeting on May 5, 2020, the Bern Township Supervisors approved revising the real estate tax payment period by extending the flat payment period until September 30, 2020 to mesh with the county's payment period schedule. The discount payment period was not altered.

Any Bern Township residents who have not paid their real estate tax bills have the opportunity to pay the flat fee until September 30, 2020. ❖

Firefighters Wanted!

Would you like to make a difference in your community? Would you like to be part of a team that protects our most important investment – our home or business? Would you like to be the person that saves someone from a burning structure? You could be that person if you are willing to devote the time and training. Greenfields Fire Company is looking for volunteers who want to make a difference in their community. If you are interested, they welcome you to contact the station today at 610-374-9283, or you can stop by the fire station on any Monday night to find out how you can help. Since the firefighters are volunteers, there may be times that nobody is at the station. Please leave a message with your name and call back number if there is no answer.

If you are unable to join as a volunteer firefighter, please consider joining the Greenfields Fire Company Social Hall at 505 Boeing Avenue, just south of the Reading Airport. Your membership at the social hall helps to raise funds to support the fire company. ❖

Aviation Road Closed

Aviation Road, the roadway that goes behind the Reading Airport, is closed for construction. The roadway will be closed to general traffic until October 2020. This roadway is not a township road.

This road reconstruction is associated with the BCIDA development behind the airport. The roadway will be widened and relocated in certain areas. The roadway will only be open to fire trucks, ambulances and police vehicles during the construction period. The roadway will be available for emergency purposes, during the construction period, involving a traffic blockage on Route 183 as a detour route for northbound traffic only.

This project also involves the reconstruction of the Aviation Road and Route 183 intersection. Route 183 will be widened and turn lanes will be added for Aviation Road. Please expect some delays while this work is taking place. Route 183 will remain passable in both directions during the project. ❖

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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
Wesley Waugh	Chief of Police
Steve Edwards	Assistant Road Foreman

Township Contacts

LTL Consultants 610-987-9290	Building Inspector / Zoning Officer
Lori Hozza 610-916-9919	Municipal Authority
Jamie D. Jamison 610-916-8955	Tax Collector
Berks Envirotech 610-375-7640	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)

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, construction material or electronics

Collection Dates:

Sept. 8, 14, 21, 28; Oct. 5, 12, 19, 26;

Nov. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Dec. 7, 14, 21, 28,

Jan. 4, 11, 18, 25; Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22

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

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. 10, 24; Oct. 8, 22; Nov. 5, 19;

Dec. 3, 17, 31; Jan. 14, 28; Feb. 11, 25

District #2:

Sept. 3, 17; Oct. 1, 15, 29; Nov. 12, 27;

Dec. 10, 24; Jan. 7, 21; Feb. 4, 18

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

2020 Census

April 1, 2020 was the opening day for responding to the 2020 Census. October 31, 2020 is the last day for census responses. This year is the first time that census responses can be filled out online.

Here's why responding to the 2020 Census is important: Federal, state and municipal officials make decisions about how billions of dollars in public funds are allocated for schools, roads and bridges, fire and emergency services, health care, and more based on census statistics. Programs include those for:

- Municipal funding for roads and bridges
- Grants targeted to municipalities
- Federal Pell Grants
- Adult Education Grants
- Career and Technical Education Grants
- Head Start Programs
- National School Lunch Program
- Medicare
- Medicaid
- Children's Health Insurance Program
- Nutritional Assistance Program
- Plus, many more community programs.

The 2020 Census results will also determine the number of seats each state receives in the U.S. House of Representatives and, in turn, the number of Electoral College votes. Results also impact congressional and state legislative districts.

Business owners use census statistics to create economic and employment opportunities. The statistics help determine where to hire new employees, open new locations and more. ❖

Walking Pets in Your Community

Many of us have been out in our community walking our pets to get out of the house and to get some exercise. It is nice to get out and get some fresh air and our puppy dogs enjoy the walks as well.

While you are out walking your pet, please be respectful of other people's properties by not allowing your puppy dog to venture into their yards to go to the bathroom on plants, trees or bushes. When our pets leave those little presents on the ground, rainwater washes the waste into the streets and storm drains, which leads directly to our creeks and rivers. The disease causing bacterium found in pet waste contaminates the creeks and rivers and the waste acts like a fertilizer in water. This promotes excessive aquatic

plant growth that can choke waterways, promote algae blooms and rob the water of vital oxygen.

Chapter 50 of the Bern Township Code notes that it is unlawful for any person to permit any pet under their supervision or control to deposit fecal matter upon streets or sidewalks in the township, or upon the property of another person or entity without the property owner's permission, or by not immediately removing the same and disposing of in a sanitary manner.

When your puppy dog needs to go to the bathroom, please scoop up the waste. As long as the droppings are not mixed with litter or other materials, it can be flushed down the toilet. This is best because the pet waste is then treated. You can also take bags with you and bag your pet waste and throw it in the trash.

Please enjoy your walks with your puppy dog and be respectful to your neighbors. ❖

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 Dates:

8:00 am to 2:00 pm rain or shine

October 24, 2020

Berks County Agricultural Center

Paper Shredding:

8:00 am to 2:00 pm rain or shine

October 17, 2020

Berks County Agricultural Center

Berks County Government Contacts

District Justice Brian Strand	610-916-4496
County Services Building	610-478-6100
Office of Aging	610-478-6500
Tax Assessment Board	610-478-6262
Recorder of Deeds	610-478-3380
Register of Wills	610-478-6600
Tax Claim Bureau	610-478-6625
Veterans Affairs	610-378-5601
Voter Registration	610-478-6490
PA Game Commission	610-926-3136
Berks Heim	610-376-4841
Schuylkill Valley Library	610-926-1555

Fall Curbside Collection Schedule

The residential curbside collection of leaf and yard waste begins on Monday, October 19 and continues until Tuesday, December 8. 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, WITH STICKS MIXED IN, WILL NOT BE COLLECTED.
- 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.
- 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. The Road Department will make collections per the following pre-set schedule:

Monday, Oct. 19 to Friday, Oct. 23
Greenfields Precinct

Monday, Oct. 26 to Friday, Nov. 6:
Schuylkill Precinct
Grange Precinct
County Precinct

Monday, Nov. 9 to Wednesday, Nov. 25:
Greenfields Precinct
Schuylkill Precinct
Grange Precinct

Monday, Nov. 30 to Tuesday, Dec. 8:

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 8. **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 or call the township to ask for another copy of the flyers. ❖

BTMA Reminders

PLEASE DO NOT FLUSH anything down your toilets but toilet paper. Flushable wipes, napkins, paper towels, kitty litter, etc. block up the flow at the BTMA meter pit, which distorts the actual flow. When the flow isn't consistent the meter reports higher flow causing the cost of treatment at the sewer plant to increase. BTMA has had problems consistently at the flow metering in the West Shore Development. With your cooperation BTMA can keep sewer rates as is.

When the doors open again at the Township Offices, the BTMA staff would appreciate if you can refrain from paying with cash at the office window. The VIST Bank on Rt. 183 will take cash along with your bill for BTMA payments. If you must pay cash at the office, you must have the exact amount you want to pay towards your bill. The office cannot give change.

The outdoor drop box is available for check payments. **DO NOT** put cash in the drop box. The inside drop box is no longer available. Please **DO NOT** try to put payments in it, the lock broke and that box will not be used in the present or the near future.

During rain events BTMA is experiencing higher than normal flows at a few of the BTMA flow meters. These areas are near the developments of West Shore, the Willows and Stonehedge. Please make sure your sump pumps are **NOT DIRECTED** to the sanitary sewer system. Bern Township has an ordinance referring to sump pumps and the sewer system. If caught you could be fined by the Township.

In order for your payment to be "on time" it must arrive on the 25th of the month. If the 25th falls on a Fri., Sat., Sun. or Holiday, the payment must



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arrive on the next business day that the office is open. Please mail payments early as the postal service seems not to have pick-ups of their boxes on Saturdays or Holidays. If you pay by on-line banking some banks hold checks until they have several to mail. Some checks are dated 5 to 7 days prior to the delivery date.

Please DO NOT postdate your check. It makes it difficult to keep checks dated up to two weeks in advance and then remember to process them on the check date. The staff has seen more & more postdated checks in the past 12 months. Even on-line banking checks will arrive on time but be dated the 26th or 27th of the month which makes the payment late.

BTMA offers email billing. You would receive your bill via your email account on the day billing is processed, usually the last few days of the month. For those who are receiving emailed bills, please print and provide the right hand side of the bill with your payment or at the least put your account number on the check. Please call the office for an application.

BTMA also offers ACH payment either from a checking or savings account. Your payment comes out of your account on the 25th of each month. This is a great option for those who lose their bills or have not received them in the mail and those who don't want to be bothered to remember to make a payment during the month. Please call the office for an application. ❖

No Such Thing as Pink Lights

Chief Wesley R. Waugh

Do you know the exact legal meaning of the steady red, the steady yellow, and the steady green lights on traffic control devices?

For most of us, the reds and the greens are easy. Green generally means go, unless there is an arrow or a need to yield when making a left turn. Red means stop. More precisely, "traffic facing a steady red signal alone shall stop at a clearly marked stop line, or if none, before entering the crosswalk on the near side of the intersection, or if none, then before entering the intersection and shall remain standing until an indication to proceed is shown except as provided in subparagraph (ii)" which authorizes right or left turns on red in certain circumstances [75 Pa.C.S. §3112(a)(3)(i)].

Ask someone what the steady yellow light means and then it gets interesting. People who learned to drive before 1977 will most likely say something like "stop if you can" or "proceed with caution," the latter being the same meaning as a flashing yellow

light has today. Our current Pennsylvania Vehicle Code was enacted and became effective on July 1, 1977, so people who learned to drive before then are remembering the provisions of the former vehicle code.

The actual legal meaning of a steady yellow light is that it is a warning. The "green indication is being terminated . . . a red indication will be exhibited immediately thereafter" [75 Pa.C.S. §3112(a)(2)(i)]. In other words, your authority to proceed into the intersection has ended. If you keep going on yellow and the light turns red before you have entered the intersection, you are in violation of the traffic control signals section of the Vehicle Code.

This provision becomes very significant in the context of "pink lights," when motorists see the steady yellow signal and race to beat the red signal. When the light turns red as they are going through, they joke that it was pink. It is a traffic violation. More importantly, it is a problem that grows – beating a red light by a fraction of a second today challenges the driver to try to beat the light again tomorrow. Eventually the time interval grows, to where the light is red for a few seconds, and opposing traffic begins to enter the intersection when the operators who now have a green light do not observe the approach of the motorist facing the red signal and often accelerating to beat it.

We can make excuses like saying that the light was pink. We can alternatively decide to slow down when approaching a "stale green," a light that has been green for a long time, so that we are ready to stop when we see yellow and know that a red signal is imminent. To drivers, yellow should mean "accelerators up, not down." ❖

Tulpehocken Creek Watershed Association

The Tulpehocken Creek was given its name by a Native American tribe that inhabited our region. "Tulpehocken" translates to "Land of Turtles". Europeans, settling in Berks County, as early as 1712, utilized water for its life giving qualities as well as their agriculture, power and transportation needs. Today, we utilize water from these local streams, rivers and aquifers to provide water for drinking, bathing and living. We also use water for our agricultural, industrial and energy production needs.

The headwaters of the Tulpehocken Creek originate in the foothills just west of Myerstown, with smaller tributaries originating in the Blue

(Continued on Page 6)

Tulpehocken Watershed (Continued from Page 5)

Mountain to the north and South Mountain to the south. The creek runs east until it reaches Reading, where it empties into the Schuylkill River, a main tributary to the Delaware River. The total watershed area contains about 113 miles of streams and covers 352 square miles or about 225,000 acres. The main corridor of the creek is about 40 miles long, of which 29 miles were designated as a Pennsylvania Scenic River. A good portion of Bern Township is located within the watershed.

The Tulpehocken Creek Watershed Association is dedicated to the monitoring, conserving, and restoration of the Tulpehocken Creek Watershed's exceptional rivers and streams. Healthy rivers and clean water align with the association's values. Our efforts, through educational outreach, will focus on how we can live, work and enjoy the recreational opportunities provided by this resource while staying in harmony with our natural world.

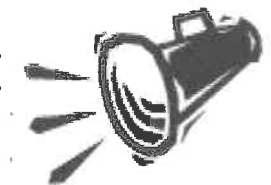
The association wants to create opportunities to bring together local residents, organizations and businesses that are passionate about the "Tully". Our motivations for clean water as a community may vary, but the value that these efforts can bring to our quality of life are indisputable. The people, businesses, industries and farms within

the watershed all contribute to pollution that ends up in these local streams and waterbodies that feed into the Tulpehocken Creek. This water then travels into the Schuylkill River, which joins the Delaware River in Philadelphia, before continuing into the Delaware Bay and ultimately the Atlantic Ocean. Pollutants in our local streams can affect you and millions of people downstream. The quality of drinking water and stream habitats for hundreds of miles are impacted by our activities.

The association members do things like stream monitoring by testing water samples by the creek, have workshops where everyone can have fun collecting, identifying and learning about aquatic life, conduct tree plantings by the creek, remove invasive and non-native plants by the stream, remove trash in and along the creek and provide educational opportunities to the public.

Want to learn more? The Tulpehocken Creek Watershed Association holds monthly meetings that are open to the entire community. Our members come from all walks of life with a variety of personalities, backgrounds, age and skills. A scientific background is not required. Contact the Bern Township Municipal Building for the dates and locations of the meetings. **The group is looking for more volunteers to help!** ❖

Important news inside that affects YOU!



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