



OCTOBER 2025

Community

UPDATE

Your Township Board

Supervisor.....Roger Seely
 Clerk.....Patrice Rose
 Treasurer.....Dave Vonk
 Trustee.....Tim Drews
 Trustee.....Melissa Hahn
 Trustee.....Ed Meny
 Trustee.....Tom Milnikel
 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.



Fall

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 or rent a container from Best Way Disposal. (463-3232)

This year's yard waste pickup season began April 1st and will end December 11th. During the season, yard waste pickup occurs each week on your regular trash pickup day, unless your regular trash pickup day is a Best Way observed holiday. See the back page of the newsletter for a listing of Best Way holidays.

Fall landfill passes will be available for pickup at the Township Hall beginning September 15th. Passes are good for rubbish drop-off at Orchard Hill Landfill in Watervliet for the following dates: October 3-4, 10-11, 17-18, 24-25. 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.

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 essentials such as food, water, flashlights, batteries and any other necessary items.
2. Prepare your vehicle by maintaining antifreeze, motor oil, battery and tires. Carry flares, blankets, coats, hats, gloves, boots, shovel and any other essential items 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.



2024 FINANCIAL AUDIT: The financial audit for 2024 was completed and was presented to the Township Board for acceptance by Kruggel Lawton CPAs at the July 7th Board of Trustees meeting. Mr. Brian Hake, 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. 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 meeting, the St. Joseph Water Services Joint Operating Board voted to approve the annual budget, which included an increase in water rates for the City of St. Joseph and the Authority, of which St. Joseph Charter Township water consumers are a part.

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 July, the Township Board of Trustees voted to continue the surcharge on the City's new rates, which took effect on 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 \$5.96.

The new rates are as follows:

<u>Meter Size</u>	<u>Local Surcharge</u>	<u>Ready-to-Serve Rates</u>
5/8 inch	\$15.27	\$30.52
3/4 inch	\$16.79	\$33.57
1 inch	\$21.37	\$42.74
1 & ½ inch	\$27.48	\$54.95
2 inch	\$44.26	\$88.52
3 inch	\$167.88	\$335.75
4 inch	\$213.67	\$427.32
6 inch	\$320.49	\$640.98

Local Surcharge per unit rate: \$1.43

Rate per unit: \$2.94

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	\$120.86
Water-Sprinkler	5539	5320	A	219	\$686.60
Sewer	1928	1917	A	11	\$112.62
Hickory Creek					\$ 13.69
Local Surcharge 1	1928	1917	A	11	\$ 59.99
Local Surcharge 2	5539	A	A	219	\$334.54

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 \$2.94/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**.

$$11 \times \$2.94 = \$32.34 + \$88.52 = \$120.86$$

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 \$2.94 = \$643.86 + \$42.74 = \686.60

Local Surcharge 1 is the **USAGE** number multiplied by the local surcharge per unit fee, which is currently \$1.43/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 \$1.43 = \$15.73 + \$44.26 = \59.99

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 \$1.43 = \$313.17 + \$21.37 = \334.54

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	\$323.09
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	\$120.86
Water-Sprinkler	5539	5320	A	219	\$686.60
Sewer	1928	1917	A	11	\$112.62
Hickory Creek					\$ 13.69
Local Surcharge 1	1928	1917	A	11	\$ 59.99
Local Surcharge 2	5539	A	A	219	\$334.54

FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESKcontinued

Roger Seely, Supervisor

To calculate sewer fees – For this sample, the **Water Domestic** meter is a 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 2018, the Township began collecting taxes for the ten-year Fire Improvement Millage that the voters approved at the August 2018 election.



The new Rosenbauer fire truck, purchased at a cost not to exceed \$725,000, arrived in 2022 and is housed at Fire Station #1.

A Rosenbaum mini pumper truck arrived in October 2023. This truck is housed at Fire Station #2.

In 2024, funds totaling \$22,160 were used to purchase airbags, supplies, and an EFORCE Ram 2.0 rescue tool.

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.

Library Millage: The Library Services millage that was voted in at a rate of .4499 mills in 2016 will expire December 31st, 2025.

In November of 2024, township residents voted to replace this millage with a renewal millage of .4482, which is the current rate. This millage cycle will begin on the 2026 tax bills.

The Township uses this millage to support services for its residents at the Maude Preston Palenske Memorial Library at a contribution rate of \$175,000 annually. The Township has also funded special projects for an additional total of \$44,742 during the ten-year millage cycle.

For information on services offered by the Maude Preston Palenske Memorial Library, visit the Township's website at www.sjct.org and click on Community/Library.



FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESKcontinued

Roger Seely, Supervisor

Road Millage: In December 2020, the Township began collecting taxes for the ten-year road millage approved by voters in the November 2020 election. The 2025 Township's share of the cost in 2025 was used for maintenance on approximately 7.09 miles of roads, including sealcoat to the Ansley Drive Subdivision (Oakridge, Tucker, Grant, Sheridan, Ansley, Miller, Lattimer, Clemens, Marvin, Manitou, Park Den, Mead, Kim, Kevin, Royalton Heights Dr.), HMA to the Indian Hills Subdivision (Onondaga, Cayuga, Learning), HMA to Meadow Grove Pl. Subdivision (Meadow Grove Pl, Carriage Ln, etc.), HMA to High Wood Estates Subdivision (Dozer Dr. to Bluffwood, Ridgeview), and Scratch and Seal to Windsor Dr. from Colfax Ave. to Bluff Ct.

**Road Maintenance Breakdown
By Year 2019 - 2025**

		Annual					ARPA
		Total Project	Road Department	Township	Funding Source		Funds
Year	Miles	Cost	Contribution	Cost	Road Millage	General Fund	Used
2019	3.83	\$ 202,043.87	\$ 101,022.00	\$ 101,021.87		\$ 101,021.87	
2020	3.64	\$ 192,689.39	\$ 96,344.70	\$ 96,344.69		\$ 96,344.69	
2021	7.62	\$ 473,995.53	\$ 103,174.00	\$ 370,821.53	\$ 320,821.54	\$ 49,999.99	
2022	3.2	\$ 433,519.91	\$ 102,237.00	\$ 331,282.91	\$ 226,282.91	\$ 105,000.00	
2023	3.73	\$ 762,164.00	\$ 102,238.00	\$ 286,926.00	\$ 286,926.00		\$ 373,000.00
2024	2.42	\$ 577,676.31	\$ 102,257.00	\$ 475,419.31	\$ 475,419.31		
2025	7.09	\$ 634,282.13	\$ 102,275.00	\$ 532,007.13	\$ 532,007.13		
				.			
Totals	31.53	\$ 3,276,371.14	\$ 709,547.70	\$ 2,193,823.44	\$ 1,841,456.89	\$ 352,366.55	\$ 373,000.00

FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESKcontinued

Roger Seely, Supervisor

Property Fraud Prevention: Deed fraud can occur when scammers file a fraudulent document with the county register of deeds, making it look like they own a resident's home or property – without the property owner's knowledge. This can result in lengthy legal battles to settle property fraud claims or even property loss. Last year, new laws – Public Acts 154 and 155 of 2004 – took effect to create safeguards for property owners. Berrien County Register of Deeds Office provides a FREE Property Alert email notification service, alerting subscribers each time a new document is recorded in Berrien County matching the subscriber's name or entity. Contact the Register of Deeds Office at <https://www.berriencounty.org> to sign up for the free service.

Berrien County Road Department Right-of-Way: The Road-Right-of-Way (ROW) is the grassy area on the side of the road, typically 66 feet across the whole road or 33 feet from the center of the road, that provides adequate space for storm drainage and a safe recovery area for vehicles that leave the road surface.

The Road Department has complete jurisdiction over the permanent road easement in the ROW. The ROW allows the Road Department to perform maintenance such as grading and leveling, guardrail replacement, mowing, tree and vegetation trimming and removal, debris pickup, sign and signal repair, and clearing of ditches.

Telephone, electric, cable, broadband, and fiber companies share poles that have been installed in the ROW, and mailboxes are also located in the ROW.

Landowner ROW responsibilities are listed in the Berrien County Road Department's policies and procedures at <https://www.berriencounty.org/DocumentCenter/View/4669/OP-14-Right-of-Way-PDF?bidId=>

SS4A Grant: At the June 2nd Board of Trustees meeting, the Board approved an application for a Safe Streets for All (SS4A) planning and demonstration grant with a two-year preparation period to develop and complete a long-term action plan for the Township's non-motorized trail, sidewalk, and pathway system. The grant requires a low match of 20%. The creation of the long-term action plan will allow the Township to be prepared with "project-ready" plans, as quick responses are often needed to be in the running when funding opportunities become available.



**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



Find us on:
facebook®



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.

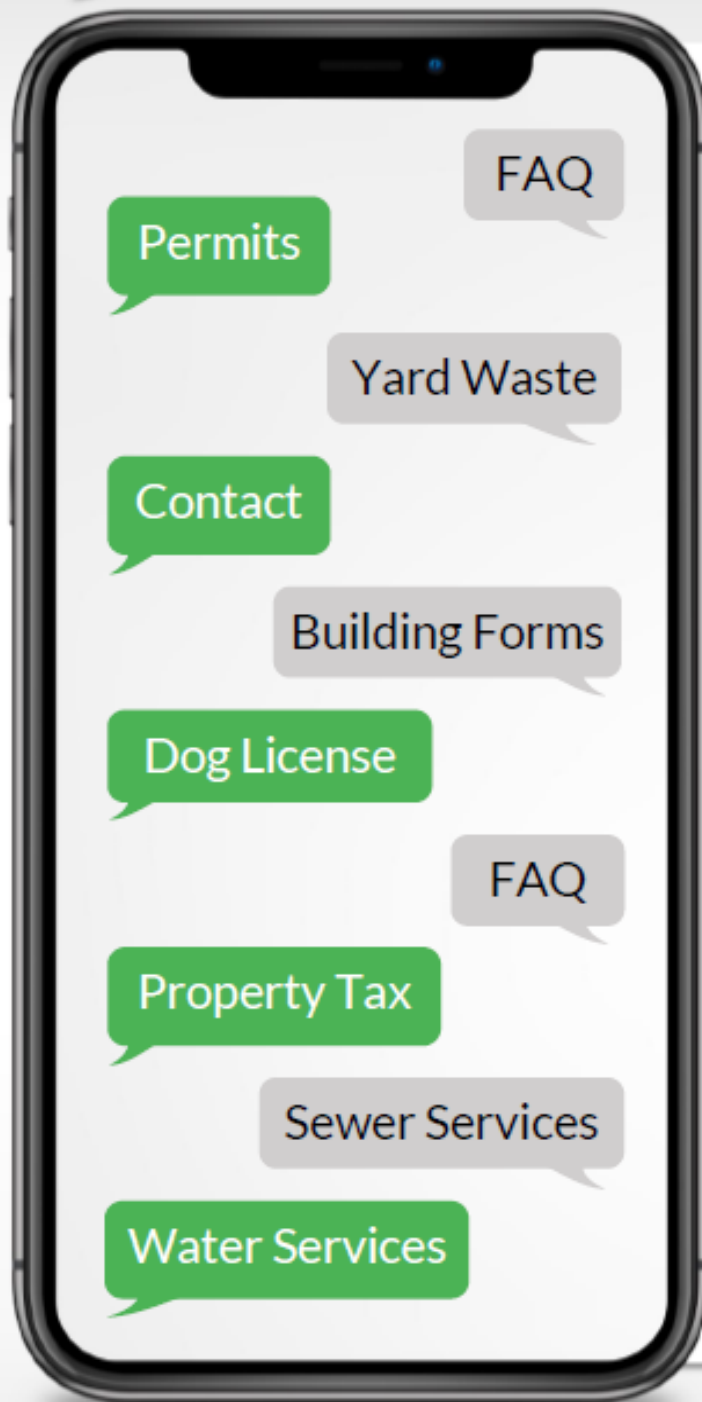
View terms and privacy policy info at: textmygov.com/opt-in-terms-conditions Msg & Data rates apply. Msg frequency varies. Text HELP for contact info.

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

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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 15, 2025**.
- **Winter Tax Bills** will be mailed **December 1st** and are due by 5:00 p.m. on **February 16, 2026**.
- After **March 2, 2026**, 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 **Name** and **Address Changes**: call our Assessor 269-587-0208.
- **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.

FROM THE CLERK'S OFFICE*Christin Rice, Deputy Clerk/Election Coordinator***2025 November 4th Special Election**

St. Joseph Public Schools and Lake Michigan College will hold a special election on November 4th 2025

Permanent Absent Ballot Voters – Important Information

Voters on the **Permanent Absent Ballot List** will receive a ballot, in the mail, for the upcoming election **on or shortly after September 25, 2025**.

If you plan to travel or spend the winter months out of state, please notify us **as soon as possible** with your forwarding address. Please remember:

The United States Postal Service **does not forward** election or voter registration mail—including ballots. If you're not already on the list, you can sign up to automatically receive a ballot by mail before each election. Here's how:

1. Visit our website
2. Under the **Departments** tab, select **Elections**
3. Locate and print the **"Permanent Absent Ballot Form"**

Return the completed form to us:

- In person
- By mail
- By email
- Or by placing it in our **Elections Drop Box**

Application Voters – Important Information

The **State of Michigan** has chosen to **keep the ballot application process available**, however: **Ballot applications will no longer be automatically mailed** to voters for each election.

Voters may **request an application** in one of the following ways:

- By mail
- In person at the Township office
- By downloading it from our website
- You may also sign up for one electronically on the State of Michigan website

You will need to **submit a new application for each individual election, unless the application indicates that it is a dual form and contains a check box of the date(s) to select an election.**

To request a ballot application online:

1. Visit our website
2. Under the **Departments** tab, select **Elections**
3. Find and print the **"Absent Ballot Application Form"**
4. Return the completed form:
 - In person
 - By mail
 - By email
 - Or by placing it in our **Elections Drop Box**

Stay ready for election season—and let us know if you have any questions!

All election-related updates are posted on our website under the **Elections** tab.

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

Elections Heads up for 2026**August Primary Election Date: August 4, 2026****November Midterm Election Date: November 3, 2026**

The following offices will be on the ballot for the 2026 Michigan Mid-term Election:

Federal

- **United States Senate:** One of Michigan's two U.S. Senate seats will be up for election.
- **U.S. House of Representatives:** All **13** of Michigan's congressional seats will be up for election.

State of Michigan

- **Governor and Lieutenant Governor**
- **Secretary of State**
- **Attorney General**
- **Michigan Legislature:**
 - All **38 seats** in the **Michigan Senate**
 - All **110 seats** in the **Michigan House of Representatives**

Judicial

- **Michigan Supreme Court:** **Two seats** will be up for election.

Local Elections

- Various **county, township, city, and school board** offices may also appear on local ballots, depending on the jurisdiction.

Township Jurisdiction Codes

For your information. Below is the listing of our codes and our elected representatives:



Bill Huizenga
US Congress Code:04



Joey Andrews
State House Code:038



Aric Nesbitt
Senate Code:20



Rayonte D. Bell
County Commissioner:05
Township Precincts 1 & 2
Village of Shoreham Precinct 2



Julie Wuerfel
County Commissioner:06
Township Precincts 3 & 4

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

Become an Election Inspector

There is a new link under departments, on our election's web page "Becoming an Election Inspector". The link is a short survey asking a few contact questions and some regarding your interest and or experience. The Township is looking for persons who are able to handle the long hours on election day and are willing to go through training sessions. Election workers are paid for working elections and for training. The inspector application can also be requested at the counter in the Township Hall during regular office hours.

Election Time Line

November 4, 2025

- MOVE (Military and Overseas Voter Enablement act) Members of the Military and their spouses, voters living overseas can request a ballot sent to them by email: deadline **Sep. 20**
- AV ballots available for voters: **Sep. 25**
- NO early voting will be held for this election.
- New voter registrations are required in person for November Election with residence verification: **Oct. 21 – Nov. 4**

A special election for St. Joseph Public Schools and Lake Michigan College held on: **Nov.4, 2025.**

Voter Registrations

Register to Vote on-line at: [Michigan.gov/vote](https://michigan.gov/vote)

Also, at the local Secretary of States office:
1690 Mall Drive, Benton Harbor, MI
Phone: (888) 767-6424
Appointments can be made at: state.mi.us

At the Township Hall:
3000 Washington Ave., St. Joseph, MI
Picture ID will be required!
See our website for links to voter registration and FAQ's about voting.

New: Regarding voter age limitations

First time drivers getting their license at the Secretary of States office are automatically registered to vote unless they indicate that they do not wish to be registered. Age limitations have recently been lowered and 16-year-olds will now be pre-registered to vote, but must wait to vote until age 18.

Voter Registration List Maintenance in St. Joseph Charter Township

The State of Michigan continuously works to keep the voter registration list—known as the Qualified Voter File (QVF)—as accurate and up to date as possible. Local Clerks, Deputy Clerks, and duly appointed Election Assistants are required to conduct regular maintenance of their jurisdiction's voter rolls.

This maintenance typically involves checking the QVF for registration-related updates and processing them accordingly. These updates may include:

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

- Notifications of a voter's death
- Address changes within the State of Michigan
- Voters moving out of state
- Name changes or updates to personal information
- New voter registrations

The Michigan Secretary of State and the Berrien County Clerk's Office regularly notify us of voter deaths recorded within the county and state. Additionally, our staff reviews local funeral home websites and obituaries in the Herald-Palladium to cross-check and verify local deaths. However, as not all obituaries are published, we welcome and appreciate your help in keeping our records accurate. If you have information regarding a voter that may be deceased or has moved, please contact us at deputyclerk@sjct.org.

Voter registration information can be updated online at:

<https://mvic.sos.state.mi.us/>

Other Secretary of State services can also be completed at the Benton Harbor Secretary of State's Office (address above, under voter registration) by appointment, or online at:

<https://www.michigan.gov/sos/all-services>

Snow Birds

Additionally, as mentioned in the Absent Ballot Voter section above, we sincerely appreciate our residents who spend the winter months in the South ("snowbirds") letting us know your forwarding address before you leave this fall. This ensures your ballot reaches you in a timely manner.

New Legislation Changes

Elections are ever changing, stay tuned to our website for future updates to your rules and rights as a Michigan State voter.

Notice – Be up to date on Township Information

Mark your calendars. The BEST way 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 the Home Page to join) TextMyGov may have pertinent information on all matters of Township issues that may concern you. Disclaimer...TextMyGov should not be considered as a way of soliciting your votes for any candidate, only to serve as a reminder that an election is coming up.

UNOFFICIAL LIST OF PROPOSALS 11/04/2025 - NOVEMBER CONSOLIDATED BERRIEN (11)**ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROPOSAL****ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOND PROPOSAL**

Shall St. Joseph Public Schools, Berrien County, Michigan, borrow the sum of not to exceed Fifty-Nine Million Nine Hundred Ninety-Five Thousand Dollars (\$59,995,000) and issue its general obligation unlimited tax bonds therefor, in one or more series, for the purpose of:

erecting an addition to, remodeling, furnishing and refurnishing, and equipping and re-equipping school buildings; acquiring and installing instructional technology and instructional technology equipment for school buildings; remodeling school support buildings; purchasing school buses; and preparing, equipping, developing, and improving athletic fields and facilities, driveways, parking areas, and sites?

The following is for informational purposes only:

The estimated millage that will be levied for the proposed bonds in 2026 is 1.40 mills (\$1.40 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a -0- mill net increase over the prior year's levy. The maximum number of years the bonds of any series may be outstanding, exclusive of any refunding, is twenty-five (25) years. The estimated simple average annual millage anticipated to be required to retire this bond debt is 1.96 mills (\$1.96 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation).

(Pursuant to State law, expenditure of bond proceeds must be audited and the proceeds cannot be used for repair or maintenance costs, teacher, administrator or employee salaries, or other operating expenses.)

LAKE MICHIGAN COLLEGE PROPOSAL**LAKE MICHIGAN COLLEGE
CHARTER MILLAGE RENEWAL PROPOSITION FOR OPERATING AND GENERAL PURPOSES**

This proposition is to renew and reduce a charter millage for community college capital purposes that will expire with the 2026 levy.

Shall the previous voted charter tax rate limitation on the amount of taxes imposed upon all taxable property within the community college district boundaries of Lake Michigan College, Michigan, be renewed in the amount of .6655 mill (\$.6655 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a period of twenty (20) years 2027 through 2046, inclusive, to provide funds to be used for operating purposes and for all purposes authorized by law, if approved, the estimated revenue the millage would raise in 2027 is approximately \$8,900,000 (this is a renewal of millage that will expire with the 2026 tax levy)?

**LAKE MICHIGAN COLLEGE
CHARTER MILLAGE RENEWAL AND REDUCTION PROPOSITION FOR CAPITAL PURPOSES**

This proposition is to renew and reduce a charter millage for community college capital purposes that will expire with the 2026 levy.

Shall the previous voted charter tax rate limitation on the amount of taxes imposed upon all taxable property within the community college district boundaries of Lake Michigan College, Michigan be renewed and reduced to the amount of 0.24 mill (\$0.24 per \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a period of ten (10) years, 2027 to 2036, inclusive, for the purpose of safety and security improvements, energy efficiency upgrades, renovation of instructional spaces, instructional technology upgrades, and other capital improvements; if approved, the estimated revenue the millage would raise in 2027 is approximately \$3,200,000 (this is a partial renewal of millage that will expire with 2026 tax levy)?

PARKS / PUBLIC WORKS

Dave Rindfield, Director

Parks

Township parks will be officially closed November 1st and reopen April 1st 2026, weather pending.

Eaton Park

The renovations to the remaining three press box towers at Eaton Park have been completed. The upgrades include new siding, doors, and painting of the roof and trim.

Before**After****Rebuild of a structurally unsafe trail bridge in the Township****Before****After****AEP Tree Trimming**

Some of the Township trails have easements for AEP to perform tree and brush trimming maintenance to protect their utility equipment. Unfortunately, the equipment and maintenance can sometimes cause damage to the Township's trails. In the event of damage to a trail, our Public Works department will work with AEP to quickly restore trails to the walkable shape that our residents have come to expect. Thank you for your patience when we need to put things back together.

MDNR Grants...**Eaton Park**

A MDNR Land and Water Conservation grant application was submitted in March for new bathrooms and a pavilion at Eaton Park. The DNR will send notice in November or December of whether or not the application is approved. If approved, construction would begin in 2026 and be completed in 2027.

Sewer

The Township Sewer Department has begun planning to replace a lift station on Trail Lane. The lift station is 53 years old and will be replaced with a newer style lift station that will allow maintenance to be performed without confined space measures, making it much safer for our employees. The project will be engineered in 2026 and replaced in the spring of 2027.

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. Michigan's Public Act of 2024, signed into law in May 2024 as House Bill No. 4596, requires manufacturers of moistened wipes to label their products with a "Do Not Flush" warning. The law also prohibits manufacturers from marketing wipes as "flushable".

Water

St. Joseph Charter Township is continuing to replace fire hydrants throughout the township and replace valves that were broken during our state-required valve-turning program. This allows us to minimize the shutdown area in case of an emergency.

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 for a few minutes until it clears up. If dirty or rusty water continues, contact the Township Public Works at 429-8113.

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, 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 stormwater system are also located on the counter at the Township Hall.



Lock It - Don't Leave It

The St. Joseph Township Police Department, along with surrounding agencies, have seen an uptick in larcenies from motor vehicles. Please remember to lock your vehicles when unattended, and don't leave valuables in plain sight. Most of the time the criminals are looking for easy targets, so don't make yourself one.



If you see someone suspicious, or notice something on your outdoor security cameras, let us know! Berrien County Central Dispatch (983-3060) can send an officer out 24/7 to check the area. Remember - no call is too small.

School Bus Safety Tips**TIPS FOR ALL MOTORISTS**

- Slow down and obey all traffic laws and speed limits.
- Red overhead flashing lights, possibly accompanied by an extended stop arm, tell you the school bus is stopped to load or unload children. State law requires you to stop at least 20 feet from the front or rear of a school bus when red lights are flashing and not proceed until the school bus resumes motion or until signaled by the school bus driver to proceed.
- Be Alert and ready to stop. Prepare to stop for a school bus when overhead yellow lights are flashing. Drive with caution if you see the yellow hazard warning lights flashing on a moving or stopped bus. Watch for children walking in the street, especially where there are no sidewalks. Watch for children playing and gathering near bus stops. Watch for children arriving late for the bus, who may dart into the street without looking for traffic. When backing out of a driveway or leaving a garage, watch for children walking or biking to school.

TIPS FOR PARENTS

- If your child rides a bus, have them at the bus stop five minutes prior to the bus's arrival.
- Help your children learn and practice the safety rules for walking, bicycling, or riding in a car or bus. Be a good role model, especially when you are with your children. Always buckle up in your car, always wear a helmet when biking and always follow pedestrian rules.
- Supervise young children walking or biking to school or as they wait at the school bus stop.

TIPS FOR STUDENTS

- If you ride a school bus, learn and practice the safety rules for waiting at the bus stop, getting on and off the bus, and riding the bus. If you walk to school, learn and practice the safety rules for pedestrians. Always cross at crosswalks or corner to corner. Obey all traffic lights or crossing guard instructions.
- Buckle up when you're riding in a car and ride in the back seat. It's the safest place for young people. Be a good role model for your younger brothers, sisters and friends and help them learn and practice safety rules.

Car Seat Inspections

Officer Paul Komdeur is certified as a Child Passenger Safety Technician. If you would like to have your child's car seat inspected or installed, please reach out to Officer Komdeur at (269) 429-6890 or pkomdeur@sjct.org.

Neighborhood Watch Recruits

The Neighborhood Watch Program is looking to rejuvenate the program, and new block captains are needed.

Block captain responsibilities may include:

- **Communicating with neighbors:** Contacting neighbors to discuss crime concerns, needs, and program improvements.
- **Maintaining a contact list:** Keeping a list of neighbors' names, addresses, and phone numbers.
- **Assist in coordinating meetings:** Notify neighbors of scheduled training sessions or organized meetings.
- **Passing on information:** Sharing information about crime trends and prevention tips with neighbors.
- **Acting as a liaison:** Connecting neighbors with the police department.
- **Activating a phone chain:** In the event of a crime, starting a phone chain to notify neighbors.

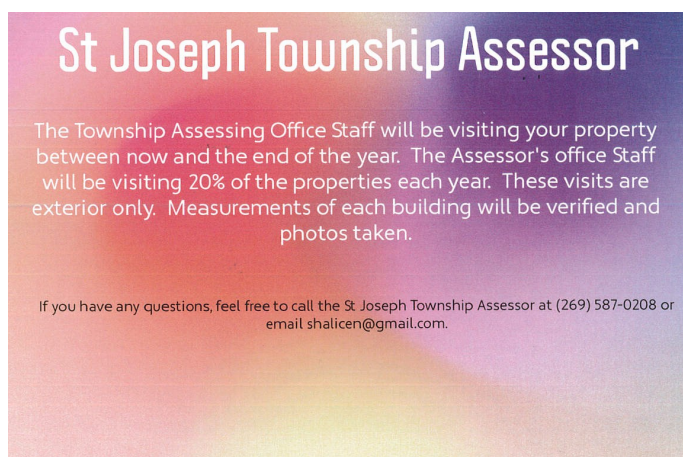
If you would like additional information, or are interested in participating in the program, please reach out to Officer Josh Allen at (269) 429-6890 ext. 2760 or jallen@sjct.org.

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 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*

Update on Michigan Building and Residential Codes

The State of Michigan has officially adopted the **2021 Michigan Building Code (commercial)**, marking a significant step forward in construction standards and safety for commercial projects across the state.

However, the adoption of the **2021 Michigan Residential Code** has been temporarily delayed. Originally scheduled to take effect on **August 29, 2025**, the update is now on hold due to a lawsuit filed against the State. Until the courts reach a determination, we will continue to enforce the **2015 Michigan Residential Code**.

We understand that changes in code requirements can raise questions. Our **State Licensed and ICC Nationally Certified Staff** is available to assist you—please don't hesitate to contact us by phone or email for clarification or support.

To purchase the latest code books, visit: <https://shop.iccsafe.org/>

We remain committed to supporting our community with professionalism and up-to-date information.

ORDINANCE DEPARTMENT*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.





Best Way Disposal is committed to the conservation of natural resources and minimizing the strain on the planet. The Curbside Recycling Program provides for the collection of recyclable materials at the curbside. The **SINGLE-STREAM RECYCLING PROGRAM** allows residents to **mix all acceptable recyclables in one cart—no sorting!** Keep this brochure handy for easy reference when preparing materials. Improperly prepared materials leads to contamination and increased recycling costs!

Accepted Items & Preparation Instructions

- ◆ Newspapers, including inserts, comics and advertisements.

- ◆ Magazines, catalogs, books, phone books, office paper, unwanted mail, paper bags, etc.

- ◆ Paperboard, such as cereal boxes, cracker boxes, Paper towel rolls, etc.

- ◆ Corrugated cardboard.

- ◆ Glass jars and bottles of any color.

- ◆ Aluminum cans, foil pie tins, etc.

- ◆ Tin or steel food cans and lids.

- ◆ Plastics such as milk jugs, food tubs detergent bottles, personal care products, etc...

Place papers directly into the recycling cart— no need to bag papers separately.

Food boxes must be clean and free of food. Remove hard covers from books before recycling.

Corrugated cardboard must be flattened and/or cut down to a size that will fit in the recycling cart

Shredded papers can be placed in a brown paper bag and placed in the cart.

Placing material in plastic bags is not acceptable.

Place materials directly into the recycling cart
No need to separate recyclable materials.

Labels are OK. Remove caps from bottles.

Rinse containers well—all materials must be clean and free of food, liquid or original contents.

Only RIGID plastics marked with symbols 1 - 7



Recycling Tips

PLASTICS



WISH-CYCLING

Many items we purchase are made of recyclable materials, but unfortunately not all are recyclable. When in doubt leave it out!

Instructions Also Located On Lid



Not Acceptable Items

- ◆ Aerosol cans
- ◆ Batteries
- ◆ Hazardous liquids or materials
- ◆ Light bulbs
- ◆ Microwave food containers
- ◆ Motor oil / motor oil containers
- ◆ Paint / paint cans
- ◆ Pizza boxes
- ◆ Plastic bags or plastic wrap
- ◆ Scrap metal
- ◆ Soiled food containers
- ◆ Styrofoam of any kind
- ◆ Wax-coated cardboard
- ◆ Window glass
- ◆ Yard waste

ATTENTION TRAIL USERS! HAVE YOU HEARD OF:

WHAT3WORDS

www.what3words.com

PLEASE READ THIS IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM 9-1-1

what3words, a groundbreaking free app available on all smart devices, divides the world into 10-ft squares, assigning each a unique three-word address. This allows anyone to easily communicate their exact location using just three words, which is especially valuable during emergencies.

When you call 911, the dispatcher will ask for your location. By sharing your what3words address, emergency responders can quickly pinpoint your location, even in remote or hard-to-find areas like trails or nature preserves. This ensures a faster, more accurate response, helping save lives by getting help to the right place as quickly as possible.

Using what3words makes it easier for 911 and emergency responders to reach you when every second counts.



WHAT3WORDS



Scan to download the app

www.what3words.com



Proudly supported by:



MTGA
MICHIGAN TRAILS & GREENWAYS ALLIANCE



HELP US FIND YOU with
WHAT3WORDS

www.what3words.com



Scan to download the app

CALL or TEXT 911 in an emergency

1



2

Wait a few seconds for the blue dot to settle in one place



LOCATE YOURSELF

3

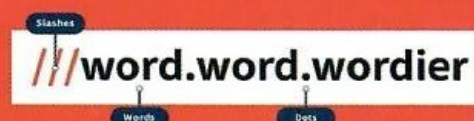
Tap your location and the 3 words will display at the top of the screen



GIVE the 3 WORDS

4

Read or text what3words location over the phone



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



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**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 2025

Thursday and Friday, November 27th & 28th—**Thanksgiving**

Thursday and Friday, 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.