

BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER



Township Open House to be bigger and even better

Twenty-five years ago the Bloomfield Township Fire Department held an Open House to mark Fire Prevention Week and teach fire prevention safety. Over the years, other Township Departments joined in to give residents an opportunity to learn about other safety practices and Township services. This year, the Open House will be the biggest – and best! – ever.

Long-time favorites are still the anchors of the afternoon. The Fire Department will set fires to a mock-up of a living room and to a pan of cooking oil on a kitchen stove to show how quickly fire spreads and how they work to extinguish it.

hand to answer questions about proper planting and mulching practices. Building Division personnel will let builders of all ages take a crack at building a dog house. The Clerk's Office will hold a Passport Fair to give visitors another opportunity to apply for a new passport or

online for a longer list of events, a map of where each will take place, the times for some of the demonstrations, and parking information. Mark your calendar and come.

Open House
Sunday, October 16,
Noon – 4:00 PM
FREE!
Township Civic Campus
West off Telegraph and
South of Long Lake

renew their old one. Senior Services will lead the brand new events by running a Charity Workout for Meals on Wheels. Even the Assessor's Office will join the festivities by helping visitors look up their properties and learn about assessing methods.



Food has always been a staple of the event, and this year will be no exception. Coffee, donuts, cider, candy, hot dogs, pizza ... it's part of the fun, and it's free.

There's more! But the list is too long for the space here. Go



Protect Your Family From Fire!

The theme from the National Fire Protection Association for fire prevention week this year is "Protect your family from fire; It's Fire Prevention Week." It's a simple but important message. In 2007 there were an estimated 362,500 structure fires in the United States killing 2565 people.

A fire in your home can block your path to safety in as little as two minutes after the smoke alarms activate. Do you have an escape plan for your family?

The Open House features fun and activities for kids of all ages. But most important, it will have all of the information that you need to "Protect your Family from Fire." Bring the family and enjoy the afternoon. And while you're having fun, get the information you need to keep your family safe.



EMS personnel will display a vehicle extrication. U of M will send its medical helicopter to touch down and let visitors see how patients are transported. The Police Department will give rides in its patrol cars and stage K-9 demonstrations.

Additionally, the Road Division will give people rides in plow trucks and graders. The Grounds Division will be on



**BLOOMFIELD
TOWNSHIP
BOARD
&
2011**

ELECTED OFFICIALS

ADMINISTRATION

Leo Savoie, Supervisor
 Janet Roncelli, Clerk
 Dan Devine, Treasurer

TRUSTEES

David Buckley
 Neal J. Barnett
 Brian Kepes

APPOINTED POSITIONS

PLANNING COMMISSION

Scot Goldberg, Chairman
 Jeff Salz, Vice Chairman
 Sherry Stefanos, Secretary
 Neal Barnett
 Richard Mintz
 Thomas Petinga
 William Stark

BOARD OF APPEALS

Corinne Khederian, Chairman
 Robert E. Taylor, Jr., Vice Chairman
 James Aldrich
 David Buckley
 Brian Henry
 Tracy Leone, Alternate
 Carol Rosati, Alternate
 Lisa Seneker
 Sherry Stefanos

Pictured above is Ken Brown, Water Division foreman. See story on Page 6.

School elections to be held November 8

At the time this newsletter went to press the Township Board of Trustees had not yet chosen a new trustee to fill the position vacated by Leo Savoie when he was appointed Supervisor. Check the website for updated information. To receive the very latest updates on Township news, subscribe to the Bloomfield Township E-Newsletter. Go to the website, www.bloomfieldtp.org, and click on E-Mail List to subscribe.

The Avondale, Birmingham and Pontiac School districts seek your vote on Tuesday, November 8, 2011. Only Bloomfield Township electors who live in these three school districts can vote. The ballot for the Avondale School District includes three school board positions. Birmingham Public Schools has an operating millage renewal proposal for a period of ten years and two openings for school board members. In the Pontiac School District there are two openings. All of the school board positions in this election are four-year terms.

The last day to register to

vote in this election is October 11, 2011. Sample ballots are posted on the Township's website www.bloomfieldtp.org/clerk.



The ten precinct locations are listed on the website, along with precinct maps. All residents affected by the precinct consolidation for this election will be notified by first-class mail. The website provides

more information.

Absentee ballot applications are available online at <http://www.bloomfieldtp.org/forms> or by calling the Clerk's Office at 248.433.7702. The last day for absentee ballots to be mailed from the Clerk's Office is Saturday, November 5, 2011. On that day the Clerk's Office will process absentee applications and issue ballots from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. The final day to request an absentee ballot at the Clerk's Office is Monday, November 7, until 4:00 p.m. Electors receiving a ballot on Monday must vote in person at the Clerk's Office.

Prevent tax foreclosure

There are two types of foreclosure. Mortgage foreclosure happens when your lender claims that you have defaulted on the terms of your mortgage. We see this referenced frequently in the news. Tax foreclosure is just as dangerous. You can lose your home just by falling behind on your property taxes.

Michigan law mandates a tight timeline for tax foreclosure whereby you could lose your home in three short years. Each year property taxes are due and payable at the Bloomfield Township Treasurer's office by September 14 for Summer Taxes and February 14 for Winter Taxes. As of March 1, Bloomfield Township loses jurisdiction over the unpaid taxes and they are turned over to the Oakland County Treasurer for collection. Oakland County adds a 4% administration fee and a 1% per month interest rate to

unpaid taxes for the first year. It becomes very expensive very fast and there are no discounts or waivers of fees or interest at that point.

In the second year the interest rate on unpaid taxes is increased to 1.5% per month. If your taxes are still unpaid in the third year, your home is offered for sale at an auction

to recover the taxes, penalty and interest owed to Oakland County.

If you know you will be having difficulty paying your property taxes, please contact Bloomfield Township Treasurer Dan Devine as soon as possible at 248-433-7704. Payment plans, tax deferments, poverty exemptions or hardship extensions may be appropriate for you. However, we cannot help you if we do not hear from you before March 1 of any given tax year.

Also, make sure you have properly filed an affidavit of "Principle Residence Exemption" on your home. You may call the Bloomfield Township Assessor's office at 248-433-7710 to find out if your affidavit has been filed properly. You also can discuss with the Assessor's office the process of lowering your assessment or receiving a hardship extension. Time is always of the essence.

Winter taxes are due December 1 and are payable December 1 through February 14 without penalty. The tax statements are mailed out in November. Bloomfield Township taxes and half of the local school taxes are billed on the December bill. December taxes become a lien on the property on December 1 and are subject to penalty on payments received after February 14. Questions? Call the Treasurer's Office at 248.433.7705.



Board of Trustees

TIME: 7:00 P.M.
DATE: 2nd and 4th Monday
LOCATION: Township Auditorium

Planning Commission

TIME: 7:00 P.M.
DATE: 1st and 3rd Monday
LOCATION: Township Auditorium

Zoning Board of Appeals

TIME: 7:00 P.M.
DATE: 2nd Tuesday
LOCATION: Township Auditorium

NOTE: The Charter Township of Bloomfield will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services at all meetings to individuals with disabilities. All such requests must be made at least five days prior to said meeting. Please contact the Bloomfield Township Clerk's Office, 4200 Telegraph Road, P.O. Box 489, Bloomfield Hills MI 48303--0489, 248-433-7702, Fax: 248-433-7714



A NOTE FROM

Leo Savoie, Bloomfield Township Supervisor

New supervisor looks to the future

Following Dave Payne's retirement in August I am thrilled to have been selected as the next Supervisor. I have big shoes to fill (in more ways than one). Just being here a few short months has shown me the number of lives he has touched. Dave, we all wish you a long and happy retirement. After 41 years of work at the Township, you've earned it!

Good things have and are happening in Bloomfield Township. As most of you know Bloomfield Township is one of the few communities in Michigan to receive Standard and Poor's AAA bond rating. This occurred in tough economic times in a region and a state that have been challenged by job losses and a declining revenue base. What many of you may not know is CNNMoney.com has rated Bloomfield Township 21st in the nation in America's Top Earning Towns. CNN Money states "the area boasts low crime rates, beautiful neighborhoods and quality outdoor

spaces."

Bloomfield Township is a community. As a community we are intertwined with our neighboring municipalities and our school districts. It is important we all work together to ensure the quality of life we all expect. Our homes are typically the number one asset of most residents' net worth. Schools and municipal services contribute heavily to the decision on where someone will reside. It is my goal to make Bloomfield Township the number one pick for people moving into the area. We can do this by providing excellent municipal services at an affordable rate. We can do this by making sure that everyone who works for Bloomfield Township has a great customer service attitude.

I can't tell you how impressed I am with the quality of the department heads and their staff. Each one of them is proud to be working at Bloomfield Township and to be working for the residents of the community. Each one of

them displays the customer service attitude I just talked about. If you need something, contact them. If you are not satisfied, contact me. I may not agree with you but I will listen. I always have an open door policy and I would urge anyone who wants to, take advantage of it. My email address is

lsavoie@bloomfieldtwp.org.

What lies ahead in the near future? I am starting the budget process now for the fiscal year that begins in April 2012. By the time you read this I will have already had numerous meetings with the finance department. Our projected revenues are still going down. We need to deliver the services expected by a community that is highly rated by CNN Money with a fixed allotment of funds. We will make sure that every dollar spent is spent wisely and prudently.

Consolidation is still a big item. We need to maintain a certain level of staffing for our departments to meet the needs of the community. If we

have additional capacity in those departments it is imperative for us to find out if there are ways for us to collaborate with other municipalities to share the cost within those departments. We have done this with our community television station. We have done it with the Assessing Dept. and we have done it with the Planning/Building Dept. I feel we must explore every opportunity to share costs with outside municipalities without adding expenses on Bloomfield Township's end. It is no different than what you or I would do with our own businesses.

I want to make sure our successes within the community are personal. They happen one individual at a time. Every interaction our staff has with a resident is an opportunity for that person to say or think "I am glad I live in Bloomfield Township." That is my goal and I am sure it is every other employee's goal as well.

I am looking forward to the upcoming year. There is much to do and much to accomplish. Feel free to contact me about anything. As I said I always have an open door policy.

BTSS offers transportation service

"I never missed an appointment and was never late. The drivers were courteous and very helpful in assisting me with my walker, getting me into the doctor's office and back to the car after my appointment." Bloomfield Township Senior Services (BTSS) staff frequently hears comments like this as they serve the transportation needs of over 100 seniors in the Township, getting them to dialysis, medical, dental and out-patient procedures, lab testing, physical therapy and more.

Transportation service is door through door in a private vehicle and is available within a 15 mile radius of Bloomfield Township. Township residents who are 60 or older and unable to drive are eligible for this service. Wheelchair transportation is

also available upon request. A generous grant from SMART covers 75 percent of the cost for this private transportation.

Service is available 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday with a minimum of two business days advance notice for scheduling. Clients need to complete a transportation application, to be kept on file with a copy of identification such as a driver's license that confirms residency, prior to scheduling any appointments for transport.

If you or a loved one are in need of back-up transportation to keep important medical appointments when friends and family are unavailable, this is a perfect solution. Call Denise at 248-723-3500 to request an application.



From the Police Department

Beware of snow removal scams

Fall brings many things: kids returning to school, cold weather, snow and, of course, snow removal scams! Beware of any flyer you receive from snow removal companies offering their services. All too often, these are scams designed to take your money, while not removing one snowflake from your driveway during the length of the 'contract.' These

fraudsters require you to sign a contract, paying them before the snow season begins. This will likely be the last time you hear from them.

Will you need snow removal this winter? There are a number of ways to find reliable services. Probably the best is word-of-mouth. Ask your neighbors who removes their snow. The Internet can be

another excellent way to find trustworthy contractors. Websites such as Angie's List (www.Angieslist.com) allow consumers to compare notes on contractors, businesses, mechanics, etc. No website can possibly protect you from every conceivable scam, but it can be a good place to start your search.

The Bloomfield Township



Police Department reminds you to be suspicious of anyone who comes to you offering services or goods.

Ten tips from the Building Division

The Building Division offers these tips to help you prepare for winter weather.

1. Check the exterior caulking and paint after the harsh summer heat. Indoors, check around your bathroom fixtures. Water getting into the walls and subfloor will result in costly repairs.
2. Replace damaged shingles because the attic and the shingles are cooler in the fall. Check your roof for adequate ventilation.
3. Cover your AC units for winter storage and make sure that your humidifier has a clean filter. Check that the vents and heat registers are clear and unobstructed.
4. Have your flues cleaned and your fireplace dampers inspected. Remove any bird nests or other debris.
5. Disconnect your hoses from the hose bibs before freezing nighttime temperatures arrive. Drain the water out of the hose to prevent freeze damage. Turn off your hose bibs from the inside if possible. If not, check to see if they are the anti-freeze type.
6. Have your sprinkler system blown out to prevent problems with broken lines.
7. If you plan to leave for an extended time, be sure to turn your water heater down to the "vacation" setting. This will conserve energy and save you money.
8. Winterize your lawn equipment by either running the gas out of the carburetor or adding a fuel additive to protect it and the tank from buildup. Fill the tank and give the snow blower a test run to make sure it's ready to go.
9. Remove the screens from your doors and windows and replace them with storm glass. This will save you dollars on your energy bill.
10. If you've recently moved into a new home or had some work done, check with the Building Division to see if there are any outstanding permit or Certificate of Occupancy issues.



Dispose of yard waste properly

Fall is the time to rake leaves, clean out the gutters and do a final weeding of the landscape beds. As you prepare for fall property cleanup, please keep in mind that burning leaves or trash is prohibited. Place leaves in the brown lawn bags (available at your local hardware store) and put them at the curb on

your regular trash pick-up day. Yard waste removal is part of the service provided by the Township waste hauler, Rizzo Services. A "greener" option is to mulch the leaves by cutting them along with your regular grass cutting. Dumping any type of waste, including leaves, is a violation of Township ordinance.

Mark your calendar - the last week for yard waste pick-up will be the week of December 12

Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Day coming up on October 1

The Fall Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Day will be held on Saturday, October 1, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. It will take place in the Public Services parking lot on the south side of Exeter Road. Enter off Andover Road from either Telegraph or Long Lake and follow the signs. This service is for Bloomfield Township residents only. Bring proof of residency.

For more information and a list of acceptable items, check the Bloomfield Township website, www.bloomfieldtpw.org. Call the Department of Public Works at 248-594-2800 with any questions.





From the Fire Department

Fire Department introduces new equipment



The new Ladder 1 at Central Station

Quick and efficient response to emergencies saves lives and property, and the Bloomfield Township Fire Department takes pride in its fast response times and good outcomes. The Department recently replaced three outdated vehicles and updated a fourth to provide the very best service to residents. The committee of firefighters worked hard to ensure the Department purchased the most efficient and economical vehicles.

On June 17, after almost two years of research and planning, Central Fire Station took delivery of an E-ONE 2011 Typhoon HP78 ladder truck. After the truck was fitted with graphics and equipment installed by Township mechanics and fire fighters, training was conducted and Ladder 1 was put into service on July 27. The truck has a 78 foot ladder reach, a 500 gallon water tank, a full complement of ground ladders, a Waterous 1500 GPM pump and a large supply of fire hose. In addition to its rescue and firefighting capabilities, the ladder truck will also be equipped to respond to paramedic calls providing advanced life support services. The

Township does not run a rescue vehicle out of Central Fire Station, so having the ladder truck equipped as a paramedic unit assures that, in the event of a life-threatening emergency in the area served by Central Station, it will not be necessary to wait for a fully-equipped rescue vehicle to begin advanced life support services in addition to its firefighting capabilities.

Two new rescue vehicles were delivered on August 1,

after a year of research and endless hours of designing. These Braun 2011 Chief XL vehicles are equipped with the latest in low maintenance electronics, emissions control systems, patient treatment and patient comfort abilities. They replace older, outdated models at Fire Stations 3 and 4 that had become prone to frequent breakdowns. The new vehicles cost less to operate. Their more compact size allows greater maneuverability and enables rescuers to get closer to emergency situations, in addition to providing a much smoother ride for the patient.



One of the new Braun rescues

Save the date...

Property values and the housing market have been on everyone's mind lately. Mark your calendar and come get the latest information and answers to your questions. The Bloomfield Township Assessing Department will hold a Property Assessment Seminar at the Bloomfield Township Library on Thursday, January 19, 2012 from 7 to 9 p.m. The Department will present general information including Proposal A review, sales study numbers, market analysis and data on foreclosures. The focus of the seminar is on understanding your assessment change notice and the procedure to appeal your assessment, including how to prepare for the March Board of Review.

Look for more information and details about the Property Assessment Seminar in the winter newsletter.



It's time to "Shake Your Mailbox"

Every year some Bloomfield Township residents see their mailboxes topple over as a result of snowplows piling snow against weak posts or hardware. In an effort to reduce the likelihood of this happening, the Bloomfield Township Department of Public Works, the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC), the County Road Association of Michigan (CRAM) and the U.S. Postal Service are encouraging residents to "Shake Your Mailbox."

This will tell you whether your mailbox posts are sturdy and the hardware holding them is in good shape. If not, you will be able to correct any problems before damage from

snowplows occurs. Repairing or replacing mailboxes now could also prevent delays in mail delivery.

Call the Public Services office, 248.594.2800, with any questions.



Check your mailbox now to prevent problems this winter

Water Division foreman Ken Brown serves residents 24 hours a day

When Ken Brown, Water Division foreman, started working for Bloomfield Township 24 years ago, it took three people working every day for a month to read the water meters in one of the three zones in the Township. Around 2005 the Township's Water Division began installing new meters that can be read remotely, and four years ago the Water Division increased its efforts to get the new meters into all the homes in the Township. In 2007 the new meters were in 6,549 homes; as of 2011, the new meters are used by nearly 15,000 of the 16,000 water customers in the Township. Once the program is fully implemented it will take one employee just one day to read all the meters in a zone.

"If you have an old meter, please call us," says Brown. "We'll come out and install a new meter at no charge. It only takes an hour." The move to the new meters results in savings not only for the Township by reducing the number of

employees needed to staff the Water Division, but can save homeowners money as well. The meters feature an indicator that shows water running through the meter. If a homeowner is not using any water but sees that the indica-



Water Division foreman Ken Brown is always on call for residents

tor is spinning, that is evidence of a leak somewhere. A Water Division employee will come out and help locate the leak so the homeowner can call a plumber to make the necessary repairs.

Installing new meters is just one part

of Water Division duties. Employees labor largely behind the scenes, checking pressure in the water mains and adjusting underground valves, checking the Township's nine sewage pumping stations, inspecting and cleaning sewers, inspecting manholes and repairing hydrants. Brown and one other employee are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"We are constantly dealing with emergencies such as broken water mains. Some of the pipes and valves date back to 1920 and things go wrong," says Brown. As Water Division foreman, Brown considers himself to be running a business that provides a product – water – to his customers. He takes great pride in providing exceptional customer service to residents, and emphasizes it to his eleven full-time employees and two part-timers. "When you call us you will always get a response. I run my department on customer service and I treat your property as if it's my own."

433-7700	Administration
433-7712	Accounting
433-7710	Assessor's Office
433-7715	Building Division
433-7702	Clerk's Office
433-7790	Community Cable
594-2800	Engineering & Env.
433-7745	Fire Non-Emergency
594-2845	Ordinance Division
433-7795	Planning Division
433-7750	Police Department
433-7755	Non-Emergency
433-7757	Animal Welfare
433-7760	Investigations
433-7775	Alarm Info
433-7777	Property
433-7776	Records
594-2800	Road Division
594-2800	Water & Sewer
723-3500	Senior Services
723-3530	Adult Day Service
433-7705	Treasurer's Office

BLOOMFIELD HILLS MI 48303-0489
PO BOX 489
4200 TELEGRAPH ROAD

BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP



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