



OCTOBER 2023

Community

UPDATE

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.....Shalice Northrop
 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



Leaf Collection: The leaves are beginning 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)

In the last few years, leaves seem to be falling later and later in the year. This led the Township Board to approve extending yard waste pickup by two weeks in the fall. This year's yard waste pickup season began April 1st and will end December 14th. During the season, yard waste pickup occurs each week on your normal trash pickup day unless your normal trash pickup day is a Best Way observed holiday. See the back page of newsletter for a listing of Best Way holidays.

Fall landfill passes will be available for pickup at the Township Hall beginning September 18th. Passes are good for rubbish drop-off at Orchard Hill Landfill in Watervliet for the following dates: October 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28. 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 463-5588.

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 dog to any park or trail in St. Joseph Charter Township, 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. Also, please see the letter from the State of Michigan regarding pet waste in storm sewer systems in this newsletter in the Public Works section.



2022 FINANCIAL AUDIT: The financial audit for 2022 was completed and was presented to the Township Board for acceptance by Hungerford and Nichols at the June 5th workshop meeting. Mr. Ryan Marschke presented the audit stating that it was a clean audit and 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 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, (**such as a water boil advisory**). 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 April 19th meeting, the St. Joseph Water Services Joint Operation Board voted to approve the annual budget which encompassed an increase to water rates for the City of St. Joseph and the Authority, including St. Joseph Charter Township water consumers.

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 June, the Township Board of Trustees voted to continue the surcharge on the City's new rates which became effective July 1st. These rate increases began on the water bill you received in August.

Based on the average units used (18) and a 5/8" tap, the approximate quarterly increase for a residential water bill would be approximately \$5.13.

The new rates are as follows:

<u>Meter Size</u>	<u>Local Surcharge</u>	<u>Ready-to-Serve Rates</u>
5/8 inch	\$13.88	\$27.75
3/4 inch	\$15.26	\$30.52
1 inch	\$19.43	\$38.85
1 & ½ inch	\$24.98	\$49.96
2 inch	\$40.24	\$80.48
3 inch	\$152.63	\$305.26
4 inch	\$194.26	\$388.52
6 inch	\$291.39	\$582.78

Local Surcharge per unit rate: \$1.29

Rate per unit: \$2.67

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	\$109.85
Water-Sprinkler	5539	5320	A	219	\$623.58
Sewer	1928	1917	A	11	\$112.62
Hickory Creek					\$13.69
Local Surcharge 1	1928	1917	A	11	\$54.43
Local Surcharge 2	5539	A	A	219	\$301.94

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 \$2.67/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**.

$$11 \times \$2.67 = \$29.37 + \$80.48 = \$109.85$$

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 \$2.67 = \$584.73 + \$38.85 = \623.58

Local Surcharge 1 is the **USAGE** number multiplied by the local surcharge per unit fee which is currently \$1.23/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 \$1.29 = \$14.19 + \$40.24 = \54.43

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 \$1.29 = \$282.51 + \$19.43 = \301.94

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.

Current Sewer Rates:

Meter Size	Ready-to-Serve Rates
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	\$109.85
Water-Sprinkler	5539	5320	A	219	\$623.58
Sewer	1928	1917	A	11	\$112.62
Hickory Creek					\$13.69
Local Surcharge 1	1928	1917	A	11	\$54.43
Local Surcharge 2	5539	A	A	219	\$301.94

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.

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

Fire Improvement Millage: 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. 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 arrived and is housed in Fire Station 1. A Rosenbaum 2022 mini pumper truck was ordered in November of 2021 and is expected to arrive sometime in 2023. This truck will be housed at Fire Station 2.



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 the Spring 2023 newsletter it was announced that the Township's share of cost would go for repairs and maintenance on approximately 6 miles of roads to include: Maiden Lane (Red Arrow Hwy. to Cleveland Ave.), Lydia Dr., Brunn Dr. (E. of Niles Rd.), Marilyn Dr. (Brown School Rd. to end), Blackhawk, Moccasin (N. of Napier Ave.), W. Valley View Dr., Crestview Dr., Lasein Dr., S. Valley View Dr., Anthony Dr., Nash Dr., Salisbury Dr., Knox St., Maiden Lane (W. of Knox St., N. of Maiden Ln.), Maiden Lane (Washington Ave. to I-94), Maiden Lane (Cleveland Ave. to I-94), Seneca, Cayuga, etc. (subs N. of Western, E. of Miami).

However, in April, when the County Road Department received the bid for repair and maintenance to the roads listed above, it was \$423,357.69 higher than estimated.

Due to limited funds, it was decided that repair and maintenance on some of the roads listed above would need to be removed from the 2023 schedule. A three-person group of Township staff and Board drove all of the roads listed above and recommended to the Board to remove the following from the 2023 schedule: Marilyn, from Brown School Rd. to the end, Blackhawk, Moccasin, N. of Napier, Seneca, Cayuga, etc. subs N. of Western, E. of Miami. The Board approved the recommendation at a cost reduction of \$448,843.

Napier Avenue Nonmotorized Pathway Project: Construction of the CMAQ grant match non-motorized pathways on both sides of Napier Avenue from Miami to Colfax has been completed with the exception of minor restoration items. The Township Board and staff are very proud of this project and the safety, beauty and health benefits it has brought to our community.

Township Building Updates and Repairs –

Meals on Wheels/Senior Nutrition Building - We encourage you to take a look at the restoration that has taken place at the Township owned building on the corner of Napier and Colfax which houses Meals on Wheels/Senior Nutrition Building program.

Repairs and updates are/have taken place this year on the outside of the **Township Hall** including power washing, painting, gable work and new hand railings. **Fire Station #2** on Colfax has also undergone maintenance and repairs this year.



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.

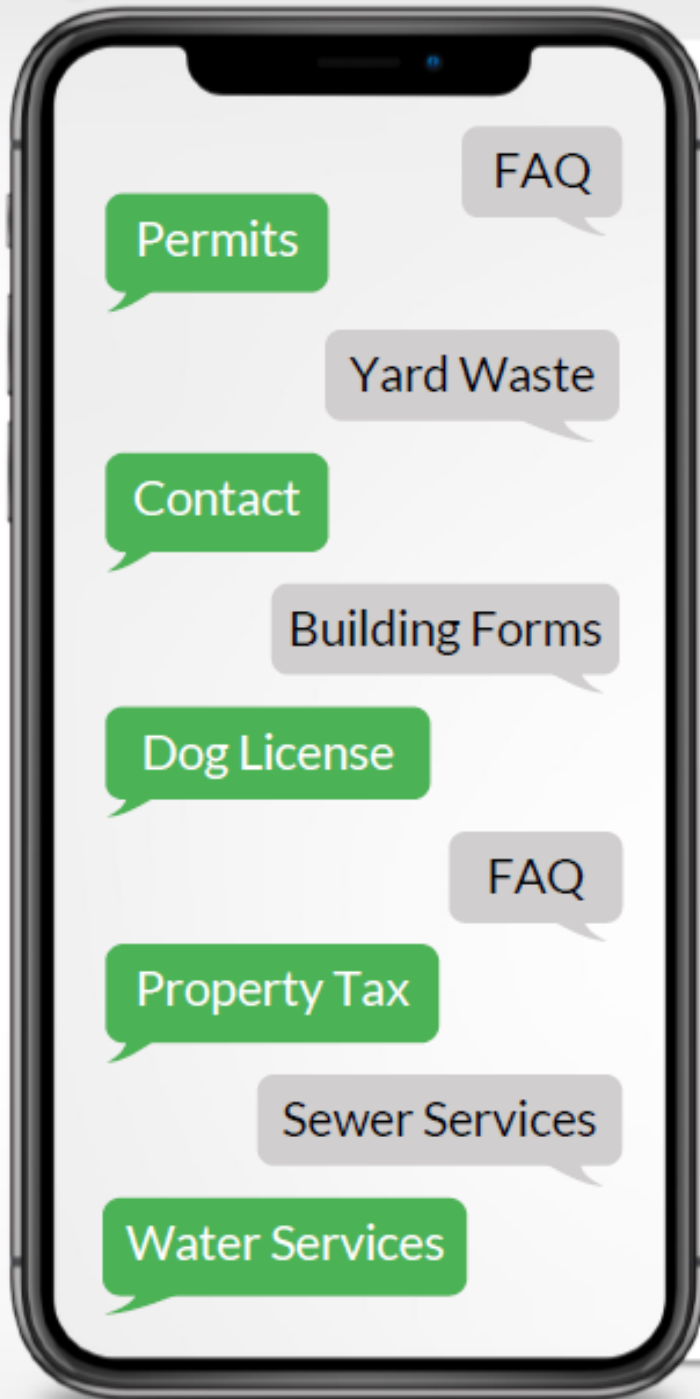
View terms and privacy policy info at: textmygov.com/opt-in-terms-conditions Msg & Data rates apply. Msg frequency varies. Text HELP for contact info.

Powered by

TextMyGov

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

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, 2023**.
- **Winter Tax Bills** will be mailed **December 1st** and are due by 5:00 p.m. on **February 14, 2024**.
- After **February 29, 2024**, 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 Kim Reed, Deputy Treasurer 269-932-0269.
- 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 \$6.00 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

DOG LICENSES:

Due to procedure changes, dog licenses are no longer available at St. Joseph Charter Township Hall and may now be purchased through Berrien County Animal Control. Licenses may be purchased in person at 1400 S. Euclid Ave., Benton Harbor or on-line at berriencounty.org click on departments then animal control. If you have any questions regarding dog licenses you may reach Berrien County Animal Control at 269-927-5648.

**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.



“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

Christin Rice, Deputy Clerk/Election Coordinator

GETTING READY FOR ELECTIONS:

Hello Everyone!

I am Christin Rice and I am the new Election's Coordinator and Deputy Clerk for the Township. I came to the Township at the end of March. Having worked in Oronoko Charter Township and also in New Buffalo City.

Lots of exciting things are happening in election world.

Proposal 22-2

Proposal 22-2 will bring many changes to our election processes. The details are still being worked out by the Michigan Bureau of Elections as to how to implement these changes. The biggest change will be the implementation of 9-days of early voting and establishing early voting locations. Details on early voting will be posted on our website and Facebook page soon.



Those who vote an Absent Ballot, will need to make a decision to change from an Absent **Application** list to an Absent **Ballot** list. Sometime in early 2024 the Application list will no longer exist. Proposal 2 contains legislation to automatically send the voter a ballot. If you do not wish to receive a ballot for every election and want to fill out an application for each election, you would need to call or email to have an application sent or stop in to fill it out.

To be on the **Ballot** list A signed application will be required from EACH voter. You will find the application on our website: www.sjct.org/departments/elections. Scroll down to FORMS and Permanent Absent Ballot form. You can also go to the State of Michigan website to sign up: www.michigan.gov/sos/all-services/absentee-ballot. If you have already requested to be added to the **ballot** list you do not need to fill out another application. This fall an application will be mailed to voters still on the **Application** list. This will be the last call for you to move to the **Ballot** list.

This change will present a big challenge for us with those of you who snowbird to warmer climates in the winter. To better serve our voters we will need additional information from you for each election; the dates you are leaving and returning, and the address you will be at when you arrive. **It is the voter's responsibility to make us aware of this prior to each election.** REMEMBER, election mail cannot be forwarded. Anything we mail to you, if you are away, will be returned to us, causing a delay in receiving your ballot and the time needed to return it. Communication will be the key. Also, absent voters will see postage paid return envelopes when they receive their ballots. No more adding a stamp to the envelope. What is important on your returned ballot envelope is your signature. Your signature is required to verify your identity. When signing your ballot envelope, you will need to sign it as closely as that of the signature on your driver's license. Please compare them before returning the ballot. We understand that health concerns may interfere with your signature matching the driver's license.

If you do not wish to mail your ballot you can bring it in to the office or drop in in our ballot drop box. In the near future, you will see 2 dropboxes in front of the Township Hall. The white dropbox will be designated for tax payments and other documents and will be located at the left side of the building. The other will be clearly marked as a **BALLOT Dropbox** (see picture below).



FROM THE CLERK'S OFFICE*Christin Rice, Deputy Clerk/Election Coordinator*

Please consider joining the Election Inspector Team!

Election Inspectors or Poll Workers conduct assigned duties which include issuing ballots to registered voters, monitoring the voting equipment, explaining how to properly mark the ballot or use the Voter Assist Terminal. You can also become a member of our Absent Voter Counting Board. This is the group of Inspectors who process those ballots that are mailed in and makes sure they are counted. Inspectors are paid for their time and are trained by myself or the Berrien County Clerk's staff.



The Township had 2 successful elections in May and August this year:

In May we processed 95 Absent voter ballots and 31 voted at the poll in person. (Remember this election was for Lakeshore Schools and we have fewer voters in that school district.)

In the recent August election, we processed 1,561 Absent voter ballots and 246 voted at the polls in person.

This could not have happened without the awesome group of employees the Township has and also its Election Inspectors! Most of these people are from our community, and spend a long day making sure your right to vote is exercised. I don't know what we would do without them. If you are interested; You can contact me here at the Township Hall by emailing deputyclerk@SJCT.org or calling (269) 429-7703. You must be at least 16+ years to work an election. Anyone registered to vote in the State of Michigan can be an inspector, even if you don't live in St. Joseph Charter Township.

As of the printing of this newsletter; there will not be a November 2023 Election.



Presidential Primary date is still to be determined.

Possible Primary dates are:
Tuesday February 6th
February 27th
March 12th

August 6th 2024 will be the Local and County Primary

November 5th 2024 will be the Presidential Election

Mark your calendars. The BEST ways to receive Township information is to check our website: www.sjct.org, our Facebook page or to join the TextMyGov option on our website (see instructions in this newsletter) TextMyGov will have pertinent information on Township issues that may concern you.

PARKS / PUBLIC WORKS

Dave Rindfield, Director

Parks

Township parks will be officially closed November 1st and reopen April 1st 2024 weather pending.

Knauf Park Trail Pavilion— The new pavilion at Knauf Park Trail, made possible through the generous donation of Mr. Fritz Knauf, has been completed. Features include: picnic tables, 2 restrooms, a drinking fountain with a water bottle filling station and a drinking fountain for dogs. Many thanks to Fritz for choosing to donate to this Township Park!



Eaton Park Improvements – The Township Board approved a construction update project at Eaton Park to include: Repairs and upgrades to the concession stand building and door frame upgrades for baseball press boxes.

MDNR Grants -

Carronde Park Water Trail Connection & Fishing Platform Development Project - Construction has started and is expected to be completed this fall. The project includes: installation of fishing platforms, a walkway along the river bank, and an all-inclusive kayak launch.

Carronde Park Tennis Court Renovation Project - The grant has been awarded with construction expected to be completed in the Spring of 2024. This project includes: renovation of 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.

The Township applied for a \$998,800 **SPARK Grant** for upgrades to **Eaton Park**. If awarded, project items included are: Renovation of restrooms, resurfacing under the playground structure, access pathways and benches. A SPARK grant does not require a match from the Township. Grant award notifications are expected to be released in September.

Kedzie Park Playground Development Project – This grant project which replaced old equipment and surfacing was completed this summer.



PARKS / PUBLIC WORKS continued

Dave Rindfield, Director

Sewer

Lincoln Avenue Lift Station – the Township Sewer Department is designing a new lift station to replace the current lift station on Lincoln Ave. The 51-year-old station will be replaced with a newer style lift station that will allow for maintenance to be performed without using confined space measures. The Township purchased property from Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to move the station further off the road allowing staff to perform maintenance without affecting traffic flow. This project is expected to begin Spring of 2024.

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.

Water

Fire hydrant flushing will 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.

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.

The following letter was sent to the Township regarding pet waste in storm sewers:



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY
Kalamazoo District Office

EGLE
AARON B. KEATLEY
ACTING DIRECTOR

June 27, 2023

VIA EMAIL

David Rindfield, Director of Public Works
P.O. Box 147
Saint Joseph, Michigan 49085

Dear David Rindfield:

SUBJECT: Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4)
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)
Individual Permit No. MI0060199
Designated Name: St Joseph Twp MS4-Berrien

This letter is to remind you of the importance of keeping pet waste out of the storm sewer system in St. Joseph Township facilities. St. Joseph Township has several storm drains that move storm water directly from ground surfaces to Waters of the State, including the St. Joseph River, which has a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) restriction for elevated levels of E. coli. E. coli is commonly found in fecal matter and can lead to sickness in humans from contact or ingestion. The TMDL sets recommended limits for all potential sources of E. coli to reduce the levels found in the river to protect the users of the resource and any waters it flows to, including Lake Michigan. Beaches along the lake are routinely closed if local health departments find potentially harmful levels of E. coli in the water.

The residents in your community can have a direct effect on improving surface water quality by decreasing the amount of waste from pets that goes into waterways. By picking up after their pets, they will be helping St. Joseph Township reduce its footprint of E. coli that goes into the St. Joseph River and eventually Lake Michigan. The Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) recognizes that waste collection bags have been provided in Township owned areas, which is very helpful on this mission. We encourage you to continue spreading knowledge of this issue to residents and inform them of the effect they can have not only on their community, but also on the health of the Great Lakes. Thank you for your efforts.

Should you require further information, please contact me or Matthew Hanauer, Kalamazoo District Office, EGLE, Water Resources Division (WRD), at 269-330-9631; HanauerM@Michigan.gov; or EGLE, WRD, 7953 Adobe Road, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49009-5025.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Klang, District Supervisor
Kalamazoo District Office
Water Resources Division
269-568-2697
KlangJ@Michigan.gov

Water Main Break

On Saturday, July 29th the City of St. Joseph's water department located a major water main break near Marquette Woods Road and Hickory Creek. The water department isolated the damaged section of the water main, and restored system pressure. However, due to a temporary loss of pressure in parts of the system, a Boil Water Advisory was issued for Lincoln Township (including the Village of Stevensville), Royalton Township, and the portion of St. Joseph Charter Township west of the St. Joseph River (including the Village of Shoreham).

It was necessary to flush the water system and take water samples to determine whether drinking water standards were met. Water department crews worked through Saturday and Sunday to continue to flush the system. They were then able to take samples Monday morning and obtain results of the samples in 24 hours. The tests came back satisfactory, the State of Michigan's standards were satisfied and the Boil Water Advisory was lifted on Tuesday afternoon.

As soon as the Township received official information on the Boil Water Advisory, notice was sent out to the Township residents via the website www.sjct.org, the Township's Facebook page at St. Joseph Charter Township, and via alerts to those residents who have signed up for text alerts with TextMyGov. Information was also broadcast on local radio and television stations.

The Township began using the TextMyGov system in 2021 and information on how to sign up for the program has been available in each newsletter and on the website since that time. We encourage you to sign up for Township alerts with TextMyGov. Instructions for this service are listed in this issue. All those signed up, at the time of the water main break, received updates each time additional news was released to Township officials.

Please note, if you sign up, you will not receive nuisance texts from this service. You will only receive texts containing newsworthy information affecting the Township.



TOWNSHIP POLICE AND FIRE COMMUNITY SERVICE EVENTS

National Night Out

Our 40th Annual National Night Out was held on Tuesday, August 1st at Maiden Lane Community Park. Thank you to everyone who came out, and a huge thank you to the following businesses for their support!



Scam/Fraud Alert!

The Federal Trade Commission reported receiving over 2.8 million fraud complaints in 2022, with 1 in 10 adults being victims of financial loss.

Due to the vast number of scams occurring, it is not necessary to report attempted scams to local law enforcement. However, the department asks that you help alert your friends/neighbors of any scam attempts.



If you have inadvertently become the victim of a scam that has resulted in financial or personal identity loss, please contact the St. Joseph Township Police Department to file a report.

Listed below are a few scams/frauds that have been reported in St. Joseph Township and surrounding communities.

SECURITY SYSTEM SCAM:

How it works –

Scammers call or show up at your door claiming to represent your security system provider and advise they are at your home to switch the alarm keypads to a more up-to-date or voice-activated system. Once the equipment is switched out, you are asked to sign the work order. In some cases, the scammers have advised they are from another security system provider who has bought out your provider or is a subsidiary of your provider, and they may request that you sign a new contract.

These subjects are misrepresenting themselves and are trying to trick you into switching security system providers. Once the equipment has been switched and you have signed an agreement or contract, you may be locked into a long-term contract with a company you didn't initially choose as your security provider.

Prevention –

Contact your current provider to verify that they have sent someone to switch out equipment. Generally, you will have been alerted by mail or email of company changes prior to someone showing up at your door.

UTILITY COMPANY SCAMS:

How it works –

This scam works similar to the security system scam. Additionally, the subjects may claim to represent a company whose name sounds very similar to your existing utility provider and may ask to see your last utility bill, claiming they are there to help you save money on your monthly bill.

These subjects are also misrepresenting themselves and are trying to trick you into switching utility providers. Once you have signed any paperwork they have provided, you may be locked into an agreement with a company you have not previously researched.

Prevention –

Contact your current utility company to verify that the person standing at your door is in fact a representative of their company.

ACCOUNT TAKE-OVER FRAUD:

How it works –

Scammers may contact you by phone, text, email, or social media pretending to be someone you know or a representative of your bank, credit union, or credit card company. Scammers target online accounts that contain your financial information (credit card numbers, account details, etc.) or personal identification (full name, address, social security number, etc.). They trick you into giving up access to your social media, email, bank or credit card account, or other online accounts and then take over your accounts.

POLICE / PUBLIC SAFETY

*Randy Leng, Chief of Police***Prevention –**

Never give anyone that you don't completely trust access to your social media, email, bank or credit card accounts, or other online accounts. Protect your personal and financial information including your date of birth, social security number, account numbers, and account passwords. It's also a good idea to choose strong passwords and to change passwords frequently.

TELEPHONE & COMPUTER SCAMS:

These include calls, texts, social media messages, and emails that claim to be from the IRS, Social Security, a local or federal law enforcement agency, a loan company, an unknown attorney, a bank or credit union, a credit card company, Amazon, Microsoft, your computer anti-virus software company, etc. Occasionally, the text or email may even appear to come from a friend. The scammers use these identities to try to trick you into sending them money either through direct access to your account, via bitcoin or other money transfer apps, or by instructing you to purchase gift cards and releasing the codes to them.

Prevention –

Beware, if you receive a call, text, message, or email asking for money or trying to intimidate you into sending money. Do not respond to the calls/messages and do not contact any phone numbers or weblinks that have been furnished in the original message. You can verify the legitimacy of the request by contacting the actual company or person allegedly making the request through use of a trusted phone number or website.

Congratulations and Thank You

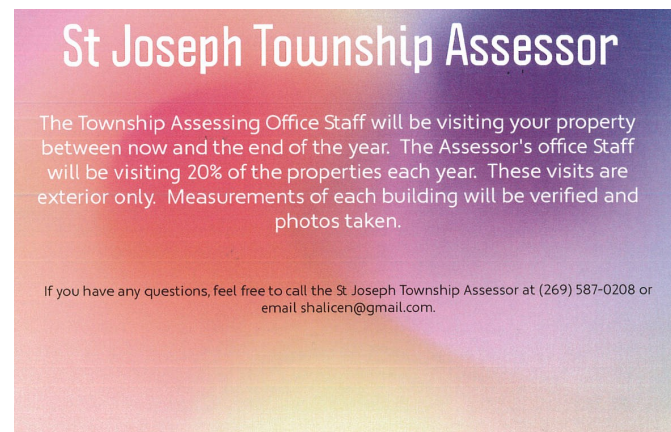
The St. Joseph Township Police Department would like to congratulate one of our administrative staff members who will be retiring from the department after 50+ years of service! Serving as the first administrative personnel for the department, Kathleen Nichols has seen many changes in law enforcement throughout the years. While we will miss her, we wish her well and congratulate her on the next chapter. Thank you for your dedication to the residents of St. Joseph Charter Township.

ASSESSING DEPARTMENT

Shalice Northrop, Assessor

The assessor's office will be visiting up to 20% of the properties every year. This visit is to be sure our records are up to date. Prior to the visit, a postcard (as seen below) will be sent letting you know that your property has been chosen for a visit. If you would like, you can set up an appointment for the visit. These visits are exterior only.

You can reach me at either (269) 429-7703 or
(269) 587-0208.



BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Troy Gano, CBO 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

Henry Wing, 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
269-338-5329

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

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
 PAID
 Kalamazoo, MI Permit No. 1366

**YARD WASTE PICKUP RUNS FROM APRIL
 THROUGH THE SECOND THURSDAY OF
 DECEMBER 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 2023

Thursday and Friday, November 23rd & 24th—**Thanksgiving**

Monday and Tuesday, December 25th & 26th—**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.