

APRIL 2022

Your Township Board

Supervisor.....Roger Seely
 Clerk.....Patrice Rose
 Treasurer.....Dave Vonk
 Trustee.....Ed Meny
 Trustee.....Tom Milnikel
 Trustee.....Ron Griffin
 Trustee.....Melissa Hahn
 Manager.....Denise Cook

Other Township Officials

Building Official.....Troy Gano
 Ordinance Officer.....Troy Gano
 Assessor.....Sue Rice
 Chief of Police.....Randy Leng

Township Meetings

Township Board of Trustees
 6 p.m. 1st Monday of the month
 (Board Workshop at 12:00 Noon)

Planning Commission
 6:30 p.m. 2nd Tuesday Monthly

Zoning Board of Appeals
 7 p.m. 2nd Wednesday
 (As Requested)

**MEETINGS ARE HELD AT THE
 TOWNSHIP HALL AND ARE
 OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Township Hours
 The Township Hall is open
 Monday-Friday
 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



"Update" is published periodically in an effort to inform residents of the many activities in St. Joseph Charter Township. Inquiries or future articles should be directed to the Manager.

FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESK

Roger Seely, Supervisor

Spring Cleanup Passes

Landfill passes will be available for pickup at the Township Hall beginning April 11th. Passes are good for rubbish drop-off at Orchard Hill Landfill in Watervliet on the following dates: April 22, 23, 29, 30 and May 13, 14, 20, 21. A household may have one (1) pass for rubbish clean up from that property. If you have any questions on what is allowed, please call the landfill office at 468-3658.



Yard Waste Pickup through Best Way begins April 1st and runs through December 15th. Yard waste will be picked up on your regular trash pickup day. The landfill does not accept plastic bags. Be sure to use large brown paper yard waste bags or you may provide your own container or rent one from Best Way Disposal (463-3232). All containers must be clearly labeled "Yard Waste". Free yard waste stickers are available at the Township Hall.

For Hazardous Waste Disposal, please call Berrien County: 269-983-7111, ext. 8234 or go to their website, www.berriencounty.org/recycle. Hazardous waste would include household/garden chemicals and pesticides, medications, tire, and electronics.

Yard Maintenance

In order to minimize rodent harborage and to keep our neighborhoods looking tidy and well-cared for, we ask that residents adhere to the maximum grass height of 6". If we see or receive a complaint that property is overgrown, a notice will be posted to bring it into compliance. If there is no response to the notice, the grass will be cut, without further notice, and that property will be invoiced for the charges. Any unpaid invoices will be placed on the winter property tax bill. Please note this extra charge on your winter tax bill could affect your monthly mortgage payment. The requirement for mowing applies to all properties, even those with deep lots. The exception for full mowing is undeveloped, wooded lots, which must be kept maintained at least around the perimeters. Please assure that your neighborhood is a great place to live in by keeping your property picked up, trimmed and mowed. Your neighbors and the Township thank you!



Pet Ordinance If you bring your dog to any Township park or trail it must be on a leash as stated in Township ordinances. Please be courteous and clean up after your pet. "Doggie" bags have been placed on the trails and in the parks for your convenience.



FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESK ... *continued*Roger Seely, Supervisor

Parks and Trails Millage Fund

In December of 2018 the Township began collecting taxes for the ten-year Parks and Trails Millage that was approved by the voters at the August 2018 election. Please see the Parks Department section of this newsletter for more information on 2022 projects and to view plans for 2023 and 2024 parks and trail improvements.

Fire Improvement Millage Fund

In December of 2018, the Township began collecting taxes for the ten year Fire Improvement Millage that was approved by the voters at the August 2018 election. At the time this newsletter was submitted to the printer, the new Rosenbauer fire truck, to be housed at Fire Station 1, was expected to be here the first or second week in February. Additional equipment has been arriving at the station and will be installed to make the truck ready to use. A Rosenbaum 2022 mini pumper truck was also ordered in November 2021 and is expected to arrive sometime in 2023. This truck will be housed at Fire Station 2.

**Revenue Sharing**

In order to receive CVT revenue sharing payments the Township must meet all State requirements. One of the requirements is to complete and publish an annual Performance Dashboard and provide public access to that information. St. Joseph Charter Township's Dashboard is available on the website. Visit www.sjct.org and click on **Public Hub** in the upper right to view the Dashboard information.

Tools to access Township services

- Permit forms, assessing information forms, tax information and much more can be accessed from the Township website under *Departments* at www.sjct.org. Also, check out the main page of the website for current general information.
- You may email the Township at info@sjct.org.
- Secured, camera monitored, and frequently checked drop boxes, both curbside and at the building to the left of the main entrance door are available to drop off payments and other documents.
- You may send information via postal mail to St. Joseph Charter Township, P.O. Box 147, St. Joseph, MI 49085.
- You may phone the Township at [\(269\) 429-7703](tel:(269) 429-7703) for information.
- TextMyGov is a smartphone texting application that allows you to text in a number to look up Township information. You may also text in a number that will allow you to receive notifications from the Township. See the [TextMyGov](#) section in this newsletter for more information on how to get started.
- The Township also sends information to its [Facebook page, St. Joseph Charter Township](#).



FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESK ... *continued*

Roger Seely, Supervisor

Napier Avenue Non/Motorized Pathway: In the past four years, the Township was involved in a study, applied for and received approval for a CMAQ grant, and is now well into the planning for construction of non-motorized pathways on both sides of Napier Avenue from Miami to Colfax. Bids will be solicited for the construction portion of the project, and completion of construction is planned for 2022-2023.



The Michigan Secretary of State's Office and the Township remind PEDESTRIANS for your safety: Where there are no sidewalks, walk or jog on the side of the road as far to the left as possible or on a paved shoulder **AGAINST** oncoming traffic.



Road Millage: In December of 2020, the Township began collecting taxes for the ten-year road millage that was approved by the voters at the November 2020 election. In 2022, the Township's share of cost will go for repairs and maintenance on: Ottawa, Pontiac, etc. (subs S. of Western Ave., W. of Colfax Ave.), Marilyn Dr. (from Brown School Rd. to End) , Lydia Dr., Brunn Dr. (E. of Niles Rd.)

Change in Assessor

After almost 22 years of service, St. Joseph Charter Township Assessor, Sue Rice, will be retiring. We have appreciated Sue's dedication to serving the Township through the assignments she has performed as assessor and other tasks she has assisted with outside of assessing duties. A huge THANK YOU to you Sue, for your years of dedicated service to St. Joseph Charter Township! We will miss you and we wish you much happiness in the days and years ahead!

Beginning May 1, the Township will be contracting with Shalice Northrop of Northrop Assessing, Inc. to carry out the assessing duties for the Township. We are confident that Shalice will pick up where Sue left off, offering high quality assessing services to the Township. Shalice can be reached by contacting the Township office at 269-429-7703.

United Way of Southwest Michigan — Call 2-1-1

Every hour of every day, someone needs help. Whether it's needing help with providing food for your family to job training, 2-1-1 is here. 2-1-1 community resource advisors provide you with information and referrals for everyday needs and times of crisis. Best of all, it's as easy as picking up your phone and dialing 2-1-1.

Housing/Shelter — Emergency Shelter, Low Income Housing, Transitional Housing, Minor Home Repair

Food and Household Needs—Food Pantries, Hot Meals, WIC, Clothing, Diapers, Furniture

Employment—Employment Prep/Assistance, Financial Information/Education

Financial Assistance—Utility Assistance, Rental Deposit Assistance, Rent Payment Assistance, Bus Tickets/Gas Money

Health Care—Primary Care, Dental Care, Health Education Programs, Mental Health/Substance Abuse, Outpatient Substance Abuse Programs, Crisis Intervention Hotlines, General Counseling Services

Transportation—Local Transportation, Medical Transportation

Veteran, Elderly and Disabled Person Resources

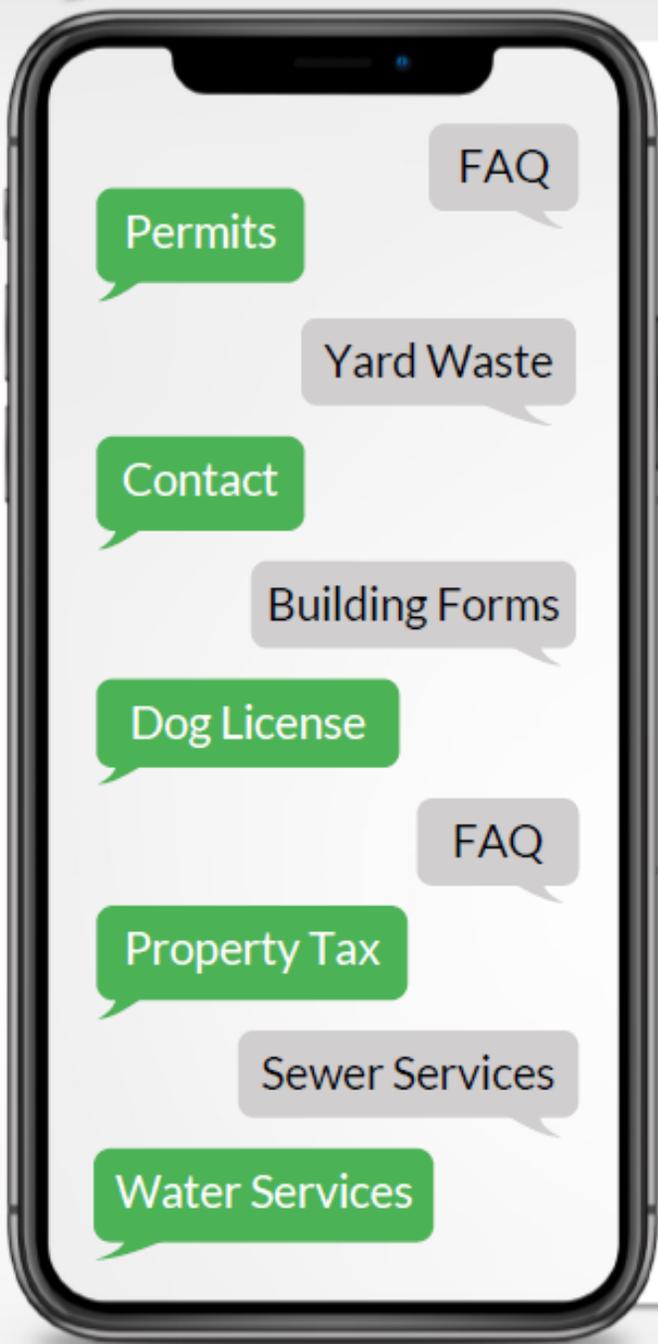
Need Help? Call 2-1-1



United Way
of Southwest Michigan

St Joseph Charter Township

Report Issues & Find Answers



Connect Via Text

Introducing a new way to skip a phone call and use your mobile phone's text messaging service to quickly report issues and find information on the go.

24/7 Assistance

Smart texting technology searches keywords to provide assistance anytime, day or night.

Get Started

Text **Hi** or any of the other featured keywords to:

(269)421-4001

View terms and privacy policy info at: textmygov.com/opt-in-terms-conditions
Msg & Data rates apply. Msg frequency varies. Text STOP at any time to opt-out.
Text HELP for contact info.

Powered by

TextMyGov

POLICE DEPARTMENT & NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Randy Leng, Chief of Police

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

The 2022 National Night Out Crime Prevention Event & Ice Cream Social is scheduled for Tuesday, August 2, 2022 at Maiden Lane Community Park from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Residents of St. Joseph Charter Township, St. Joseph City, and Lincoln Charter Township are welcome to participate in various displays and activities.



Past programs have included Fire Department Jaws of Life Demo, Med Flight helicopter, Berrien County and MSP canine units, MICHIP Program, Lions Kid Sight vision testing, fire trucks, police cars, and other local emergency equipment, and games/prizes for the children.

Hot dogs, chips, pop, and ice cream sundaes will be provided.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

St. Joseph Township Police Department encourages all residents to become involved in the Neighborhood Watch Program. The ultimate goal is to establish the program in all neighborhoods of St. Joseph Charter Township.

Township residents who wish to become involved in the Neighborhood Watch Program may contact Lt. Rick Knapp at (269)429-6890 ext. 2710 for further information. Lt. Knapp will be conducting several brief training sessions for participants and block captains in the coming months.

CRIME PREVENTION/SAFETY AWARENESS

The St. Joseph Township Police and Fire Departments participate in pop-up crime prevention/safety awareness community events. Dates, times, and locations of events will be announced on social media.

The St. Joseph Township Police Department participates in the Law Enforcement Day at the Berrien County Youth Fair in August.

Prior to 2020 the police department held occasional community awareness seminars featuring speakers on various topics including fraud, drug and gang awareness, personal safety, and neighborhood watch block captain training. There are plans to reinstate this program in the future. If any residents have suggestions for potential topics, please contact Lt. Rick Knapp at (269)429-6890 ext. 2710.

Information on the St. Joseph Township Police and Fire Departments and the Neighborhood Watch Program are located on the St. Joseph Charter Township Website at <http://www.sjct.org/> under Public Safety.

Follow the St. Joseph Township Police and Fire Departments on Facebook.

- St. Joseph Township Police Department <https://www.facebook.com/SJTwpPD/>
- St. Joseph Township Fire Department Station 1 <https://www.facebook.com/Sjctfd/>
- St. Joseph Township Fire Department Station 2 <https://www.facebook.com/sjctfd2/>

St. Joseph Township Police Department is joining the Nextdoor social network. Join the network at <https://nextdoor.com> or by installing the free app on your smart phone or device.

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!
Report suspicious activity. Help prevent crime.

FROM THE CLERK - Elections
Danielle Riegel, Election Coordinator

2022 Election Information

August 2nd – Primary Election
 November 8th – General Election



Absentee ballot applications for the above elections will be mailed out in June, and will come as a “dual application”. If you’re on the permanent absent voter list, you’ll automatically be sent the application via U.S. Postal Service. Be sure to check which elections you’d like an absentee ballot for, sign, and date!

If you’re not sure if you’re on the permanent absent voter list, please feel free to contact Tammy Conrad or myself, Danielle Riegel, at (269) 429-7703. You can also hop online at <https://mvic.sos.state.mi.us/> to check your registration status, see upcoming elections, view sample ballots (when available), or find local clerk contact information.

Looking forward to spring and another great election year!

ASSESSING DEPARTMENT
Sue Rice, Assessor

The State Tax Commission requires that assessors annually inspect a percentage of the properties in each class. New photos of the homes included in this percentage will be taken.

Over the years changes are sometimes made to your property, things added, and sometimes things are removed. The only way your record card can be accurate is by making sure that any changes you make (or have made in the past) have been accounted for. If, for example, you recently removed an inground swimming pool and did not get a demolition permit we would not know it was gone and it would remain on record card and you would be paying taxes on something that is no longer there. Remember, **YOU** pay property taxes based upon the information I have in my files – and if that information is not current then neither is your assessed and taxable value.

In February you received an Assessment Change Notice showing your new 2022 Assessed and Taxable Values. It has a section that says...% **Exempt As “Homeowner’s Principal Residence”**. If this property is your principal residence, not a second/vacation home, as noted on your Michigan driver’s license, your Michigan voter’s registration card, and the address you file your Michigan Income Tax from then the % here should be 100%. If it is 0 and you feel that it is incorrect please contact this office as soon as possible as this % is used in computing your **summer tax bill** as either Homestead or Non-Homestead. It is a little number but it makes a **HUGE** difference on your tax bill. So please take a second look at your notice and check – if you cannot find your notice you can call and we can check for you. It is much easier to correct this now before the summer bills are processed.

As always, if you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me at 269-932-0272 or srice@sjct.org.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Troy Gano, CBO Building Official

Spring is upon us and many home remodel plans may be just around the corner. Always remember to obtain the required permits for work being done, and if you have questions we prefer you ask them now, rather than ask for forgiveness later. If you have a contractor doing work for you, be sure they are licensed and that they have obtained the required permits. We want safety a top priority, and along with that, if you have a major fire, flood, or other incident most insurance companies will NOT cover damages if the required permits were not obtained. Our applications have recently been updated to a fillable format that you can complete online and just print and bring in to the office. Also note, even though building permits are not required for most sheds and fences, we require a zoning permit for approval.

Visit our link to obtain permit applications and view codes currently enforced.

<http://sjct.org/departments/building-dept>.



ORDINANCE DEPARTMENT

Troy Gano, Ordinance Enforcement

In order to keep our Township looking great, here are a few ordinances that regularly come up as issues:



Lawn maintenance such as keeping it mowed and not to exceed 6 inches in height. Please note that if your grass gets too high, it will be posted and mowed by the Township contractor at your expense.

Parking in the road right of way and/or on unimproved surface, such as grass, is not allowed in the Township.

Property maintenance such as junk and debris on a property or peeling paint and surface conditions in disrepair need to be tended to. We will be sending out notices to become compliant as we see these issues. We currently enforce the 2021 International Property Maintenance Code.

Rental properties must be registered with the Township, and as the corona-virus situation is ever changing, we have to adapt as well. We plan to do on-site inspections for all properties every 2 years, however if the cases are elevated you may receive a homeowner affidavit that we ask you to complete for the life safety of the tenants. (We will do inspections if requested at any point.)

House numbers are required to be on the front of the primary structure and at least 4 inches in height, so as to be visible from the road.



PARKS / PUBLIC WORKS

Dave Rindfield, Director

Parks

Parks officially open April 1st and, weather pending, water should be turned on by April 15th.

MDNR Grants...2019 Maiden Lane Playground Structure Project LWC grant application - The \$110,000 grant that the Township applied for was awarded to the Township and project construction was originally scheduled for the spring and summer of 2020. However, the COVID-19 pandemic put a hold on the project. The good news is, installation of the equipment began late 2021 and the project will be completed in 2022.



The 2019 **Carronde Park Water Trail Connection & Fishing Platform Development Project Land and Water Conservation Fund grant application** for installation of fishing platforms, a walkway along the river bank, and an all-inclusive kayak launch was approved for funding. The Township will be applying for an additional Fisheries grant which is only available for application every other year. The next application schedule for that grant is August 2022. If awarded, this grant could cover the match portion of the Water Conservation Fund grant allowing for little or no funding from the Township for the whole project. Waiting to apply for this grant will push the project out a year with permits being applied for in 2022 and an expected completion date sometime in 2023.

In 2020, the Township submitted a Trust Fund grant application for **Carronde Park Tennis Court Renovation Project**. The grant was not awarded in the 2020 cycle. The Board approved re-submitting this grant application in 2021. The Township received word in December that the project had been approved for grant funding. This project will renovate three tennis courts to include improving one existing tennis court and refurbishing the other two courts to add green space and two pickle ball courts. This project is expected to be constructed and completed in 2023.

The Township also submitted a Trust Fund grant application for **Kedzie Park Playground Development Project** in 2020. The grant was not awarded in the 2020 cycle. The Board approved submitting this grant application in 2021. The Township received word in December that the project had been approved for grant funding. The grant would replace equipment and surfacing with structures to better meet the needs of users. This project is expected to be constructed and completed in 2023.

PARKS / PUBLIC WORKS ... *Continued*

Dave Rindfield, Director

Sewer

A reminder to all residents...**do not discharge the following to the sanitary sewer:** storm water, surface water, ground water, roof runoff, subsurface drainage, cooling water or unpolluted industrial process waters.

As noted in the past, disposable flushable wipes should never be flushed as these wipes cause issues to our lift stations and the treatment plant.

Washington Avenue & Hillview Lift Stations/Sewer Main Upgrade: Both projects have been completed with the exception of concrete that will be poured in the spring.

**Water**

Fire hydrant flushing will begin May 1st and continue through the fall. During this time you may see water that is dirty or rusty. If this happens, run your water a few minutes until it clears up. If dirty or rusty water continues contact Township Public Works at 429-8113.

Please note: Per the International Fire Code, all fire hydrants must maintain a 3 foot radius so please be sure that all fire hydrants are cleared of bushes and trees and no other landscaping hides a hydrant.

Hollywood Water Main Replacement Project: Engineering for the project has been completed with plans being updated at this time. Applications for permits are expected to be submitted the first week of February with a normal turn-around permit receipt time of approximately 30 days. Once permits are secured, request for construction bids will be solicited. Construction is expected to be completed in 2022.

Storm Water/Watershed Management

Just a reminder that it takes all of us working together to prevent pollution of the surface water runoff to our rivers and streams. For further information check out "Keep it Blue" at <https://www.swmpc.org/water.asp> . Brochures that illustrate ways to prevent pollution to our storm water system are also located on the counter at the township hall.



TREASURER'S REPORT

Dave Vonk, Treasurer

IMPORTANT TAX DATES:

- **Summer Tax Bills** are mailed **July 1st** and due by 5:00 p.m. on **September 14, 2022**.
- **Winter Tax Bills** are mailed **December 1st** and due by 5:00 p.m. on **February 14, 2023**.
- After **February 28, 2022**, all delinquent payments for 2021 taxes are due to the Berrien County Treasurer 269-983-7111 ext. 8569.

PAYMENTS:

- You can pay your tax bill by check, cash or credit/debit card. There is a 3% fee (\$2 minimum) for using a credit or debit card.
- We can accept partial payments starting the day you receive your tax bill.
- Please call 269-932-0269 for current balance due if you did not pay by the due date.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

- **Tax Bill Address Changes:** call our Assessor 269-932-0272.
- **Tax Bill Name Changes:** call the Berrien County Register of Deeds 269-983-7111 ext. 8562.
- **County Drain Assessments:** call the Drain Commissioner 269-983-7111 ext. 8255.
- Your **taxable value** is based on the value of your property on December 31st of the preceding year.
- Valuable **income tax information** can be found on your tax bills. Please save them.

You can access your tax information free online at www.bsaonline.com. After creating an account, you will have unlimited access to your property tax information. BS&A charges a \$3.00 fee for online inquiries by non-owners of any property.

“Like” our Facebook page: **St. Joseph Charter Township** to keep up to date on Township happenings. Or go to our website **SJCT.org**. Please see the following Facebook pages for Police and Fire Department information:



St. Joseph Township Police Department
 St. Joseph Charter Township Fire Department Station #1
 St. Joseph Charter Township Fire Department Station #2

Recycling Do's and Don'ts

PLEASE RINSE ALL CONTAINERS AND REMOVE LIDS FROM CONTAINERS

METAL CANS, ALUMINUM FOIL, ALUMINUM FOIL PANS

Recycle all food and beverage metal cans - steel, tin, bi-metal and aluminum

CARDBOARD, NEWSPAPER, AND MAGAZINES

You can also include newspapers, inserts, catalogs, paperback books, phone books, and brochures

PAPER FOOD CONTAINERS

Recycle food boxes including: ice cream & milk containers, and cereal & pasta boxes

PAPER

Recycle envelopes, office paper, junk mail, greeting cards, & file folders.

PLASTICS

Recycle plastics #1 thru #7. Look on the bottom of containers for a number inside the recycling arrows

DO NOT RECYCLE

No Plastic Bags

No Plastic Food Wrappers

No Pizza Boxes

No Plastic without Numbers

No Greasy Food Containers

No Food or Liquid Waste

No Yard Waste

No Construction Debris or Scrap Metal

No Hazardous Waste

No Electronics, Cables, or Batteries

No Diapers, Tissues, or Biohazardous Waste

No Light Bulbs

No Ceramics, Dishes, or Mirrors

No Hoses, Toys, Clothes, Shoes, Tools, or Holiday Decorations

No Styrofoam





Presort Standard US Postage
PAID
Kalamazoo, MI Permit No. 1366

**ST. JOSEPH CHARTER
TOWNSHIP**

3000 Washington Ave
P.O. Box 147
St. Joseph MI 49085

PHONE NUMBERS

TOWNSHIP HALL429-7703
Fax.....429-2079
(Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

POLICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Emergency Only.....9-1-1
Police Administration.....429-6890
(Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.)
Non-Emergency.....983-3060
(Dispatch – 24 hr.)

FIRE: Emergency.....9-1-1
Fire Administration
Station #1 - 3000 Washington Ave.....429-4100
Station #2 - 1750 Colfax Ave.....429-4100

AMBULANCE.....9-1-1
Public Works - Sewer/Water Problems.....429-8113
Water/Sewer Bills983-6324

Berrien County Road Department.....925-1196
Berrien County Animal Control927-5648
I&M Electric800-311-6424
Michigan Gas800-401-6451

YARD WASTE PICKUP RUNS FROM APRIL THROUGH THE SECOND THURSDAY OF DECEMBER, ON YOUR NORMAL TRASH DAY

Office Closures for 2022

Friday, April 15th — Spring Holiday

Friday and Monday, May 27th and 30th— Memorial Day

Friday and Monday, July 1st and 4th— Fourth of July

Friday and Monday, September 2nd and 5th— Labor Day

Thursday and Friday, November 24th and 25th—Thanksgiving

Friday and Monday, December 23rd and 26th—Christmas

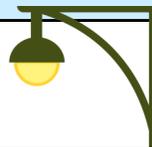
BEST WAY DISPOSAL OBSERVES THE FOLLOWING HOLIDAYS

Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Years Day

Usually, if a holiday falls on your regularly scheduled collection day, that day and every collection day after that day will be moved back one day for the remainder of that week. **Please call Best Way directly (463-3232) with any questions on holiday pickup or recycling schedules.**

Arrangements for extra rubbish carts, yard waste carts, or recycling containers can be made by calling Best Way. Please call Tami at **269-463-3232** with any questions or concerns on our rubbish/yard waste/recycling programs.

STREET LIGHTS: If you notice a street light that is not working, report it to Indiana Michigan Power on their website: <https://www.indianamichiganpower.com/> You will be asked for the pole number and the nearest street address or cross street. The pole number is located on a metal tag about eye level on the street light pole. If you do not have internet access, you may contact the Police Department at 429-6890 to have them enter your request into I&M’s website.



IMPORTANT NOTICE: Your water service may be turned off if your bill remains unpaid 45 days after the date of the bill. There will be a fee to turn the water back on, so please call 983-6324 with any questions or problems *before* this occurs.

Unpaid bills are added to December property tax bills, and these additional fees, which raise the amount that mortgage companies with escrow accounts pay, COULD affect your monthly mortgage payment, so please keep your account current. Call 983-6324 to make payment arrangements.

FIRE HYDRANTS are a vital part of our overall community public safety. **Please try to keep them free of over growth 3’ around and easily visible.**

Seconds can make a difference between saving and losing someone’s home or life. Please help us keep them readily visible for emergency personnel, even in winter. Our fire fighters thank you for your help!