

# LAKETON TOWNSHIP

Fall 2009 Newsletter (also available online)

## Township Officials

### Board of Trustees

Supervisor Kim Arter  
Clerk Christina Achterhoff  
Treasurer Nancy Zeller  
Trustee Cindy Zaagman  
Trustee Tom Kane

### Planning Commission

John McDonnell  
Mary Marcil  
Lynn Stel  
Bob Schalow  
Cindy Ackerman  
Jim Federighe  
Cindy Zaagman

### Zoning Board of Appeals

Brian Boersma  
Bob Neis  
Gary Charles  
John McDonnell  
Kim Arter

### Employees & Contract Staff

Don Bond  
David Bossenbroek  
Wanda Budnik  
Tim Chorny  
Tim Duba  
Bob Frain  
Dick Grenell  
Molly Joslyn  
Lee Marine  
Brenda Moore  
Jim Shereda  
Rod Siegel  
Diane Sowa  
Veronica West

### Contact Information

Phone: 231-744-2454  
Fax: 231-744-2506  
Website: [www.laketon.org](http://www.laketon.org)

### Office Hours:

Monday—Friday  
8:30 am to 4:30 pm

## Laketon Township—Accepting U. S. Passport Applications

Clerk Christina Achterhoff has successfully completed the required training and has been authorized by the U.S. State Department to accept applications for U.S. Passports. Applications are accepted **BY APPOINTMENT ONLY**.

Applications and basic information are available at the Laketon Township Hall as well as on our website. [www.laketon.org](http://www.laketon.org)

All fees are set by the U.S. State Department. Passport fees must be in the form of check or money order made payable to "Department of State". The Execution fee is a separate fee payable to Laketon Township by cash, check or money order.

If you have questions, you can call the Clerk Christina Achterhoff or visit the website of

the U.S. State Department  
[www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)



## VETERANS' DAY—NOVEMBER 11, 2009

Veteran's Day is intended to honor *ALL* American veterans, both living and dead. In fact, Veterans Day is largely intended to thank *LIVING* veterans for dedicated and loyal service to their country. November 11 of each year is the day that we ensure veterans know that we deeply appreciate the sacrifices they have made in their lives to keep our country free.

Laketon Township offices will be closed in honor of Veteran's Day and all those that have served the United States of America. Thank you to all Veteran's for their service.

## ELECTION DAY —NOVEMBER 3, 2009



Tuesday November 3rd, 2009 is election day. Here in Laketon Township there will be a couple of proposal's on the ballot for Reeths Puffer School District. If you wish to see a sample ballot prior to election day – they will be available in the offices of Laketon Township Hall.

Remember— state law requires you to be registered to vote at least 30 days prior to an election to be eligible to vote in that election. You can register to vote at the Laketon Township Hall or any Secretary of State office.

If you will need an absentee ballot or have any questions, please call the Township Hall and ask to speak with Clerk Christina Achterhoff or Deputy Clerk Molly Joslyn. 231-744-2454

## MasterCard/Visa Card Payments No Longer Accepted

Several years ago, Laketon Township began accepting Master Card and Visa card payments in order to offer our residents another payment alternative, however only a very few residents actually took advantage of this service.

Unfortunately after 08/24/2009 Laketon Township will no longer accept credit/debit card payments due to state law and program changes.

If you wish to use your credit lines to pay taxes or other bills, you may be able to access your credit via cash advances or convenience checks. We apologize for any inconvenience this causes our residents.

## Energy Credits Available for some Home Improvements

The American Recovery & Reinvestment Act created energy credits for certain home improvements, such as roofing, insulation, home heating & cooling (HVAC), windows, doors and certain other items that meet program requirements.

A chart is posted at the Laketon Township Hall that has more information. More information can also be obtained from [www.thestimulussource.com](http://www.thestimulussource.com) Please remember to consult with a tax professional regarding all income tax and tax credit related questions.

Also, remember to check to see if any permits are required for any home repairs/remodeling you may choose to undertake.

## GO GREEN IN THE YARD—WHAT TO DO WITH YARD WASTE

### Clip and Keep

- **Yard Waste Disposal Site NEW HOURS STARTING TUESDAY SEPT. 8, 2009** Tuesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays 11:00 am to 7:00 pm Also—weather permitting—the site will be open on Sundays from October 18, 2009—November 15, 2009 from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm
- **Township Hall—Upcoming Holiday Closings**  
Columbus Day 10-12-2009  
Veterans Day 11-11-2009  
Thanksgiving Weekend - 11-26-2009 & 11-27-2009  
Christmas Eve 12-24-2009  
Christmas Day 12-25-2009  
New Year's Eve 12-31-2009  
New Year's Day 1-1-2010
- **Report Streetlight outages to Consumers Power:** either online or by phone. The website is [www.consumersenergy.com](http://www.consumersenergy.com) then click on Home menu and then Report an electrical outage. The phone number is 1-800-477-5050
- **Report Traffic light outages to Muskegon County Road Commission:** Call 231-788-2381
- **Stray or Loose Dogs:** Call Vector Control 231-724-6007 to have an officer respond to the area to pick up the dog, if the situation is urgent or after normal business hours call 911
- **Notary Services:** Laketon Township offers notary services to it's residents free of charge. At least one notary public is present in the office during regular office hours.
- **Need Plant or Gardening advice? Call the MSU Extension hotline 231-724-4730**

### Yard Waste Disposal Ideas:

1. Use a mulching lawn-mower whenever possible and leave grass clippings in the yard where they break down and act as a natural slow release nitrogen fertilizer.
2. Compost grass clippings and leaves in your own yard. Compost tips to follow.
3. Use a light layer of grass clippings and/or leaves as a weed block around landscaping then cover with a more decorative mulch, such as wood chips.
4. Use a wood chipper to chip up any brush or branches and utilize the chips as mulch around your own yard.
5. Laketon Township

Residents can drop off (or even pick up) grass clippings, leaves and brush (under 3 inches in diameter) at the yard waste site—see hours at left.

### Composting Tips:

1. Choose or construct a bin for your compost. (many are commercially available).
2. Fill your bin with yard waste—be sure to follow the 50/50 rule: "50% **green stuff**" such as grass clippings, vegetable and fruit scraps, coffee grounds, and many other non-meat kitchen scraps. "50% **brown stuff**" such as leaves, dry dead plants/weeds, sawdust, paper towel, paper

3. Make sure the compost has adequate air and water. Turn/mix the compost once every week or two and if needed add a layer of good garden soil between layers of green and brown yard waste to get the decomposition process started.

**DO NOT** add any of the following to your compost: meat/meat scraps or bones, fish/fish bones, plastics, oils, fats, pet feces, plants that are diseased or have gone to seed or glossy paper. Compost piles that are properly taken care of do not emit bad odors—so go green and start composting today.

## GRASSCYCLING—YES, THAT'S RIGHT GRASSCYCLING!

What is grasscycling? It involves leaving the grass clippings on your lawn, to fertilize the grass and return their nutrients to the lawn. Why throw away these valuable nutrients?

Grasscycling is GREEN. It enhances your green lawn and also your green wallet by saving money spent on commercial fertilizers. It also saves tax dollars the township spends on disposing of grass clippings dropped off at the yard waste site. Each year an average lawn produces eight tons of clippings per acre. The cost to dispose of these clippings can add up to thousands of dollars.

Grasscycling adds moisture and naturally fertilizes the lawn. It also saves you time—it takes less time to mow if you don't have to bag and haul away the clippings.

It has long been thought that thatch would build up in a lawn if the clippings were not re-

moved. Actually, thatch is not caused by grass clippings left in the lawn, but by over watering and over fertilizing. Lawns typically are fertilized with 2 to 4 lbs of nitrogen per 1000 square feet each year. If you leave the clippings in the lawn you will only need 2 lbs (or less) per year per 1000 square feet.

You can also reduce the amount of clippings your lawn generates by increasing the mowing height during the summer months. This will improve the health of the lawn because the grass plants can then produce more food for itself (photosynthesize) so it will be better able to compete with weeds and shade the soil thereby using less water.

Here's how to grasscycle:

1. Mow the grass between 2 and 2 1/2 inches to hide clippings, be sure to cut no more than 1/3 the grass height to keep the clip-

2. pings small. Water deeply but infrequently. (unless you have clay soil, then water more often for shorter periods of time)
3. When you need a new mower, consider a mulching mower. The best mulching mowers blow very fine clippings back into the lawn where they disappear from sight. An electric mulching mower will cut down on air pollution as well and a manual push mower will eliminate it completely.

