

BERN TOWNSHIP



in the news.....

FALL 2025

Trash & Recycling Collection Schedules Are Not Changing!

The current contracts and collection schedules for trash collection, for the trash districts, and recycling collection are ending on December 31, 2025. Bern Township requested proposals for a new five-year contract with two optional one-year extensions, beginning on January 2, 2026 and ending December 31, 2030. Bids were received on August 28, 2025.

A.J. Blosenski will be the recycling hauler for the next five years. ***Recycling collections shall continue to be every other Thursday in 2026.*** The day of collection will depend on which recycling district you live in. Please see page 2. Residents shall use their recycling cans for commingled aluminum and tin cans, clear, green and brown glass, #1 and #2 plastic bottles and containers. Newspapers, paper and cut-up cardboard shall be placed in paper bags, in a separate container from the commingled cans, glass and plastics, or separately bundled and tied together with string. Do not place any recyclables in plastic bags for collection. The annual recycling fee is increasing slightly to \$105.00.

BFI / Republic Services will be the trash hauler, for the trash districts, for the next five years. ***The trash district collections shall continue to be every Monday, beginning on January 5, 2026.*** Residents can still put out six 35-gallon cans or bags plus one bulk item every week. There is no spring or fall cleanup.

The annual trash fee is increasing to \$335.00.

The township will advertise the days of collections in the Reading Eagle as we get closer to the end of the year. We will also send the notice to residents by e-mail, for those who are on our e-mail list. ❖

Glass is Back!!

We are happy to inform everyone that you can place clear, green and brown glass food and / or beverage containers in your recycling can as of January, 2026!

Glass recycling was discontinued in 2020 because of the additional cost for it only to go into a landfill anyway. The recycling processor that we had at that time would crush the glass and use it to cover trash in the landfill so the trash would not blow around. The Department of Environmental Protection considers this as an acceptable use of recycled glass.

Cougle's Recycling is now our recycling processor and they have markets for the glass. Some of the uses include using screened and crushed glass for on-site sewage systems instead of using sand. Crushed glass is also used in the making of concrete blocks.

So, go ahead and place your glass bottles and jars in your recycling container, instead of throwing them into the trash can! ❖

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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
Bobby Turner	Road Foreman

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 610-375-7640	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 Twp. 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, oil or epoxy paint cans or construction material. Please use lids on cans.*

Collection Dates:

Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27; Nov. 3, 10, 17, 24;

Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26;

Feb. 2, 9, 16, 23; March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30;

April 6, 13, 20, 27; May 4, 11, 18, 26

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, mixed glass, bi-metal and aluminum cans in your recycling container.

*Place newspapers in paper bags or bundle. Cut cardboard and place in paper bags or bundle. **Items NOT collected for recycling:** paint cans, tires, styrofoam, plastics #3 thru #7, batteries or large appliances.*

Collection Dates:

District #1:

Oct. 2, 16, 30; Nov. 13, 28; Dec. 11, 26;

Jan. 8, 22; Feb. 5, 19; March 5, 19;

April 2, 16, 30; May 14, 29

District #2:

Oct. 9, 23; Nov. 6, 20; Dec. 4, 18;

Jan. 2, 15, 29; Feb. 12, 26; March 12, 26;

April 9, 23; May 7, 21

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

Yard Waste Center Program

The township rolled out the yard waste center access key card program earlier this year. The gates closed at the end of July and now you must have a key card to enter the facility. We had to do this because of the illegal dumping that was taking place at the center which doubled the disposal costs to over \$80,000, which all of us paid taxes to support. Instead, we now pay \$20 for the cost of the access card and \$10 annually to support the processing of our material.

You do not have to purchase the access key card if you do not plan to use the center. Renewal notices will be mailed out in early November to those residents who have purchased access key cards. If you did not purchase an access key card earlier this year, you will not receive a renewal notice as you will not have anything to renew.

All residents who purchased an access key card received a copy of the access key card user agreement and the yard waste center rules and regulations so that you know the rules that you have signed to agree to follow. Any person who violates any of the rules shall, upon conviction, be guilty of a summary offense and subject to a penalty of at least \$100 and not more than \$600, plus costs of prosecution. Violators may also lose their privilege of using the yard waste center for either a temporary period or permanently, depending on the violation.

Please do not place your access key card in the sun, near magnets or in your wallet. These actions could damage your access key card. Replacement cards will cost you \$20.

The yard waste center will close on occasion to allow for the grinding and removing of the yard waste material. We asked for you to provide your email address so that we may send you a note in

advance of the center closing for these operations. If you did not provide an email address, you will not be notified of this action. We did our best to decipher some of the email addresses that were provided. If you find that you are not receiving any notices, please call the township building to confirm that we have the right address.

None of us like changes very much, so we thank you for being patient with us on this new program that we have implemented. By doing this, we are confident that when you visit the center to dump your yard waste, you will find ample space to do so. ❖

Thank You, Kameron Boyer

Bern Township was recently the fortunate beneficiary of an Eagle Scout project. Kameron Boyer, of scout troop 154 based at Belleman's Church, constructed two benches along the Bern Township walking trail near Leesport. Kameron fund-raised for the project, ordered and coordinated delivery of the materials and built the benches and mulched box areas. Bern Township is proud of his efforts. The benches add another level of service to the trail, allowing a place to take a rest or providing a means to just sit, relax and watch the river flow by. As you can see, the benches look great! Kameron will be a senior this year at Schuylkill Valley High School. We thank him for choosing Bern Township to be the recipient of his Eagle Scout project, and wish him the best in his future endeavors! ❖



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Your Cans Are In Good Hands!

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From EMC Kevin Hinkle
Emergency Management

BTMA News

Prevent Sewer Problems – Avoid Flushing these items down toilets, sinks, bathtub/showers, garbage disposals or other drains. These items could lead to damaging grinder pumps, clogs leading to backups onto homeowner property and problems at pump stations leading to the local treatment plant. These issues are costly to the homeowner and the municipal authority.

Abrasive or corrosive items	Candy or food wrappers
Cement	Cigarette butt
Cotton Swabs	Diapers or baby wipes
Disposable toilet brushes	Fats, oils or grease
Flammable/hazardous items	“Flushable” items
Glass	Gravel
Hair	Oil, gasoline, solvents
Hydrocarbons	Kitty Litter
Metal	Mud
Paint and paint thinners	Pharmaceutical products
Plastic	Rubber or latex materials
Sand	Sanitary napkins
Seafood shells	Spackle
Strong chemicals	Syringes
Tampons or applicators	Tar
Towels, rags, clothes, etc	

BTMA has completed installing two new pump stations (at a cost of over \$400,000) which pumps sewage from the West Shore Development and businesses along Leisz’s Bridge Road and others to the Reading Regional Airport Authority’s sewer plant. These pump stations record accurately the amount of sewage BTMA sends to RRAA which saves BTMA and the customer money each quarter. However, within 2 month’s of the pump stations going on-line, BTMA had blockages in the pumps with “disposable wipes”. These type of wipes get balled up and mixed with oils and grease (which should NOT go down drains). This could cause a blockage in the sewer lines before it even gets to the pumps. If a blockage occurs in the sewer lines it will cost thousands to fix.

BTMA will be spending an additional \$20,000 plus to install pump lifts to unclog pumps when needed. Calling an outside company to lift the pumps out every time they get clogged will cost much more. BTMA already had to call an outside company twice to unclog the pumps.

Please follow the rules stated above for what items not to flush, it will help keep the costs to you, the customer, steady. ❖

Bern Township continues the cooperative work with the Blue Marsh Regional Emergency Management Agency. The agency includes Jefferson Township, North Heidelberg Township and the Borough of Bernville. All municipalities will share administrative costs for certifications and classes, while each municipality will cover their own costs for any incidents that happen within their jurisdiction. Fortunately, 2025 has been a very quiet period for activities and incidents.

We continue to receive training during the year by attending the monthly Berks Department of Emergency Services meetings. As part of the Ontelaunee Dam Flood area, we participated in a workshop and tabletop exercise simulating a dam breach. Our current Emergency Operations Plan is consistent with a rapid and coordinated response if flooding occurs in our area.

The township has placed into service a used vehicle for Emergency Management use. We are still trying to secure money to pay for emergency lights, exterior markings and mobile computer for the vehicle. Funding for Emergency Management is very limited and quite competitive. Despite this, the vehicle is fully operational and has been used on several occasions.

World War II Weekend event went well and the Emergency Operations Center was staffed during the three-day event. No significant events were managed during the event.

The township updated the various emergency plans: the Notification and Resource Manual which list available resources and staff assignments for emergencies, the Continuity of Operations Plan that lists alternative staffing, equipment and facilities to be used in the event of losing any of those resources, the Hazard Vulnerability Assessment that lists potential man made or natural threats to our community. The township also adopted the Berks County Hazard Vulnerability and Mitigation Plan.

Please check the township website www.berntownship.org for updated material and information on various subjects including preparedness, weather concerns and information for pet owners. You will also find the “Bern Township Guide to Emergency Preparedness” on our website. This explains the things that you can do to be prepared for certain kinds of disasters ahead of time.

BERN TOWNSHIP

For 2024, there were 147 actual hours in incident response or training time (up from 111 in 2023). Kevin increased his volunteer time from 10 hours/week to 15 hours/week. This was needed due to increased participation in public safety issues and Blue Marsh Regional EMA integration. This totaled approximately 780 hours of work. This resulted in a total savings of **\$31,518 to the Township (up \$10,000 from 2024).** ❖

From Chief of Police Brett Forry

Don't Fall Victim to Today's Scams

Scams are everywhere these days, and they are becoming more convincing and more dangerous. Criminals are using phone calls, emails, texts, and even social media to trick good people out of their hard-earned money or personal information. The Bern Township Police Department wants to help you recognize these scams before they can do any harm. Here are just a few of the most common ones we're seeing right now:

The "Grandparent" Scam

Scammers call claiming to be your grandchild or another family member in trouble—maybe they've been arrested, are stuck overseas, or need emergency funds. They'll beg you not to tell anyone and ask you to send money immediately.

What to do:

Hang up and call your family member directly. Always verify before sending money.

Tech Support Scam

You receive a pop-up or phone call saying your computer has a virus. The "tech" tells you to give them remote access to fix it—or asks you to pay for unnecessary software.

What to do:

Never allow remote access unless you know the person or company is legitimate. Reputable tech companies don't contact you this way.

Government or Utility Payment Scam

A caller or email claims to be from the IRS, Social Security, or even a utility company, demanding payment or threatening arrest, service shutoff, or loss of benefits.

What to do:

Know that government agencies will never demand payment over the phone or ask for gift cards, cryptocurrency, or wire transfers. When in doubt, hang up and call the

agency directly using a number you trust.

Delivery Text or Email Scam

You get a text or email saying a package couldn't be delivered and asking you to click a link or enter personal info.

What to do:

Avoid clicking any suspicious links. Go directly to the delivery company's official website to check on any packages.

Tips to Stay Safe:

- **Never give out personal information** unless you are 100% sure who you're talking to.
- **Resist the pressure to act immediately.** Scammers create a sense of urgency—don't fall for it.
- **Talk it over** with a trusted friend, neighbor, or your local police before sending money or sharing sensitive information.
- **Report suspicious activity** to the Bern Township Police Department. We're here to help!

There are many types of scams, and they can happen to anyone. Please share this information with your loved ones, especially seniors, who are often targeted. If you're ever unsure whether something is a scam, call us. We would rather check it out with you than have you become a victim. ❖

Paul Miller's Law

Effective: June 5, 2025. Prohibiting use of interactive mobile device, a summary offense is created, making it illegal to use an interactive mobile device while driving a motor vehicle with the exception of communicating with law enforcement or emergency services to prevent injury to persons or property. The section applies to vehicles who are temporarily stopped in the traffic flow due to traffic jams or traffic control devices. It does not apply to those who have pulled safely out of the flow of traffic. Prohibited behavior includes holding, dialing with more than one button, or reaching in a manner that requires one to become unseated or unseatbelted.

- Only warnings may be issued from June 5, 2025 until June 5, 2026.
- On June 6, 2026, this offense will be punishable by a \$50.00 fine.
- This applies even if you are stopped at a red light. ❖

BERN TOWNSHIP

From Road Foreman Bobby Turner

Slow Down – Construction Crews at Work

With roadwork happening throughout the area, we are asking drivers to please slow down and stay alert in construction zones. These crews are out there working hard to fix and improve the roads we all use every day.

Speeding or not paying attention puts their lives and yours at risk. Even if you don't see workers right near the road, equipment and lane changes can pop up fast.

A few extra seconds behind the wheel can make all the difference. Let's all do our part to keep our road crew safe and get everyone home at the end of the day.

Take It Easy This Winter

Winter driving is not like summer driving as roads can be slick, visibility can drop fast, and it just takes longer to get where you are going. That's why it's so important to slow down and drive carefully when the snow starts falling.

Give yourself extra time, leave space between cars, and take it easy on the gas and brakes. It might feel like a hassle, but getting there safely is what really matters.

Our road crews will be out doing their best to keep roads clear, but they cannot be everywhere at once. A little patience and caution go a long way.

Stay safe out there and remember, there is no harm in getting there a few minutes late if it means avoiding an accident. ❖

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:

Pre-Registration Required

8:00 am to Noon

October 18, 2025

Berks County Agricultural Center

Paper Shredding:

Pre-Registration Required

8:00 am to Noon

October 11, 2025

Berks County Agricultural Center

Register at www.co.berks.pa.us/swa

Recycling 101

What types of things can you place in your recycling can for collection? What types of paper products can you bundle up and put out for recycling? Welcome to Recycling 101.

The following types of items can be placed in your recycling can: Aluminum cans which are entirely made of aluminum and which formerly contained only edible substances. Tin cans made from a steel alloy which formerly contained only non-aerosol edible substances such as vegetables, meats, fruits, juices or other similar food storage containers. Clear, green and brown glass food and or beverage containers. Plastic bottles and containers that are marked with a #1 or #2. All of these items that you can recycle should be cleaned and rinsed out before placing in your recycling bin.

The following types of paper products can be recycled: Corrugated boxes and paper having a structural rigid parallel furrows and ridges. Mixed paper including all corrugated cardboard normally used for packing, mailing, shipping or containerizing goods, merchandise or other material, and post-consumer magazines, junk mail, coupons, phone books, cereal boxes, sweepstake entries and envelopes. Newspaper which has been used for the production of daily, weekly, or special edition news publications which shall include all paper items which are sold with the newspaper. Office paper including all white paper, bond paper and computer paper.

Items that you should NOT put in your recycling can: Aluminum building materials. Cans that held hazardous cleaning substances or automotive supplies (motor oils, transmission fluids, etc.). Glass type products that are crystal, ceramics, lightbulbs, plate, window, laminated, wired or mirrored glass. Any plastics that do not have the recycling symbol marked with a #1 or #2 in it.

Items that you should NOT put out with your paper products: Plastic, styrofoam, wax-coated paper, soiled or chip board. Pizza boxes that have been stained / soiled with sauce, cheese or grease. ❖

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

BERN TOWNSHIP

Catch Fish, Not Birds with Fishing Line

Want to help birds and wildlife? Here are some steps to help prevent injuries and death to birds and wildlife:

- **Dispose of broken or leftover fishing gear properly.** Never leave behind fishing lines, hooks, lures or bait. Use designated fishing gear disposal options, such as fishing line recycling bins or tubes.
- **Don't release fish who still have hooks in them.** If practicing catch and release, use barbless hooks.
- **Act quickly when you find an entangled bird.** Try to safely capture the bird and take it to a Park Ranger office or PA Fish Commission office.
- **Remove Hooks from unintended catches.** If you unintentionally hook a bird or other wildlife while fishing, try removing the hook safely. If you can't remove the hook, contact a Park Ranger or PA Fish Commission.

We have placed these tips in this newsletter since a good amount of fishing line was recently discovered entangled in trees and brush along the Tulpehocken Creek. We know that persons from other municipalities visit the creek and not just Bern Township residents, and so these tips are for everybody.

If you are interested in volunteering to help remove entangled fishing lines, please call or visit the township building. ❖

Pack it In, Pack it Out

If you are visiting a park area or going for a hike in the woods, please do not litter. If you bring it in, take it back out or use trash receptacles. How long does it take for things to degrade until they are gone? An orange peel takes two years. A plastic wrapper takes five years. A cigarette butt takes ten years. A plastic bag will take ten to twenty years. A wet wipe will take one hundred years. An aluminum can will take two hundred years. Disposable diapers will take four hundred fifty years. A plastic bottle will take one hundred to one thousand years.

Please be kind to the environment. It is the only one that we have. ❖

From LTL Consultants

Zoning and Building Permits

Understanding when a zoning or building permit is necessary can be complex for many residents. Generally, a zoning and/or building permit is required for any change in the use of a property, structural changes to a building, or the addition of new buildings.

Zoning permits are issued after a thorough review of the Zoning Ordinance is conducted to ensure that the proposed use aligns with the regulations of the designated Zoning District. A zoning permit also deals with the distance from property lines and other design requirements the Township may have. If a proposal does not comply with these requirements, the application may be denied, and the applicant could be advised to consult the Planning Commission, Zoning Hearing Board, or the Board of Supervisors, as applicable.

Building permits must be secured before any construction, alteration, or repair work begins, aside from general maintenance or ordinary repairs. It is important to note that the contractor undertaking the work must hold a contractor's license issued by the State and must provide proof of insurance. However, ordinary repairs to existing structures, such as replacing siding, doors, or windows with similar materials, do not require a permit. Replacing shingles on a residential home does not require a permit.

If you are unsure whether your project requires a permit, please reach out to the Township or LTL for clarification. LTL can be contacted Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 5 PM at 610 987-9290 or 888 987-8886. Bern Township can be reached Monday through Thursday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM and Friday from 8:30 AM until Noon at 610 926-2267. ❖

Communication Information

The township sends email blasts to residents to communicate regarding issues such as trash and recycling collections, snow emergencies, newsletters, road projects and other "hot" topics of the day. All email addresses are kept confidential. If you would like to sign up for this service, please call the Township Building to provide your email and street address. ❖

Important! Property Maintenance

Bern Township enforces the International Property Maintenance Code 2015 edition. Chapter 3 General Requirements of this Code includes regulations for exterior areas.

The Bern Township Code has an amendment to this section. The amendment, Section 301.2.1 Properties abutting public right-of-way states "Where properties abut a public right-of-way (a.k.a. street), the abutting property owner shall be responsible for the maintenance of the area between their property line and the cartway (edge of the road), including the curb, the sidewalk and grass areas between the curb and the property line.

In country settings where there are no curbs, property owners are responsible for the maintenance of their property to the edge of the cartway (paved road).

You might wonder why we have a brush cutting machine. Sometimes we wonder about that as well. While we will continue to provide the brush cutting service, please know the first responsibility of maintenance of vegetation along the edge of the roadways falls to the property owner. ❖

Prepare Mailboxes for Winter

Mailboxes can be damaged by snow thrown from snow plows unless they are prepared for winter. If a mailbox is damaged by snow and ice thrown by the plow, the repairs for the damage is the responsibility of the resident. Here are some tips on how you can reduce mailbox damage:

- Place a 6 to 8 inch piece of reflective tape on the mailbox to help snow plow operators see it at night.
- Remove snow from around the mailbox but do not throw it back onto the road.
- Consider repositioning the mailbox slightly off the road but still within reach of the postal carrier.
- Consider the installation of a cantilevered mailbox support that will swing a mailbox out of harm's way (free plans are available on PennDOT's website, www.dot.state.pa.us).

Contact the Post Office for more information on how to correctly position a mailbox. ❖

Important news inside that affects YOU!



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