

Laketon Township

Spring 2021 Newsletter

COVID-19 Pandemic Changes ongoing....

Since the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, changes have been a way of life for all of us. Laketon Township Officials and Staff have worked hard to provide residents a variety of options for getting the services they need. There is a drop box available 24/7 365 days a week for dropping off paperwork and bill payments (NO CASH) and some payments can be made over the phone with a debit or credit card (fees apply). Choice One Bank takes Laketon Township Property Tax payments. Visit the township website at www.laketon.org or the township facebook page "Laketon Township Community Info" for the most up to date information. And as always, feel free to call if you have any questions. Phone: 231-744-2454 . Thank you all for your patience and understanding as we navigate these ever changing and challenging times!

March Board of Review

If you do not agree with your 2021 assessed value and wish to make an appeal, you can call Laketon Township at 231-744-2454 to make an appointment with the Board of Review. As of the writing of this newsletter, we do not know exactly how the COVID-19 pandemic will affect the Board of Review with regard to having in person or virtual meetings, but appeal by mail is always an option. If you choose to appeal by mail, you **MUST** complete a form L-4035 and mail it to Laketon Township with a letter and any other documentation of the facts that support your appeal. The form can be found on the State of Michigan's website or one can be emailed to you—just call the Township Hall. This mail in appeal **MUST** be received by Laketon Township **BEFORE** the close of the March Board of Review at 9:00 pm on Wednesday March 9th, 2021. If you have questions, you can email the Assessor Ed Vandervries at evandervries@hotmail.com or the Deputy Assessor Kathryn Wright at assessor@laketon.org or call Laketon Township at 231-744-2454 with any questions.

To figure estimated property taxes for 2021, use one of the following formulas: Homes owned and occupied by the owner qualify for the Principal Residence Exemption (PRE). Homes/properties that are vacation properties, rental homes or businesses do not qualify for the PRE exemption. Use the Taxable Value from your 2021 Assessment Notice to calculate estimated 2021 property taxes. **Keep in mind we do not yet know the 2021 millage rate—these formulas are using the 2020 millage rates for a PRE property and a Non-PRE property for the purpose of an ESTIMATE of 2021 property taxes here in Laketon Township.** *Note regarding millage: One mill is \$1.00 per every \$1,000 of taxable value.*

For a home with a Principal Residence Exemption:

2021 Taxable Value x .0325477 = 2021 estimated taxes
_____ x .0325477 = _____

For a home or property without a Principal Residence Exemption

2021 Taxable Value x .0505477 = 2021 estimated taxes
_____ x .0505477 = _____

Please also see an article on the reverse for information about how "uncapping" of the taxable value after a sale affects property taxes!

Tidbits:

- **Mail Slot/Drop Box:** for your convenience, there is a mail slot and a drop box—feel free to drop off bill payments (checks or money orders only—**NO CASH**), permit applications, dog licenses or any other paperwork. If you need a receipt please provide either a self addressed stamped envelope or an email address and you will be emailed a receipt. Thank you.
- **Property Taxes:** If you have 2020 property taxes that have not yet been paid—they can be paid at Laketon Township until February 28th, 2021—please call for the correct amount due, including penalties and interest. 231-744-2454 M-F 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.
- **Recycling and Disposal Opportunities:** As of the writing of this newsletter—due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, it is unclear at this time what events will be held—please watch our Facebook page (Laketon Township Community Info) and our website (www.laketon.org) for more information as it becomes available.
- **Yard Waste Site Cards— The price of a yard waste card for 2021 is \$20.00.** Seasonal hours will be the same as in prior years (COVID-19 may affect this) and can be found at www.laketon.org Click the General Township Info tab at the top and select Yard Waste Info from the drop down list.
- **High Water Problems:** The Muskegon County Office of the Water Resources Commissioner (formerly known as the Drain Commissioner) has a lot of good information on their website: <https://www.co.muskegon.mi.us/492/Water-Resources-Commissioner> under "Information Pieces" there are two informational documents that may be very helpful. Or call 231-724-6219. for assistance.

FENNER RD WASHOUT/ REPAIR UPDATE



The Muskegon County Road Commission is currently working on design for the new structure to cross Green Creek where the washout occurred last spring. This is a major watershed structure. Even though this was an unplanned closure, it is still subject to all normal compliance and permitting requirements at the state and federal levels.

Hydrologic and hydraulic work has been completed and design alternatives are being evaluated. This was not a planned project and has to be fit into everything else the Muskegon County Road Commission is committed to do.

The MCRC has reported that a project of this size and scope normally takes about 2 (two) years to get through reviews, permitting, bidding and construction. In addition, there are 2 (two) other major water crossing structure failures elsewhere in the county.

Temporary Structures— "Tarp Structures"



Over the past few years, tarp covered structures have become increasingly popular as they go up quickly and are often an affordable storage option.

What you may not know however, is that the Laketon Township Zoning Ordinance has regulations that apply to these kinds of structures. The Zoning Ordinance defines a temporary structure as one that is "permitted by the Zoning Administrator to exist during periods of construction of the main building or for special events, which period may not exceed six (6) months in a twelve (12) month time period". In order for a temporary structure to be erected or placed on the property, a zoning compliance permit must be applied for, approved by the Zoning Administrator and issued. The fee for a Zoning Compliance permit is \$75.00. If you have any questions regarding these type of structures, or the permitting process, Zoning Administrator Theresa Maner can be reached by email at zoningadmin@laketon.org or at the Township Hall by phone.

Home Improvements often need a permit...

If you are planning home renovations, repairs, additions, sheds, accessory buildings, decks, fences etc—make sure you obtain any required permits BEFORE you begin the project. Don't forget, this may include permits for zoning, building, electrical, plumbing or mechanical (heating/cooling).



Also, BEFORE undertaking any project that involves digging—State law REQUIRES you to contact MISS DIG to have public utilities marked to avoid potential damages or serious injuries from occurring. MISS DIG 811 is FREE—so call or visit their website at elocate.missdig811.org to request these public utilities to be marked anytime you plan a project that involves digging. This includes: decks, patios, landscaping, fencing, mailboxes, swing sets/play sets, home construction & additions, pools, garages/sheds etc. A MISS DIG information sheet is available at: www.laketon.org/departments/building

Buying a new house or your first house?

Here's what the Assessor and Treasurer wish you knew about buying a home and how the change of ownership affects property taxes — you NEED to know this BEFORE you buy!

Taxable Value Uncapping: Per MCL 211.27a (known to many as Proposal A, from 1994) the taxable value on your home will uncap in the year after you buy your home (except in some exempt situations—ask the assessor about these situations). Uncapping of the taxable value will lead to an increase in property taxes. Most people will have an escrow account set up with their monthly mortgage payment to cover the property taxes and homeowners insurance bills. It is important that your mortgage company estimates the property taxes based on the potential uncapped taxable value and not the current taxable value. If the property taxes are estimated on the current taxable value, you could potentially see a very large increase in your monthly escrow payment the year following the purchase of a home. This is because your property taxes were underestimated by the mortgage/title company. **So, what can you do BEFORE you put in that purchase offer???**

Contact the local Assessor or Treasurer's Office, they are happy to provide an estimate of property taxes on a potential home purchase. You can use our estimate as a tool for you and your realtor, title company and/or mortgage company to better estimate your potential property tax obligations after the sale.

