

Sycamore Township

NEWS

Fall 2008

In this Issue

- 2 EMS/Fire Department
Chief Jetter
Home Safety
Local Cable Access
- 3 Police and Crime Prevention
Cpl. Kristy Fritz
Seasonal Hazards
- 4 Parks and Recreation
What a Great Weekend
- 5 Authority to Aggregate
Sycamore Township 5K
Calendar of Events
- 6 Planning & Zoning
Beautification Award Winners
Land Use Plan
- 7 Maintenance Department
Clean Up After the Storm
Tree Shrub Trimming
Leaf Collection
- 8 Contacts

OHIO HURRICANE?

Living in Ohio, I am sure that none of us would have ever thought that we would feel 85 mile per hour wind gusts from a hurricane that hit land 1,200 miles away. But on Sunday, September 14th, Hurricane Ike arrived in Cincinnati and none of us will forget the pounding we took.

The Trustees were teleconferencing at 1:00 pm on Sunday with Tracy Kellums, Township Maintenance Supervisor, and we decided to bring in maintenance staff to begin runs through the township to survey the area for damage. Our road crews were out in force by 2:00 pm, insuring safe passage for our residents shortly after the first tree fell. By nightfall, the devastation to trees and power lines mounted, and nearly all of Sycamore Township was dark. The Trustees were out in the community at midnight on Sunday, assessing the damage and confirming that power was out in 95% of the township. Our Township Fire and EMS personnel worked diligently through the night, supplying ice, oxygen and other safety equipment to our most needy residents.

Many of you experienced trees and branches falling in your yards, some with major damage to your property. We want you to know that we are working overtime to collect all of the yard waste. Unfortunately, the magnitude of tree damage to some properties has been so substantial, the cleanup process is time consuming. In fact, in one neighborhood the first week we were out, it took us the entire week working overtime every day to clear debris on only 4 residential streets. We anticipate that we will finish our first pass through the entire Township by October 25th. When we complete the first pass, we will reduce our crew size to begin leaf pickup, and we will make one additional pass through the entire township to pick up any residual storm damage that is left.

You can help us to expedite the brush removal. Please put all of the storm damage branches on your lawn at the curb with butt ends towards the street (not in the street). This helps expedite the handling and disposal of the storm damaged trees. We ask that you put ONLY storm damaged trees at the curb, and do not put any other yard waste. This will also help us to expedite clearing all of Sycamore Township.

While the outage was overwhelming for Duke, it was clear that in certain neighborhoods, communication could have been better. As an Executive Committee member of the Hamilton County Emergency Management Agency, I have asked for a meeting to be set up with Duke Corporate Management from both Cincinnati and North Carolina, and local government officials to review the communication challenges during this outage, and determine how we can communicate better if faced with his type of crisis in the future.

The total cost to Sycamore Township for cleanup will exceed \$200,000. We will be applying to FEMA for reimbursement of some of these costs.

Lastly, if there are any residents with special needs as a result of this storm, we want to do whatever we can to meet those needs. Please feel free to contact us at our office at 791-8447 during business hours.

On behalf of Cliff Bishop and Dick Kent, I want to thank you for your patience through these challenging times, and we look forward to getting back to normal in the township very soon.

Sincerely,



Tom Weidman, Trustee



Tom Weidman





EMS/Fire Department



EMS & Fire Director/
Fire Chief
William "BJ" Jetter,
Ph.D. MIFireE, CHSIII

After coming through another dry summer season there are some key fall home prevention tips that can help make your home safe for the upcoming winter weather.

Make sure your gutters are clean from leaves and debris. You may ask... 'why is this so important for safety?' During

winter weather when gutters are stopped up and water freezes, the water can push back under the roof shingles and create a roof leak in your home. Water seeks pathways that can damage electrical fixtures or soften drywall ceilings and leave an unsightly mark.

Water leaks can also lead to the growth of mold in your home. The mold spores can trigger respiratory allergies and complicate breathing for those with breathing problems. For more information on home mold problems please use the Hamilton County Health District web page www.hamilton-co.org.

This summer we have experienced a problem with bed bugs. If you want to learn more about how to manage a bed bug problem, go to the following web site for clean-up information and prevention tips: www.hamilton-co.org. A national web site for inquiries is www.cdc.gov.

When you are cleaning up around your home in preparation for the fall season you may find you want to dispose of some of the following hazardous materials: paint, pesticides, fertilizers, solvents, lawn and pool chemicals, cleaners, propane tanks, fluorescent bulbs, mercury, driveway sealer, gasoline, antifreeze, motor oil, and automobile batteries. All of these items can be discarded by taking them to the Hamilton County Waste Collection site. This site is only open through, October 27, 2008.

The following two locations will accept any of the above items from Hamilton County residents only. You will need to bring proof of residency with you.

Environmental Enterprises, Inc.
4650 Spring Grove Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio 45232
Hours of operation:
Tuesday 2:00 pm – 6:00 pm
Saturday 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Environmental Enterprises, Inc.
10163 Cincinnati-Dayton Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45241
Hours of operation:
Wednesday 2:00 pm – 6:00 pm

You can call 513-946-7700 or visit www.hamiltoncountycycles.org for more information.

The change in seasons can be some of the most exciting times of the year. Fall sports programs bring hometown support to our local high schools and other local sports teams. Please use caution around our parks, playgrounds and schools by taking a few seconds to watch out for our children. Leave a few minutes ahead of time, have patience in traffic back-ups, but more than anything, watch out for our pedestrian traffic of all ages walking to and from these fall events.

Be safe and have a great fall.

*William A. Jetter Ph D, MIFire,
EMS & Fire Director/Fire Chief*

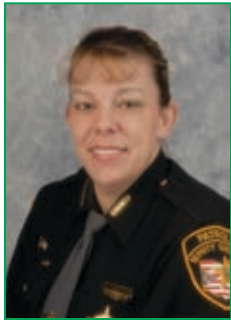
Local Cable Access / CincyScape.com

In February 2006, the Board of Trustees cancelled the \$95,000 a year contract with the ICRC for local cable access and entered into an agreement with CincyScape.com and WKRC TV. As a result of the new partnership, the Board of Trustees significantly increased the options available for local video access while reducing the costs associated with it by 75%.

CincyScape.com is a 24 hour web based community devoted to events and residents in Sycamore Township. As a part of the agreement, WKRC dedicates up to 14 hours per week of filming and video production to Sycamore Township events. In addition, user submitted videos can also be made part of the site. If you know of a Sycamore Township community event that you would like filmed or have filmed an event yourself that you would like posted, please contact Greg Bickford (gbickford@sycamoretownship.org) for more information.

Other member communities of CincyScape include Deerfield Township, Colerain Township and Learning Through Art. Please take the time to visit CincyScape.com to see all there is to offer. All videos posted on CincyScape.com are also available at no charge on Time Warner Cable Video on Demand Channel 1111.

Police and Crime Prevention



Cpl. Kristy Fritz,
Sheriff's Liaison

After the heat of summer, most of us welcome the colorful, cooler days of fall.

It has the predictable pattern of kids returning to school, days becoming shorter, and leaves turning their brilliant colors. Ghosts and goblins also abound during Halloween.

Although predictable, each one of these also brings with it hazards that are unique to the

season. I have put together a short list to help you through the season.

Back to School Safety

- Teach children how to walk or ride the bus safely. They need to obey all traffic lights and signals. They should only cross the street at marked crosswalks. Make sure they pay attention to the bus driver or crossing guard.
- If your child(ren) walk to school, if possible, have them walk with a group of kids. There is always safety in numbers.
- Teach your children not to talk to strangers and to never accept a ride from anyone they don't know.
- As adults, be aware that school buses will be stopping to pick up children. Make sure you know the law about when/if you have to stop.

Shorter Days and Driving Tips

- Although beautiful, fall leaves can make roadways dangerous. Wet leaves can retain water, creating slick roadways. Pay particular attention on winding roads.
- Fall also brings with it the first frost. Allow extra time for your vehicle to warm up and never try to drive while the windshield is frosted over.
- Frost will also cause roadways to become slick. Bridges and overpasses will frost over quicker due to not retaining heat from the ground.

- Remember with the decreasing daylight, most of us will commute to and from work in the dark. Check your vehicle to ensure that all your lights are working properly.

Halloween Safety

- Children need to remember to only cross streets at the corners. Remind them not to hide in-between cars parked on the street.
- Purchase only costumes that are labeled "Flame Proof" or "Flame Retardant". Candles are everywhere during Halloween and a costume that isn't flame proof or flame retardant can catch fire very quickly.
- Rather than a mask, which could obscure your child's view, use face paint.
- Have children wear a light colored costume or carry a flashlight to make them more visible to passing motorists.



Of course these are just a few safety tips to help you through the season. If you would like more information, please don't hesitate to contact me at the Township Administration Building or by e-mail at kfritz@sycamoretownship.org.



Parks and Recreation

Festival in Sycamore **WHAT A GREAT WEEKEND!**

Many thousands of township residents and neighbors from near and far enjoyed a wonderful weekend at this year's Festival in Sycamore. Fantastic music by AMBROSIA, ATLANTA RHYTHM SECTION, DAVE MASON, and some great local groups highlighted the event. Festival patrons with youngsters were very pleased with the \$5 ride all day rides. Many folks commented on how good the food was, and also that the prices were very reasonable. It was a great time, and we are already starting to plan next year's event.

Thanks to the Township administrative staff, the maintenance dept., and the Park and Recreation Committee members for all of their hard work. A huge amount of cooperation and coordination between everybody is necessary to make the Festival successful. Everyone involved in all of these groups works very hard to make this happen. Thanks again to all of them.

We're looking forward to next year. If you have any questions or comments about the Festival or any other Parks and Recreation related matter, please call Mike McKeown at 791-8447, or email mmckeown@sycamoretownship.org



Sycamore Township Announces Natural Gas Plan – Authority to Aggregate

The Board of Trustees recently voted to place on the ballot the question of whether the Township should engage in natural gas aggregation. Natural gas aggregation is the process by which the Township would negotiate a bulk price on natural gas for its residents. Individual consumers would then decide if they wanted to opt-out of the Township negotiated price and continue to provide for their own natural gas supplies. If approved by the voters, residents would see no change in natural gas services. Duke Energy would continue to carry, service, and bill for the natural gas supplies.

Township residents will see the following language on their ballots this November: *'Shall Sycamore Township, County of Hamilton, Ohio have the authority to aggregate the retail natural gas loads located in Sycamore Township and enter into service agreements to facilitate for those loads the sale and purchase of natural gas, such aggregation to occur automatically except where any person elects to opt-out?'*

Officials have placed this issue on the ballot to give the Township the authority to aggregate. This is a completely voluntary program. Residents will be given the choice to opt-out of the program if they do not wish to participate.



Sycamore Township 5K Challenge

Get your running shoes ready for the annual Sycamore Township 5K Challenge Run and Fitness Walk on Saturday, November 8, at 9:00 a.m. at Bechtold Park (4312 Sycamore Road, 45236). Whether you're a serious or leisure runner or walker, there is a place for you in this challenging yet fun event. Prizes will be awarded in gender and age categories. For more information, log onto www.sycamoretownship.org.

LEAF COLLECTION
MONDAY, NOV 3
THROUGH FRIDAY, DEC 12

BRUSH CHIPPING DROP OFF
BEHIND TOWNSHIP ADMIN BLDG
8540 KENWOOD RD
SATURDAY 8 AM – 4 PM
NOV 1 AND DEC 6



HAMILTON COUNTY GENERAL ELECTION
TUESDAY, NOV 2
POLLS OPEN FROM 6:30 AM – 7:30 PM

SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP CHALLENGE, 5-K RUN, FITNESS WALK AND KID' FUN RUN
BECHTOLD PARK
SYCAMORE & PLAINFIELD RDS
SATURDAY, NOV 8, 9 AM

BLOCKWATCH MEETINGS
SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP SAFETY SERVICES BLDG TRAINING ROOM
8540 KENWOOD ROAD
EVERY THIRD TUESDAY AT 7 PM



Planning and Zoning

Sycamore Township Land Use Plan

Sycamore Township is in the process of updating the Township wide land use plan. The Land Use Plan is a guide for future development in the Township. Working with the community is one example to assure implementation of public policy and to create a safe and well-planned place to live, work and play. The plan currently is in draft stage and open for public comment. Copies of the plan are available on the Township website.

Interested parties can attend one of the three open houses to learn more about the plan and leave comments.

November 13, 2008 – The northern section of Sycamore Township will be the focus of an open house at a location and time to be announced. Check the Township website for more details.

December 16, 2008, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm, the southern section of Sycamore Township will be the focus of an open house at the Township Administration Building, 8540 Kenwood Road, Sycamore Township, OH 45236

January 13th, 2009, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm, the full plan will be the focus of an open house at the Township Administration Building, 8540 Kenwood Road, Sycamore Township, OH 45236.

To learn more about the plan, the open houses, or if you have specific questions, please contact Greg Bickford at 792-7250 or gbickford@sycamoretownship.org.

The 2008 Beautification Award Winners



Pictured are:

Mr. & Mrs. Ervin Moermond, Mr. & Mrs. William Dickmann, Ms. Charlotte Schepers
Family member accepting on behalf of Mr. Clifford Hackney
Mr. & Mrs. James Phillips, Ms. Grace Harpen, Mr. & Mrs. Terrence Flaig
together with Trustees Tom Weidman and Cliff Bishop

The 2008 Beautification Award Winners NOT pictured are:

Ms. Jane Patrick, Ms. Carol Dowling, Mr. & Mrs. Hector Rios



Maintenance Department

Clean Up After the Storm

HIRING AN ARBORIST: The recent wind damage in Ohio has led to the need for people to hire arborists to assist with tree clean-up and removal. Make sure you make good decisions when it comes to hiring an arborist. There have been reports that folks are being quoted outrageous prices for tree removal services. A woman in Cincinnati reported a \$12,000.00 estimate for cutting up a tree that was already down, lying in the driveway (it was already down!). The recent wind storm also unfortunately blew in the scam artists as well.

Dave Shetlar, OSU Extension, reminded folks not to panic and that clearing trees from the property isn't an urgent situation unless the trees are damaging your home, on electric wires, or potentially hazardous (about to fall). In other words, a tree that is lying in the yard doesn't have to be removed right away; don't fall victim to pressure from someone who comes to the door with an offer – get estimates, even though it may take some time. Never pay until the job is done and don't succumb to "bargain offers".

In addition, make sure that the person hired is insured. Request a certificate of insurance and contact the company to verify. Also ask for proof of liability for possible property damage. OSU Extension has an excellent fact sheet, "How to Hire an Arborist" at the following website: <http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/100/1032.html>.

If one is unsure about the structural stability of a damaged tree, hire a professional arborist certified by the International Society of Arboriculture to assess the damage. This organization requires testing and continued training in order for an arborist to remain certified.



Tree and Shrub Trimming

Please trim branches that may overhang the public sidewalk in your area. Many people are out walking and these branches are not only a nuisance but, can be dangerous. Please show your consideration and trim back trees, shrubs, and bushes to make sure the sidewalk is clear of all obstacles.



Leaf Collection

Leaf collection will begin on Monday, November 3rd and run through Friday, December 12th. Leaves should be raked out to the public right-of-way beside the street. PLEASE DO NOT PUT LEAVES IN THE STREET. Leaves become very slippery when wet and, when parked over, they can start a car on fire when brought into contact with the catalytic converter.

Sticks, grass clippings, or garden debris will jam our machines and should not be mixed into leaf piles. Consequently, piles with materials other than leaves will not be collected. Maintenance crews will be working from 7:30 a.m. 'til dark, six days a week, rain or shine to collect your leaves in a timely fashion. Many factors such as the amount of leaves to be collected on a given round and availability of temporary laborers have an effect on collection and make it impossible to know exact pick-up times.





Contacts

Fall 2008

Tom Weidman, President
Cliff Bishop, Vice President
Dick Kent, Trustee

Robert C. Porter III, Fiscal Officer
R. Douglas Miller, Law Director
Rob Molloy, Administrator
Tracy Kellums, Superintendent
Mike McKeown, Parks & Recreation Director
791-8447 – Fax 792-8564

Greg Bickford, AICP, Planning Zoning Director
Assistant Township Administrator
792-7250 – Fax 792-8571

EMS & Fire Department/Fire Chief
William "BJ" Jetter, PH.D., MIFireE, CHSIII
792-8565 – Fax 792-8564

Sheriff's Liaison, Corporal Kristy Fritz
791-8447 – Fax 792-8564

Fire and Police Emergency – 911
www.sycamoretownship.org



8540 Kenwood Road
Sycamore Twp., Ohio 45236

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
CINCINNATI, OH
PERMIT NO. 1693

"There's More in Sycamore"



Trustees available to better serve you

To serve you better, the Trustees have designated areas of Sycamore Township to service. If you have a question about your neighborhood, please contact the appropriate Trustee.



Tom Weidman
President
Northern Area



Cliff Bishop
Vice President
Dillonvale/Rossmoyne



Trustee
Kenwood



Robert C. Porter III
Fiscal
Officer

You can reach your elected officials by calling the Sycamore Township Administration Office at 791-8447.