

Sharon Township

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First Quarter, 2017

—Township Trustees—

Chair John H. Oberle

Phillip W. Smith

Lindsay S. Duffey

John S. O'Keeffe, Fiscal Officer

Website update!



You may have noticed that we began using our newly designed website in early December. While it is still a work in progress; I hope you like what you see so far. Most exciting is that it is designed to be mobile friendly, making it easier for residents to access on their phone or tablet as well as their computer. We will continue to update the site, so check back soon! www.sharontwp.us

A heartfelt THANK YOU to the residents and staff who spent many, many hours helping us to create and organize the content on the site. We could not have done it without you!

Coming soon: Facebook

We are in the process of putting together an official Sharon Township Facebook page. The Facebook page will give us another opportunity to disseminate time-sensitive information. We are working hard to get our Social Media policies in place and hope to have our page live during the first few months of 2017.

E-mails from Sharon Township

Interested in receiving e-mail updates from the Township?

Would you like to receive your newsletter via e-mail?

If you are interested in either of these options, please e-mail John O'Keeffe at

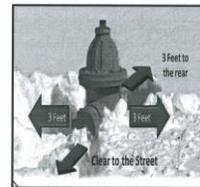
fiscalofficer@sharontwp.us

Please let him know whether you would like to receive e-mail updates or the newsletter (or both).

If you would like to receive the newsletter in an electronic form **only**, please share your address, so we know to stop sending a paper copy.

Fire Hydrants and Snow

A timely reminder from Sharon Township Trustee Phillip Smith, for those township residents who may have a fire hydrant located near or on their property. In order to assist emergency responders, please try to keep the hydrants clear of snow three feet in all directions. Also make sure the hydrant has a path to the street. Every minute counts when responding to a fire.



Township Property For Sale After Removing Blight

By John H. Oberle, Trustee

One focus of the Township is to remove blight and improve our neighborhoods. We were successful in getting a house demolished at no cost to the township at 6790 Maple Canyon Avenue and the property was given to the Township for free.

There are four parcels of land and the Township will be taking bids to sell the property. We are giving preference to residents of the Township first. If a resident has an interest in acquiring the property, please submit an offer to the Sharon Township Board of Trustees by March 31, 2017. Parcel numbers are 252-000167; 252-000168; 252-000169; 252-000170.

WINTER IS HERE

Please help us keep the roads free of snow and ice. When shoveling snow from your driveway, please don't throw it into the street, piles of snow thrown back into the street is hazardous to traffic and can cause unexpected slippery spots.

To help keep the snowplows from filling your drive entrance back in with snow, pile the snow on the opposite side of your driveway from the flow of traffic. On street parking – if at all possible remove your vehicle from the street when snow or ice is in the forecast. Maneuvering around parked vehicles on slippery roads is difficult for plow trucks. If you must park your car on the street, please move it to a clear location after a 2” or more snowfall. This will allow the plow trucks to clear the area where you normally park. If possible park on the other side of the street.

Policy:

Our policy on snow removal is all clear. This means we plow the roads from curb to curb or road edge to road edge. We salt down the center of the roads to allow the salt brine to melt the snow and ice in both directions. During the late evening hours and during heavy snowfalls we try to maintain two lanes of open roadway, returning during daylight hours or after the snow stops to clear the roads to full width.

How do we know when the roads need plowed or salted?

During regular work hours 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. the Road Department monitors the road conditions with the help of the Police Department. The Police Department is responsible for monitoring road conditions during our off time. When they determine our services are needed they call the Road Superintendent. Our response time to their call is normally between 30 to 45 minutes to get employees in and trucks loaded. If you have any questions or problems please call the numbers listed.

Snow Removal and Right of Way Do’s and Don’ts

It came to our attention that there are several areas that have created a nuisance in the road right-of-ways, this is in violation of Ohio Revised Code 5543.10. All rocks, logs, fencing, basketball hoops, and other obstructions will need to be removed from the right-of-way, all vegetation will need to be trimmed or removed so that snow removal can be done in a safe manner. Fiberglass reflective markers will be placed on roadways without curbs or gutters. The markers will aid the Snow-Warriors in judging where the edge of pavement is during heavy snowfalls. As you can imagine, when we are called out at 3 a.m., with snow falling and visibility reduced, it is sometimes hard to judge 15 feet in front of you. The placement of obstructions near the roadway edges has become a problem for the Township drivers and has actually caused some damage to the trucks. Due to over grown trees and plants we were unable to clear the entire roadway in some areas. We will be trimming these plantings as weather permits and appreciate your understanding of the situation. We also would like to thank you for your patience and understanding this winter. We understand how frustrating it is for you to

have shoveled your driveway only to have the plow trucks clear the street and add more snow. However we will not be able to honor resident requests to remove the snow from driveway approaches. We just hope it helps knowing once you get on the roads, you’ll be able to drive on them!



LEAF COLLECTION:

Leaf collection officially ended on November 30 2016, the Road Department did continue to collect leaves for an additional week. We would like to thank everyone who placed their leaves at the edge of the road and not in the road. By not placing your leaves in the road you have helped reduce pollution into our waterways. There were some requests to extend the leaf collection season, however, due to winter weather conditions, this was not possible. The trucks we use for leaf collection are the same trucks we use for snow and ice removal. It takes three days to properly transition a truck from leaf pickup to snow removal. Leaf pickup will begin the third week of October of 2017 and end on November 30, 2017. Please remember to be environmentally friendly by placing your leaves at the edge of the road and not in the road.



CODE

CONCERNS

By Mark Higdon,
Code Enforcement Director

As you receive and read this, winter is slowly turning toward spring. Let’s look at both seasons.

During winter, thick ice often forms along street edges, sometimes spreading into the street. The usual cause is sump pump discharge flowing out at the curbs. Salt is ineffective on thick ice, and using heavy equipment on it can damage pavement. Since there is no good cure for this problem, prevention works best. If possible, shut off or redirect sump pump water away from the street during cold months. Contact our Road Department 614-885-5933 about how to do that. And, of course, always watch out for ice as you walk and drive.

Here are some tips for fair weather months and year-round.

1. Keep grass mowed, good vegetation trimmed and building exteriors in good condition.

2. Don't let *blighting* conditions—e.g. exposed junk and rubbish—develop on your property: neatly store or cover items of value.
3. Trash receptacles at the curb *only* between 6AM Sundays and 6PM Tuesdays.
4. Exposed junk vehicles = blight and possible code violation.
5. Be sensitive to the effect your property's appearance has on its value and on that of others.

The Exterior Property Maintenance Code can be read online and downloaded from sharontwp.us. Contact me at 614-885-5115 (ext. 402), 614-787-5644 (cell) or codeenforcement@sharontwp.us to discuss *your* code concerns.

From the Fiscal Office

LOCAL WASTE SERVICES offers a \$1.50 per month discount to all those 62 years or older and who are the head of the household. Contact Local Waste Services 614-409-9375 on how to sign up for the monthly discount.

The City of Columbus offers a Senior Citizen Water Discount Program and a Low Income Water and Sewer Discount Program. To determine if you meet Columbus Department Water & Sewer Programs criteria, go to <https://www.columbus.gov/utilities/customers/Utility-Discount-Programs/> or contact the Columbus Department of Public Utilities Call Center by calling 311 or 614-645-8276.

FROM YOUR POLICE DEPARTMENT

NEED POLICE ASSISTANCE, PLEASE CALL THE PROPER NUMBER.... The Township Administrative Office often receives phone calls from residents wanting to speak with a police officer to come to their location. The Administrative Assistant does not have the capability to dispatch an officer. If you need the assistance of an officer, please call the Dispatch Center at 614-525-2125; this is the non-emergency number. If it is an emergency, please call 911.

GOING AWAY ON VACATION? ... Please take advantage of our Vacation House Watch Program; it is available to all residents of the unincorporated areas of Sharon Township. We have made it easier for those who have Internet access to make a Vacation House Watch Request. Simply go to the Township's Website at www.sharontwp.us, in the section for the Police Department you will see the link to the on-line form.

Just complete the fillable form; when finished, just click on the "Request Service" button at the bottom.

If you do not have Internet service, or do not desire to submit an on-line request, you can still make the request by calling the Township Administrative Assistant at 614-885-5115. The information will be written up and provided to the Police Department. Some of the information we would like for you to provide is:

- Date and time leaving and returning
- Vehicles that will be left parked at the property
- Lights that will remain on 24 hours, or will be on a timer; please tell us the time the lights will be going on and off
- Persons who may be staying at the house or have access to it
- Animals (pets) maintained at the residence

If you want to contact us about a Vacation House Watch and it's after normal office hours, or on the weekend or holiday, please call the Dispatch Center at 614-525-2125. Ask that a cruiser be dispatched to your home, or have an on-duty constable call you. Someone will respond and record the information.

Constables will physically check your residence at least once per shift, sometimes more often if the workload permits. Please call us if you plan to be away whether it is two days or several months.

KEEPING YOU AND YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD SAFE...

For those of you who live in the Township, your crime rate remains much lower than other areas of Franklin County and Columbus. Most of our neighborhoods are surrounded by Columbus neighborhoods that are experiencing an increase in criminal activity. We at the Sharon Township Police Department believe that our almost constant presence in your neighborhood is one of the primary reasons we have not seen an increase in criminal activity.

Statistics show that many crimes go unreported. The only way your police department knows that a criminal incident has occurred is by reporting it to us. If you are involved in a crime, regardless of how minor you may think it is, please call 614-525-2125 and ask that a constable be dispatched to your home so a report can be filed.

Reporting crimes are the only means by which a police department can determine what type of activity is occurring within their jurisdiction.

No law enforcement agency can promise their residents a 0% crime rate; it is impossible even with the best security systems installed in every home, business and vehicle in the Township. Some crime is still going to occur. But, with our residents and law enforcement officers working together we can keep the crime rate as low as possible; thus, keeping our

neighborhoods safe. WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP US? Really it is quite simple, just follow this rule; “SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING.” If you notice anything that appears to be suspicious to you, call 614-525-2125 and ask that a constable be dispatched to check things out. Please inform the person answering the telephone at the dispatch center what you saw and/or what type of activity you are suspicious of so the information can be relayed to the constable. Please provide as much information as possible. We will respond to anything you call about, regardless of what it is. Please, do not think you are wasting our time; this is what we get paid to do. Nothing is too small or unimportant. You should also let the complaint taker know if you do, or do not want, the constable to stop and speak with you.

CON AND SCAM ARTISTS... It is tax time again.

In this article, we want to discuss the scam that has occurred to a few of our residents the last few years; the TAX SCAM. In past years, a few of our residents have received aggressive and threatening phone calls by criminals impersonating IRS agents demanding that the resident pay a bogus tax bill. They con the resident into sending cash, usually through a prepaid debit card or wire transfer. They may also leave urgent callback requests through phone “Robo-calls,” or via a “phishing e-mail.”

The following is an excerpt from one of several articles found on the Website of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS):

IRS-Impersonation Telephone Scams

An aggressive and sophisticated phone scam targeting taxpayers, including recent immigrants, has been making the rounds throughout the country. Callers claim to be employees of the IRS, but are not. These con artists can sound convincing when they call. They use fake names and bogus IRS identification badge numbers. They may know a lot about their targets, and they usually alter the caller ID to make it look like the IRS is calling.

Victims are told they owe money to the IRS and it must be paid promptly through a pre-loaded debit card or wire transfer. If the victim refuses to cooperate, they are then threatened with arrest, deportation or suspension of a business or driver’s license. In many cases, the caller becomes hostile and insulting. Or, victims may be told they have a refund due to try to trick them into sharing private information. If the phone isn’t answered, the scammers often leave an “urgent” callback request.

Note that the IRS will never:

- *Call to demand immediate payment using a specific payment method such as a prepaid debit card, gift card or wire transfer. Generally, the IRS will first mail you a bill if you owe any taxes.*

- *Threaten to immediately bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have you arrested for not paying.*
- *Demand that you pay taxes without giving you the opportunity to question or appeal the amount they say you owe.*
- *Ask for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.*

Remember: Scammers Change Tactics -- Aggressive and threatening phone calls by criminals impersonating IRS agents remain a major threat to taxpayers, but variations of the IRS impersonation scam continue year-round and they tend to peak when scammers find prime opportunities to strike.

During last year’s tax season, the IRS saw an increase in E-mail, Phishing, and Malware schemes. There is reason to believe that these types of incidents, and others, will increase this year. To stay updated on any scam involving your taxes or the IRS, please go to the IRS Website at <https://www.irs.gov/>, or <https://www.irs.gov/uac/tax-scams-consumer-alerts>.

How taxpayers can help? Below are a few common-sense suggestions by the IRS that can make a big difference.

- Always use security software with firewall and anti-virus protections. Make sure the security software is always turned on and can automatically update. Encrypt sensitive files such as tax records you store on your computer. Use strong passwords.
- Learn to recognize and avoid phishing emails, threatening calls and texts from thieves posing as legitimate organizations such as your bank, credit card company and even the IRS. Do not click on links or download attachments from unknown or suspicious emails.
- Protect your personal data. Do not routinely carry your Social Security card, and make sure your tax records are secure. Treat your personal information like you do your cash; don’t leave it lying around.

Forward IRS-related scam emails to phishing@irs.gov. Report IRS-impersonation telephone calls at www.tigta.gov.

For more information, you can use the Internet to access [IRS Security Awareness Tax Tips](#) for a recap of IRS tips to help secure your data. Also, see [Publication 4524, Security Awareness for Taxpayers](#). Both sites are accessible from the IRS Website.



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Renewing Your License Plates?

Make sure your tax dollars go where they belong. When renewing your license plates, please make sure your taxes are going to Sharon Township and not the City of Columbus or other jurisdictions. Part of the license fees are used for Road Department services. If you do not check your registration, your money may go to the wrong entity. This is your money, please make sure it goes to your community.



2017 MEETING DATES

The Sharon Township Trustees will meet in regular session on the first and the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. as follows (with noted exceptions):

January 11, 2017
January 18, 2017*

February 1, 2017
February 15, 2017

March 1, 2017
March 15, 2017

April 5, 2017
April 19, 2017

May 3, 2017
May 17, 2017

June 7, 2017
June 21, 2017

July 12, 2017
NO -- 2nd Meeting July 2017

August 2, 2017
August 16, 2017

September 6, 2017
September 20, 2017

October 4, 2017
October 18, 2017

November 1, 2017
November 15, 2017

December 6, 2017
December 20, 2017

**Insuring Sharon Township
residents since 1946**

Call Insurance

*95 East Wilson Bridge Road
Worthington, OH 43085-2301*

**Call or Email Leanne Daggett or
Sue Willing**

**for a free auto and home
insurance review**

614-846-4120

**leanne@callinsurance.com
sue@callinsurance.com**

Reporting Water Pollution

If you see anyone putting anything down a storm drain or into a ditch, stream or river, call the Sharon Township Police Department non-emergency number: 614-525-2125

Chemical or petroleum pollution: call the Ohio EPA 24-hour hotline, 800-282-9378

Sewage-related pollution: Call the Franklin County Public Health 24-hour hotline, 614-525-3965, or report online at www.myfcph.org.

Agriculture or manure-related pollution: Call Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District, 614-486-9613 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

You can also contact us about any non-emergency water pollution and we will contact the appropriate agency.



Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Study

Franklin County Department of Sanitary Engineering is conducting an area-wide Sewer System Evaluation Study to assess the sanitary sewer system serving Franklin County customers. The County has contracted with local engineering firm Brown and Caldwell to perform this evaluation.

Brown and Caldwell and its subcontractors will be performing smoke testing in select service areas. All public safety authorities have been properly notified of this testing.

How does smoke testing work?

Smoke testing consists of injecting a harmless, simulated smoke into the sewer system to find leaks and faulty connections which may need repair. The smoke is non-toxic and odorless. It will only enter your home if there are faulty sewer connections or dry traps in plumbing fixtures. The smoke does not stain and is not a fire hazard.

The testing in Sharon Township was halted earlier due to cold weather. Results are to be posted after all the testing is complete.

Stream Cleanup

Sharon Township with the assistance of Boy Scout Troop 862, the City of Columbus, the City of Worthington, and the Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District and Flow are planning a cleanup of the Rush Run Creek.

The cleanup area will be adjacent to Walnut Grove Cemetery in Rush Run Park. Cleanup is scheduled for Sunday March 5, 2017 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

All volunteers are welcome and we will be meeting by the Bridge over the creek located in Walnut Grove Cemetery at 5561 Milton Avenue Worthington, Ohio 43085 at 1:00. Boots and gloves are highly recommended, we will be removing tree limbs, debris and trash from the creek. For additional information check the Sharon Township website at sharontwp.us or contact Thomas Kayati at 614 885-5933.

A Note of Thanks

SHARON TOWNSHIP wants to thank former Sharon Township Trustee Paul Insley of Insley Printing for his assistance in getting the newsletter out to residents.