


Community
UPDATE
OCTOBER 2021
FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESK
Roger Seely,
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 Inspector.....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.



Leaf Collection: In a few weeks we will be moving into autumn in Southwest Michigan. When the leaves start to fall remember... all leaves must be bagged in large brown paper yard waste bags or placed in containers clearly labeled "Yard Waste". Plastic bags are not allowed. You may either purchase your own container and label it (there are stickers available at the Township Hall) or rent a container from Best Way Disposal. (463-3232)

Fall landfill passes will be available for pickup at the Township Hall beginning September 13th. Passes are good for rubbish drop-off at Orchard Hill Landfill in Watervliet for the following dates: October 8-9, 15-16, 22-23, 29-30. A household may have one (1) pass for rubbish clean up for that property. If you have any questions on what is allowed, please call the landfill office at 468-3658.

Before we know it, cold weather will be back with us in Southwest Michigan. Here are a few helpful reminders for cold and snowy weather.



Snowplowing: SJCT (St. Joseph Charter Township) roads are plowed by the BCRD (Berrien County Road Department). MDOT (Michigan Department of Transportation) plows Niles Rd. and S. Lakeshore Drive. Village of Shoreham roads are plowed by a private contractor hired by the Village Council. The Road Department plows in the following order: 1) primary roads are opened for emergency vehicles; 2) secondary roads are opened to link primary roads; 3) subdivision roads are opened when both primary and secondary roads are stabilized.

Remember:

1. Plan ahead. When bad weather is announced, stock up on food, water, flashlights, batteries and any other necessities.
2. Prepare your vehicle by maintaining antifreeze, motor oil, battery and tires. Carry flares, blankets, coats, hats, gloves, boots, shovel and any other item you may need if you should get stuck for any length of time.
3. Stay off the roads if a snow emergency is announced. This will ensure your safety and also the safety of the Road Department crew.
4. Only lightweight aluminum or fiberglass markers are allowed to mark the road edge.
5. Do not run portable generators in your home or garage. Portable generators give off deadly carbon monoxide in enclosed places.

Have a safe autumn and winter and enjoy the holidays!

FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESKcontinued

Roger Seely, Supervisor

Pet Ordinance: If you bring your four-legged furry friend 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.



Based on the 2020 Census results, the State of Michigan lost one representative seat going from 14 total representatives in 2010 to 13 in 2020.

The 2020 census populations for local governments have been finalized. St. Joseph Charter Township's population decreased by 35 persons from the 2010 count. The total population count for 2020 is 9,993, a drop of 0.3 percent. This number will be the official population count until 2030 when a new count is announced. For more information on the Census go to: 2020census.gov.

2020 FINANCIAL AUDIT: The financial audit for 2020 was completed and was presented to the Township Board for acceptance by Hungerford Nichols CPA's at the June 1st meeting. Mr. Brian Wisneski presented the audit stating that overall, the Township is in excellent financial condition.



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.

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 new 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 DESKcontinued

Roger Seely, Supervisor

Water Rate Increase: At their February 17th meeting, the St. Joseph Water Services Joint Operating Board approved a water rate increase for water users of St. Joseph City water which includes St. Joseph Charter Township water consumers. The rate went from a 6.9% annual rate increase to a 7.5% increase.

The Township collects a 50% surcharge which is incorporated into water rates listed on your City water bill. The surcharge is used to fund water operations and water capital expenditures in the Township. In April, the Township Board of Trustees voted to continue the surcharge on the City's new rates which became effective July 1st. These rate increases will begin on the water bill you receive in August.

The new rates are as follows:

<u>Meter Size</u>	<u>Local Surcharge</u>	<u>Ready-to-Serve Rates</u>
5/8 inch	\$10.60	\$21.20
3/4 inch	\$11.66	\$23.32
1 inch	\$14.84	\$29.68
1 & ½ inch	\$19.08	\$38.16
2 inch	\$30.74	\$61.48
3 inch	\$116.60	\$233.20
4 inch	\$148.40	\$296.80
6 inch	\$222.60	\$445.20

Local Surcharge per unit rate: \$1.24

Rate per unit: \$2.56

Quarterly East Side Customers Only – \$23.92 charge for 2012 Fairplain water system construction needed to change water provider from the City of Benton Harbor to the City of St. Joseph remains the same.

Sample west side of the Township water/sewer bill

DESCRIPTION	CURR READ	PREV READ	TYPE	USAGE	AMOUNT
Previous Balance					\$0.00
Water-Domestic	1928	1917	A	11	\$89.64
Water-Sprinkler	5539	5320	A	219	\$590.32
Sewer	1928	1917	A	11	\$112.62
Hickory Creek					\$13.69
Local Surcharge 1	1928	1917	A	11	\$44.38
Local Surcharge 2	5539	A	A	219	\$286.40

To calculate water fees: – For this sample, the **Water-Domestic** meter is for a 2" line and **Water Sprinkler** meter is for a 1" line. (Most homes possess either a ¾" or 1" domestic water line and a 1" sprinkler line.)

Follow across to the right of **Water-Domestic** and you will see **CURR READ** and **PREV READ** column headings. You will also see a **USAGE** column heading. The Number listed under **USAGE** equals the number listed under **CURR READ** less the number listed under **PREV READ**. The **USAGE** number is multiplied by the per unit charge which is currently \$2.56/unit to get the total unit usage fee. Each water meter size (unfortunately, the water bill does not tell you what your meter size is) has a Ready-To-Serve Rate which is added to the total unit usage fee. This is listed under **AMOUNT**.

$$11 \times \$2.56 = \$28.16 + \$61.48 = \$89.64$$

FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESK continued

Roger Seely, Supervisor

You may also have a **Water-Sprinkler** line item which is also a combination of the Ready-To-Serve rate for the meter size and the usage fee.

$$219 \times \$2.56 = \$560.64 + \$29.68 = \$590.32$$

Local Surcharge 1 is the **USAGE** number multiplied by the local surcharge per unit fee which is currently \$1.24/unit to get the total local surcharge unit usage fee. Each water meter size also has a local surcharge fee which is added to the total local surcharge usage fee. This sum will be listed under **AMOUNT**.

$$11 \times \$1.24 = \$13.64 + \$30.74 = \$44.38$$

If you have a **Water-Sprinkler** line item you will have a **Local Surcharge 2** which is calculated the same way as the **Local Surcharge 1** amount.

$$219 \times \$1.24 = \$271.56 + \$14.84 = \$286.40$$

If you live on the east side of the Township (Fairplain) you will also have an additional flat fee of \$23.92 listed as **FAIRPLAIN** added to your bill. This fee began in 2012 when the Township constructed a new system changing the water provider from the City of Benton Harbor to the City of St. Joseph. This fee has not changed.



Sewer Rate Increase: At their July meeting, the Board of Trustees approved a 10% sewer rate increase to begin August 1, 2021. For an average user the increase is expected to be approximately \$7.00/quarter and approximately \$28.00/year.

The new rates are as follows:

<u>Meter Size</u>	<u>Ready-to-Serve Rates</u>
5/8 inch	\$29.39
3/4 inch	\$32.33
1 inch	\$41.15
1 & ½ inch	\$52.90
2 inch	\$85.23
3 inch	\$161.65
4 inch	\$235.12
6 inch	\$323.29
8 inch	\$470.24

Commodity Rate: \$2.49

Quarterly Flat Rate: \$ 97.44

Quarterly West Side Customers only - Hickory Creek Sewer
Lining Bond Payment rate of \$13.69 per customer remains the same.

Sample west side of the Township water/sewer bill

DESCRIPTION	CURR READ	PREV READ	TYPE	USAGE	AMOUNT
Previous Balance					\$0.00
Water-Domestic	1928	1917	A	11	\$89.64
Water-Sprinkler	5539	5320	A	219	\$590.32
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Hickory Creek					\$13.69
Local Surcharge 1	1928	1917	A	11	\$44.38
Local Surcharge 2	5539	A	A	219	\$286.40

FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESKcontinued

Roger Seely, Supervisor

To calculate sewer fees— For this sample, the **Water-Domestic** meter is for a 2" line. If you don't possess a water meter, your bill will be a flat fee of \$97.44. If you have a water meter you will pay the number listed under **USAGE** multiplied by the Commodity Rate of \$2.49 plus the sewer Ready-To-Serve fee based on the size of your water line meter. Sewer is not charged for **Water-Sprinkler** use.

$$11 \times \$2.49 = \$27.39 + \$85.23 = \$112.62$$

For residents of the west side of the Township only, there is also a flat fee of \$13.69 added to your bill for the Hickory Creek sewer interceptor lining and is listed in the **AMOUNT** column to the right of **Hickory Creek**.



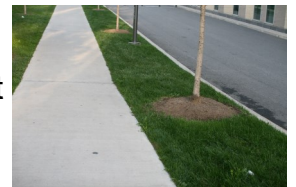
Fire Improvement Millage: In December 2018, the Township began collecting taxes for the ten year fire improvement millage that was approved by the voters at the August 2018 election. In October of 2020, the Board of Trustees approved the purchase of a Rosenbauer fire truck at a cost not to exceed \$725,000. The truck has been ordered, is being built, and is expected to be completed in 2021 or 2022. Additional equipment needed to make the fire truck operable was also ordered and is expected to arrive in 2021 or 2022.

Parks and Trails Millage: In December 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 park projects.



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 2021, the Township's share of cost will go for repairs and maintenance on: Nelson Rd., Maiden Ln. from Hollywood Rd. to Lincoln Ave., Western Ave. from Miami Rd. to Colfax Ave., Hoover Ave. from Fairplain Ave. to Colfax Ave., Brown School Rd. from Cleveland Ave. to the Village of Shoreham limits, Forest Hills Ln. from Washington Ave. to end, Windsor Dr. from Nelson Rd. to end, Maiden Ln. from Lincoln Ave. to Washington Ave., Grandeur Ln., Oak Brook, Karen Ct., Lynn Dr., Ann Dr., Sun Prairie Dr., Pontiac Rd. from Napier Ave. to Miami Rd., and a portion of Lincoln Village Subdivision west of Lincoln Ave. and north of Tucker Dr. (not including North Trail Ln., West Trail Ln. and Vinewood Dr. west of North Trail Ln.).

Napier Avenue Nonmotorized Pathway Project: Engineering continues on the project for pathways on both sides of Napier Avenue from Miami to Colfax. Construction is planned for 2022.



Berrien County Pinebrook Drain Project – The Drain Commissioner's office sent word to the Township that the Pinebrook Drain Project would begin August 2nd. This project was initiated due to flooding on Manitou Rd.

Fireworks: State of Michigan Public Act 256 of 2011 Section 28.457 states that consumer fireworks may be ignited and discharged the following days and hours after 11:00 a.m.:

- December 31 until 1 a.m. on January 1
- The Saturday and Sunday immediately preceding Memorial Day until 11:45 p.m. on each of those days.
- June 29 to July 4 until 11:45 p.m. on each of those days
- July 5th, if that date is a Friday or Saturday, until 11:45 p.m.
- The Saturday and Sunday immediately preceding Labor Day until 11:45 p.m. on each of those days.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Dave Vonk, Treasurer

IMPORTANT TAX DATES:

- **Summer Tax Bills** were mailed **July 1st** and are due by 5:00 p.m. on **September 14, 2021**.
- **Winter Tax Bills** will be mailed **December 1st** and are due by 5:00 p.m. on **February 14, 2022**.
- After **February 28, 2022**, all delinquent payments 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 269-429-7703 for current balance due if you did not pay by the due date.
- Tax payments can be made in person, mailed, or left in our DROP BOX. Please allow 10 days for your payment to reach us by mail. If you would like a receipt for a mailed or drop box payment, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

- Tax Bill **Address Changes**: call Sue Rice, Assessor 269-932-0272.
- Tax Bill **Name Changes**: call the Berrien County Register of Deeds 269-983-7111, ext. 8562.
- **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 \$2.00 fee for online inquiries by non-owners of any property.

If you have any questions, please contact Kim Reed, Deputy Treasurer, at 269-932-0269

TREASURER'S REPORT continued

Dave Vonk, Treasurer



1 YEAR DOG LICENSES will be available to purchase at the Township Hall
DECEMBER 1st —FEBRUARY 28th.

- Bring the license form that will be mailed to you in November by the Berrien County Animal Control and your pet's rabies certificate. Fees are listed on this form. If your rabies certificate will expire in the next 30 days, you will need to bring a new one.
- If you have a new dog that has not been licensed in Michigan before, we will need your pet's rabies certificate and proof of neutering/spaying, if applicable.
- Always attach the tag to your dog's collar right away, just in case they are ever lost.
- **3 YEAR LICENSES** are available from the Berrien County Animal Control 269-927-5648. You can purchase your license online directly from their website.

Again if you have any questions, please contact Kim Reed, Deputy Treasurer, at 269-932-0269.

MISCELLANEOUS TOWNSHIP INFORMATION



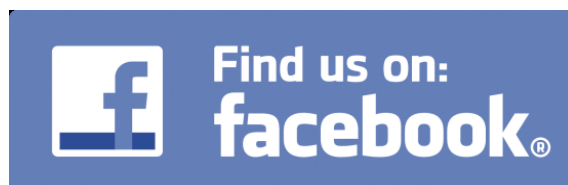
**Halloween Trick-or-Treat hours have been tentatively set for
6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. on October 31st.**
Residents wishing to participate are asked to turn on porch lights as a
welcome signal to trick-or-treaters.

**Please be advised due to the COVID-19 Pandemic this event is
subject to change**



“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



FROM THE CLERK'S OFFICE

Danielle Riegel, Election Coordinator

2021 Election Information

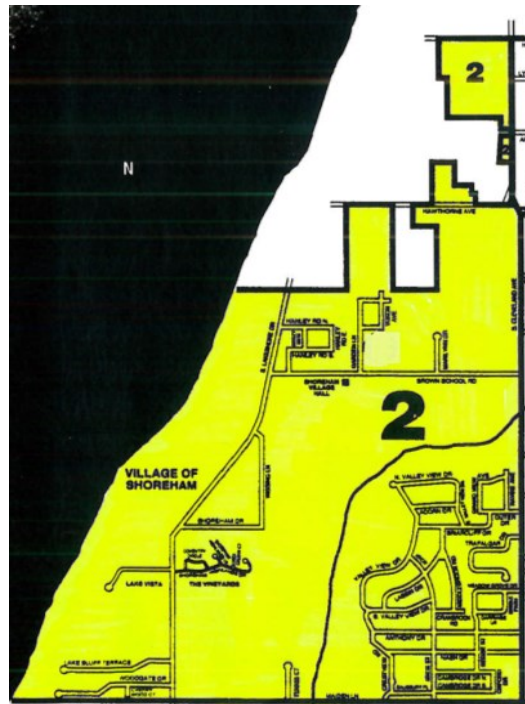
At this point, we have no elections scheduled for 2021.

**Precinct Location Change**

As I'm sure some of you can remember, Precinct #2 had a location change for the November 3rd, 2020 Presidential Election. The St. Joseph Seventh Day Adventist Church was generous enough to welcome us into their building, and we received a lot of great feedback on how well the facility met our needs.

With that in mind, St. Joseph Charter Township is looking to make the St. Joseph Seventh Day Adventist Church the new permanent home for Precinct #2. **IF** this permanent change is made, everyone who is registered to vote within that precinct will receive a new Voter ID Card in the mail advising of the permanent change.

Precinct location changes have to meet certain criteria set forth by the Michigan Bureau of Elections, along with the facilities and the Township coming to an agreement everyone is comfortable with. Stay tuned and keep an eye out for up-to-date voting location details!

**Election Inspector's**

Good news for our current election inspectors! One good thing that's come out of this pandemic is our ability to re-certify current election inspectors in more ways than ever before.

The Berrien County Clerk's Office has created new election inspector re-certification training videos that can be viewed online! You simply watch the video from the comfort of your home, and then take a short quiz. Once you pass the test, they send us a message with your new certificate! This will be a great new option for election inspectors that have previously served; however, if in-person learning is more your style, we will still offer that option too.

Thinking about becoming an election inspector and ensuring that every vote is counted? Contact myself, Danielle Riegel, at driegel@sjct.org or (269) 429-7703, and I will pass along further details about each position.

PARKS / PUBLIC WORKS

Dave Rindfield, Director

Parks

Township parks will be officially closed November 1st and reopen in April 2022.

Knauf Park Trail Donation – Mr. Fritz Knauf has been working with Township staff and consultants on an improvement project for the Knauf Park trailhead. Mr. Knauf has very generously agreed to donate the funds for a number of improvements to the trail to include: a pavilion with restrooms, a drinking fountain with dog/bottle filling station, a paved parking lot, a new sign and flower beds, items, that without his generosity, would have remained only part of a wish list. Many thanks to Fritz for choosing to donate to this Township park!

Oak Wilt – Is a fungal disease that moves through the vascular system (water conducting tissue) of oak trees. The fungus spores are carried to the tree by small beetles that feed on sap from fresh wounds. For more information on cause and prevention of Oak Wilt go to the Michigan State University Extension https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/oak_wilt_diagnosing_and_preventing.

Grants

2019 Maiden Lane Playground Structure Project LWC grant application - The \$110,000 grant that the Township applied for was awarded and project construction was originally scheduled for the spring and summer of 2020. However, the COVID-19 pandemic put a hold on the state receiving the required agreement from the federal government. On July 29th, we received the agreement from the State and at the August 2nd meeting the Board of Trustees awarded the contract for the equipment. Project construction is expected to be completed spring of 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.



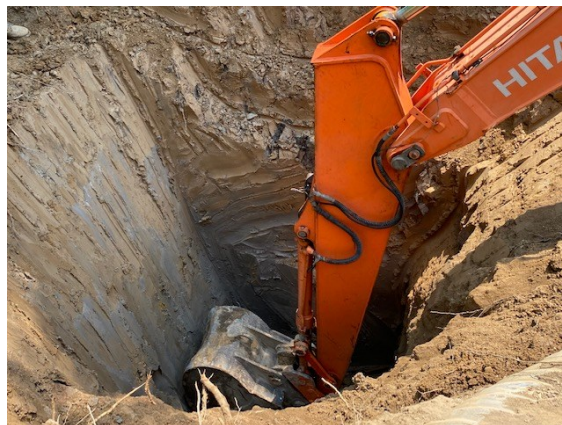
In 2020, the Township submitted a Trust Fund grant application for **Carronde Park Tennis Court Renovation Project**. The grant was not awarded in the 2020 cycle. The Board approved re-submitting this grant application in 2021. This project will renovate three tennis courts to include improving one existing tennis court and refurbishing the other two courts to add green space and two pickle ball courts. Word on approval of this grant is expected near the end of this year. If this grant is received the 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 re-submitting this grant application in 2021. The grant would replace equipment and surfacing with structures to better meet the needs of users. Word on approval of this grant is expected near the end of this year. If this grant is received this project is expected to be constructed and completed in 2023.

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 Update: To date, both the Hillview and Washington force main have been installed. We are waiting on pumps and controls to complete the work on the lift stations.



Water

Fire Hydrants: 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 work has occurred and the Township is waiting on permits from the State. Construction is now anticipated for spring of 2022.

Storm Water/Watershed Management

Just a reminder we all have to work together to prevent pollution of the surface water runoff to the rivers and streams. There are brochures located on the counter at the township hall showing how to prevent pollution to our storm water system.

Be Safe, Be Seen, Be Smart, Be Alert! – Pedestrian, Bicycle, & School Bus Safety Tips**Bicyclists & Pedestrians:**

- Wear bright/light colored clothing or reflective materials.
- Use headlights/taillights or carry a flashlight during dark hours.
- Do not wear headphones or use a cell phone while bicycling.
- Always wear a helmet while riding a bike.
- Walk *facing* traffic and bike *with* the flow of traffic.
- Follow rules of the road and obey traffic signals.
- Walk and bike single file on the paved shoulder of the road.
- Be alert to engine noise or backup lights in driveways and parking lots.
- Watch for turning vehicles.
- While waiting at the bus stop, stay a safe distance from the road's edge.
- Do not engage in "play" within the road right-of-way.
- Walk (do not run) to and from the bus, crossing in front of the bus.
- Watch for vehicles that may not have seen the bus stop lights.

Motorists:

- A distance of 3 feet or greater is required when passing a bicycle on the roadway.
- Prepare to stop when a slowing bus has its overhead yellow lights flashing.
- Stop at least 20 feet away from buses when red lights are flashing, unless driving in the opposite direction on a divided highway.
- Slow down in or near school and residential areas.
- Look for clues that indicate children might be in the area - such as safety patrols, crossing guards, bicycles, and playgrounds.
- Watch for children near bus stops.

	<p>SCHOOL BUSES WITH OVERHEAD Red and Yellow Lights (With or Without Bus Stop Signs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Yellow lights are flashing: Prepare to stop ▶ Red lights are flashing: Stop no closer than 20 feet from the bus ▶ Red lights turned off: Proceed 	
	<p>SCHOOL BUSES WITH OVERHEAD Red Lights (With or Without Bus Stop Signs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Red lights are flashing and bus is stopped: Stop no closer than 20 feet from the bus ▶ When red lights are turned off: Proceed 	
	<p>ALL SCHOOL BUSES Yellow Lights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Yellow hazard warning lights are flashing: Proceed with caution 	

TOWNSHIP POLICE AND FIRE COMMUNITY SERVICE EVENTS

St. Joseph Township Police Department would like to thank all those who participated in the 38th annual National Night Out event. We had a great turnout, and the kids had a lot of fun!!

Special thanks goes out to Jeff's Towing, The Christian Reformed Church of St. Joseph, Pri-Mart, and Culver's for supplying all of the food items and servers for this event.

We hope to see everyone again and make this an even better event in 2022!!!



ASSESSING DEPARTMENT*Sue Rice, Assessor*

The Assessing Department is responsible for the inventory of all property within St Joseph Charter Township, including the Village of Shoreham, and the valuation of all its taxable property. We maintain records of current ownership, assessed and taxable values, property characteristics, and market data. Record Card copies are available upon request. This office follows the requirements of the General Property Tax Act of the State of Michigan. That being said, remember, **YOU** pay property taxes based upon the information we have in our files. If you remove a deck, pool, shed or garage and do not notify us, it stays on your record card and you continue to pay taxes on it. If you ever have any questions please call me at 269-932-0272.

Also, to ensure proper billing of taxes and required notices we encourage you to notify us of any name changes, mailing address changes or business changes. Mail sent from the township is not forwarded and will be returned to us – which delays your receiving it.

Many residents are not aware that there is a [Poverty/Hardship Exemption](#) available for those residents who are unable to pay their property taxes due to their financial situation. This Exemption is for those residents who have found that they are unable to pay their property taxes in a timely manner. There are guidelines which need to be followed in order to qualify for this exemption, the most important one being that you have to own and occupy the property. You also must meet the Federal Poverty income standards as set by the United States Office of Management and Budget. For 2021 the guidelines are as follows:

Size of Family Unit	Poverty Guidelines
1	\$12,760
2	\$17,240
3	\$21,720
4	\$26,200
5	\$30,680
6	\$35,160
7	\$39,640
8	\$44,120
For each additional person	\$4,480

Public Act 390 of 1994 states that the poverty exemption guidelines established by the governing body of the local assessing unit shall also include an asset level test. An asset test means the amount of cash, fixed assets or other property that could be used, or converted to cash for use in the payment of property taxes. Such assets might include boats, motorcycles, coin collection, antiques, silver etc. and are *not to exceed \$15,000*.

You **must** apply annually for this exemption – it only qualifies for the year in which you apply.

If you feel that you might qualify for this exemption, please contact my office at 269-932-0272 or email me at srice@sjct.org.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Troy Gano, Building Official

If you are planning a remodel or construction project and have a contractor, be sure that they are licensed to do the work, and ensure that they have obtained the required permits. If you are unsure of what work requires a permit, don't hesitate to call. If you as a homeowner plan to tackle some of these projects and are unsure if a permit is required, please call and we will let you know either way. Our goal is life safety of all residents and through permitting we can ensure this is achieved. Note that a building permit is not required for a shed under 200 sq. ft. in size or a fence of any type, but we do require a \$24 zoning permit to ensure compliance with our zoning code.

We are here to serve you with our State Licensed & ICC Nationally Certified Staff

Contacts:

Troy Gano, Building Inspector (269) 930-2453

Ken Simpson, Electrical Inspector (269) 471-5869

Ken Jewell, Plumbing and Mechanical Inspector (269) 287-0425



ORDINANCE DEPARTMENT

Troy Gano, Ordinance Officer

As we approach fall, leaves will be coming down and yard waste will become an ongoing struggle. If we all do our part to keep our yards clean, the overall appearance to us who live here and to visitors passing through will keep the Township a sought-after community.

A few reminders:

- **There is no burning of yard waste allowed in St. Joseph Charter Township.** All leaves must be bagged in the large brown paper bags or placed in containers clearly labeled "Yard Waste" (we have these stickers available for free in our office). You may either purchase your own container and label it or rent one from Best Way Disposal (463-3232).
- **Permissible Fires**—It is permissible to burn clean dry fire wood or sticks contained within a non-combustible ring no larger than 4 feet in diameter, constantly attended, and at least 15 feet from any building or structure. (Excessive smoke in all cases will be required to be put out)
- **Junk & Debris**— If you have large items such as furniture or appliances that you would like to dispose of, please note that Best Way will NOT pick these items up without a special pickup call and additional fee. If you have extra debris/items please store it out of sight until you can haul it away or until you are able to schedule a special pickup.
- **Parking**—There is no parking on the lawn or road right-of-way at any time. All off-street parking must be on an improved surface such as crushed stone, crushed concrete, paving bricks or other similar material.
- **Dog barking** continuously is deemed a nuisance and prohibited. Dogs will bark when they see a dog or people near their property and a reasonable amount is allowed.
- **Rental Property**—Dwellings are permitted to be rented as single-family long-term (30 days or more) only if legally registered and inspected by the township.



Troy Gano, Department Head

Henry Wing, Ordinance Enforcement



Receive Township Alerts

St. Joseph Charter Township

Sign up to receive township notifications via text message.
Opt-in to the following program:

- ✓ Township Notifications keyword: **SJCTOWNSHIP**

Get Started:

Text in the above keyword to: **91896**



What to Expect:

- After the initial keyword is sent, you will receive a confirmation message asking you to reply YES to verify opt-in.
- You will receive up to 4 text messages a month with a notification for each alert category selection.
- Message and data rates may apply. Check with your carrier for more details.

How to Opt-Out:

Text STOP at any time to remove yourself from the notification list.

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

Powered by

TextMyGov

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

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



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



Presort Standard US Postage
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**YARD WASTE PICKUP IS FROM APRIL
 THROUGH NOVEMBER ON YOUR NORMAL
 TRASH DAY**

**BEST WAY DISPOSAL OBSERVES THE
 FOLLOWING HOLIDAYS**

**Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving
 Day, Christmas Day, and 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.

Office Closures for 2021

Thursday and Friday, November 25th & 26th—**Thanksgiving**

Friday and Monday, December 24th & 27th —**Christmas**

Other Holidays Observed: New Year's Day, Easter, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day

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.

FIRE HYDRANTS are a vital part of our overall community public safety. **Please try to keep them free of overgrowth 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!



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.