

Laketon Township

2009

Summer Newsletter

2735 W. Giles Rd, Muskegon, MI 49445 Phone: 231-744-2454
Office Hours—Monday through Friday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Website

www.laketon.org

Personnel Directory

Elected Officials

Township Supervisor—Kim Arter

Township Clerk—Christina Achterhoff

Township Treasurer—Nancy Zeller

Township Trustees—Tom Kane and
Cindy Zaagman

Office Personnel

Deputy Clerk—Molly Joslyn

Deputy Treasurer—Veronica West

Water/Sewer payments & Cemetery
Dept.—Diane Sowa

Zoning Administrator—Dick Grenell

Assessor—Bob Frain

Assessor—Wanda Budnik

Building Department

Building Inspector—Rod Siegel

Electrical Inspector—Tim Chorny

Plumbing/Mechanical Inspector—Jim
Shereda

Maintenance Department

Parks & Building Maintenance—Tim
Duba and Lee Marine

Cemetery Sexton—Don Bond

Yard Waste Attendant—LTJ Udell

POOLS REQUIRE FENCING

Summer weather brings the fun of swimming in lakes, ponds and pools. But the recent tragic drowning of a 3 year old boy in Holland Township has again reminded us that any body of water can be very dangerous.

Even though all bodies of water can't be fenced, the law does require all pools to be fenced. Please make sure your pool is properly fenced—the building inspector can provide the specifics on types of fencing and gate latches that are required. Have a fun summer but remember to be SAFE!

New—Municipal Civil Infraction Ordinance Adopted

Laketon Township strives to provide a clean, neat, safe and healthy environment and community for the benefit of residents and visitors alike. However, Laketon Township receives over 100 complaints every year for a variety of issues, most commonly; un-mowed, un-raked or un-maintained yards, junk or unlicensed vehicles, junk and debris littering property, building complaints and barking or loose dogs.

Earlier this year, the Township Board passed a new ordinance—the Municipal Civil Infraction Ordinance. In essence, what this ordinance does is change the way ordinance violations are processed. [The entire text of the ordinance is available on the township website (www.laketon.org) or at the township hall. A schedule of civil infraction fines adopted by the Township Board is also available on the website or at the township hall.] Before this ordinance was adopted, ordinance violations were misdemeanor criminal offences and the process to enforce an ordinance through the criminal court system was very time consuming and costly. The new ordinance changes the violation of most Laketon Township ordinances from misdemeanor criminal offenses to municipal civil infractions.

The adoption of the Municipal Civil Infraction Ordinance changes the way the township proceeds to enforce local ordinances and building codes. Please understand that Laketon Township does not actively patrol the township looking for violations. It has been a long-standing policy to enforce ordinances when a complaint or report brings a situation or potential violation to Laketon Township's attention.

In general, under the new Municipal Civil Infraction Ordinance when a complaint is received the Township will follow the process listed below.

1. A complaint or report is received—complaints can be made by phone, letter, e-mail or in person and complaints can be made anonymously.
2. The Ordinance Enforcement Officer, Building Official or Zoning Administrator is sent out to investigate the complaint.
3. If a violation is found to exist, a letter is sent to the property owner with a copy of the applicable ordinance notifying him/her of the violation and setting a date for the violation to be corrected.
4. After the designated time frame (usually 10 to 14 days) a re-check or re-inspection of the property is made. If the violation is corrected this is the end of the process. If the violation still exists a Notice of Violation is issued and a fine is charged. The fine is determined by the adopted schedule of fines and whether it is a first, second or third offense. If you receive a Notice of Violation and a fine, it is to be paid at the Laketon Township Hall.
5. If the fine is not paid or the violation not corrected within the specified time frame noted on the Notice of Violation, a Civil Infraction Citation will be issued. Once a Civil Infraction Citation is issued a formal court hearing in front of a judge can be held. At the formal hearing the judge will issue his/her judgment or court order. The court order can include penalties such as fines, court costs and requirements for the property owner to correct the violation etc. Failure to comply with a court order can result in contempt of court charges.

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints, please feel free to call the Laketon Township offices. We will do our very best to assist you as we strive to provide the best possible community for all that live, work and play in Laketon Township.

NEW STATE LAW CREATES

"MICHIGAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION"

Do you have a dispute or complaint with your video/cable television company that you have been unable to resolve? If so, a new law signed by Governor Granholm creates the Michigan Public Service Commission. This commission is to provide for a dispute resolution process between customers and providers regarding video/cable television complaints.

The MPSC recommends trying to resolve any issues or complaints with your service provider first, if you need the assistance of the MPSC, they can be contacted by phone, fax, mail or online: **Website:** www.michigan.gov/mpsc

Mail: Michigan Public Service Commission

Attn: Video Franchising

6545 Mercantile Way

Lansing, MI 48909

Phone: (866) 552-7725 **Fax:** (517) 241-2400

Election Results/Statistics from the May 5, 2009 Election

Reeths Puffer School Bond Extension: Failed district wide: 1664 No votes 1600 Yes votes

Reeths Puffer School Board Member Bob DeMuro: Won the seat with 2224 total votes

Laketon Township Public Safety Millage Renewal: Passed 1157 Yes votes 370 No votes

The total turn out of registered voters in Laketon Township was 25.68%. Registered voters over the age of 60 had the best turn out with 45.33% coming out to vote. Voters in the 22—30 age group had the lowest turn out with only 6.49% of registered voters coming out to vote. A detailed report on voter turn out statistics is available on the township website. There is also a link on the township website to the County Clerk's Website for all election results

Township Offices will be CLOSED for the following holidays:

Independence Day—Friday July 3, 2009 **Labor Day**—Monday Sept. 7, 2009

Columbus Day—Monday Oct. 12, 2009 **Veterans Day**—Wednesday Nov. 11, 2009

Thanksgiving Day & Day After —Thursday & Friday Nov. 26 and Nov. 27, 2009

Important Notices about Tax Payments

For property tax payments made by check: please be aware that if any check is returned by the bank unpaid (bounced) the taxes will remain unpaid. The township will not send a returned check notice to the taxpayer, the issue of an unpaid check is between the taxpayer and their banking institution. If a returned check payment is replaced with another form of payment AFTER the tax bill due date, the payment is late and the appropriate interest and/or penalty WILL apply.

For property tax payments mailed by first class mail: if your payment check does not clear your bank account within a few days, please call us to ensure the payment was received. Laketon Township is NOT responsible for tax payments that are mailed but not received. It is the taxpayers responsibility to ensure their property tax payments are received and paid on time.

Laketon Township DOES NOT send out reminders or notices if the taxes are not paid by the due date. All property taxes that remain unpaid as of March 1st every year are turned over to the Muskegon County Treasurer for collection. The Muskegon County Treasurer will send out delinquent notices.

If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Laketon Township Treasurer at 231-744-2454. Thank you.

YARD WASTE SITE HOURS

Through Saturday November 14, 2009 the site will be **open** from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm on **Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays**

For Fall leaf clean up, in addition to the days above, the site will also be **open on Sundays** 12:00pm to 6:00pm October 18, 2009 thru November 15, 2009

All dates & times above are dependent up on weather conditions. After November 15, 2009, the site is closed for the season.

Muskegon County Phone Numbers

- Road Commission 231-788-2381
- Drain Commission 231-724-6219
- Dept. of Public Works 231-724-6411
- Health Dept. 231-724-6245
- Vector (animal) Control 231-724-6007
- County Clerk 231-724-6221
- County Treasurer 231-724-6261
- Register of Deeds 231-724-6271

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE—SPRING THAW AND SPRING RAINS BROUGHT WATER PROBLEMS

The spring thaw and rains are becoming a memory for many of us looking forward to the summer sun, but for some this spring brought high water and flooding resulting in water damage to homes and property. Some areas experienced overflowing roadside ditches and standing water in their yards, but for some homeowners it was much worse and water flooded basements and crawl spaces.

Depending upon the source or cause of the water problem - the Muskegon County Road Commission (MCRC) or the Muskegon County Drain Commission (MCDC) can be of assistance. Currently, the MCRC and MCDC are working to clean out ditches and drains all around the County.

However, property owners are the "first line of defense". Every property owner should be maintaining the ditch in front of their home as well as the culvert under their driveway (if they have one) by keeping both the ditch and culvert clear of dirt, leaves, brush, weeds or any other debris that will prevent the flow of water. Please DO NOT dump yard waste (grass, leaves, brush etc.) in ANY ditch. In the winter, snow, ice and gravel from plowing often block culverts and the flow of water—try to keep the snow piles away from the culverts as much as possible. One blocked up ditch, culvert or drain can impact many homes.

Your cooperation in making Laketon Township a safe and healthy community for all is very much appreciated. Thank You for your efforts.

Township Cemetery Sexton Retires

New Employee Hired

Laketon Township Cemetery Sexton John Bialek retired after 10 years of service to Laketon Township. Thank you John for your service and dedication these past 10 years!

Numerous resumes/applications were received for the sexton position. After reviewing them, the Township hired Don Bond. Please join us in welcoming the newest addition to Laketon Township — Welcome Don!