

Sycamore Township

NEWS

Winter 2021

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Beautiful, colorful leaves are on display throughout Sycamore Township as we move through fall and the start of winter is now right around the corner. Our roads and maintenance crew members are at your service, and they are ready for it all. Leaf pickup already began in October, and it will continue through the week of December 13. After that, our crew will switch over the trucks into winter mode and they will stand ready to keep our roads clear of snow over the months which follow.

You'll see some changes come January in the Board of Trustees now that the November elections have concluded (and with the election over, you're probably relieved that the deluge of election mailers and online ads has finally stopped!). Regarding the Board:



Tom James
Chairman, Board of Trustees

First, I'm thrilled to report that the voters elected Mrs. Tracy Schwegmann to the Board of Trustees. Her four-year term starts in January 2022. She's an accomplished professional who has been involved in local government and development matters throughout the Greater Cincinnati region for years, and who recently served on our Land Use Planning Committee. She lives in the Kenwood area of the Township. Mrs. Schwegmann will join me and Trustee Tom Weidman, who was re-elected to another term, on the three-member Board of Trustees which governs the Township. She is the first woman ever to be elected to the Board and I am very excited to have her join us. I look forward to working with her and with Mr. Weidman in what I hope will be a collaborative and cooperative environment going forward.

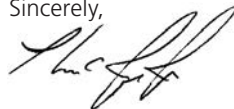
Second, I would like to thank Trustee Jim LaBarbara for his years of service to Sycamore Township, both on the Board of Zoning Appeals and these last four years as Trustee. His term as Trustee runs through the end of this year. Mr. LaBarbara has worked hard as a Trustee to make Sycamore Township a better place for its residents, its business community stakeholders, and its visitors. On behalf of the Board and the Township's staff, I would like to express the Township's appreciation for all that he has accomplished.

Third, I invite you, our residents, to keep an eye on the Board, including by attending or watching our meetings. We work for you, and when you let us know what you think and how we can better serve you and your neighbors, that helps us help you. And if you have an interest in serving on a Township Board or Committee or in helping or volunteering in some other capacity, we'd love to hear from you about that, too.

There are always great things going on in our dynamic and resilient community among our residents, our business owners, and those who come through our borders each day to work, shop, eat, and be entertained. We all know and appreciate that "There's More in Sycamore." For information about Township-related happenings, see our website at SycamoreTownship.org, where you will find parks and event information, Township office hours and visitation protocols, zoning and permitting requirements, and upcoming events and public meetings.

The approach of the winter season means that holidays will also soon be upon us, bringing with them colorful lights and decorations along with family gatherings, excitement, and joy. Along with my fellow Trustees, Jim LaBarbara and Tom Weidman, our Fiscal Officer, Rob Porter, and our outstanding Sycamore Township Staff, I wish you and your families a safe, healthy, and joyous holiday season, whatever your faith or your reason for holiday celebration might be. We also wish our Township businesses a successful and prosperous winter season.

Sincerely,



Tom James
Chairman, Board of Trustees



**SYCAMORE
TOWNSHIP**
GOVERNMENT COMPLEX





Police & Crime Prevention



Michael Tarr, Lieutenant
Hamilton County Sheriff's Office

Whether it's holiday preparations, social events, family gatherings, last minute shopping or travel, the month of December can be very busy for many of us. December is also historically the month in which we see the most traffic crashes in Sycamore Township. This is not surprising when you consider that the causative factor in most crashes is some sort of distraction on the part of the at-fault driver. With that in mind, I thought I would present some tips to help everyone get to their destination during this busy season. Although it may not be possible to avoid every distraction completely, these strategies can help you minimize sources of distraction:

BEFORE YOU ROLL:

- Set essential controls: Before you back out of your parking spot, queue up the playlist you want to hear, set climate controls to a comfortable level, and program any destinations into your GPS.
- Review your route: When you are headed for an unfamiliar destination, review your directions, and study your route ahead of time.
- Secure your pets: Keep your furry friends out of harm's way in a well-ventilated crate or carrier, secured preferably in the backseat or hatchback. This way, you will not be tempted to feed or pet them while driving, and they'll stay protected in case of a collision.
- Manage your time: Rushing tends to promote distraction, road rage, and taking unnecessary risks. Whenever possible, leave a few minutes early so you can arrive at your destination stress-free.
- Prep at home: Get ready for work before getting in your car. Putting on deodorant, makeup, and shaving are much easier and safer when done in your own bathroom.

ON THE ROAD:

- Drive thru, pull over: When you grab food on the go, take ten minutes to park and eat. You can use the time to check your messages, return some calls, or read the paper.
- GPS adjustments: If you get lost, turned around, or need to make major changes to your route, find a safe place to pull off the road.

PUBLIC SAFETY ALERT

The Hamilton County Sheriff's Office recently issued a Public Safety Alert due to the increase in vehicles thefts and thefts from vehicles throughout the County. Residents are asked to double check that they have locked their vehicles, refrain from leaving keys or personal property inside vehicles, and report suspicious activity by calling 911 or the non-emergency dispatch at 513-825-2280.



- The buddy system: An adult passenger riding next to you can share your awareness of the driving situation, and actually reduce the risk of collision. Make it a habit to stick with light conversation topics — a heated discussion can actually pull your attention away from the road.
- Save it for later: Suspend phone conversations in heavy traffic and bad weather, even if you're using hands-free talking. You need your full attention on the road to anticipate and react to hazardous road conditions.
- Spacing out: If you feel like your mind is wandering to some problem at work or at home, pull off the road and write it down or make a phone call. On long drives, take breaks to rest your eyes.



EMS/Fire Department



Rob Penny, Fire Chief

FIREPLACE SAFETY TIPS

I hope everyone enjoyed the colors of the fall season! Now winter is upon us and, with heating costs rising, we all may be using our fireplaces for the first time in a while. Here are some safety tips to keep in mind before burning in your fireplace for the first time this season:

- 1) Have your chimney cleaned by a professional company. Creosote and soot will build up in your chimney over time when burning in your fireplace. It is dry and in a powdered form. It can catch fire up inside your chimney where you cannot get to it to put it out. If there are any cracks in the mortar joints in the chimney, sparks and fire can escape through the brick if a piece of wood or paper is close enough to it.
- 2) Use only seasoned wood. Do not burn fresh cut (green) wood, rubbish, or trash. Do not burn construction type lumber such as two by fours or plywood. Plywood contains glue which can cause sparks to pop outside the fireplace onto a rug or nearby furniture and start a fire.
- 3) Always use a fireplace screen to avoid pieces of burning wood from falling out of the fireplace.
- 4) When cleaning the fireplace after burning a fire, always place the ashes in a metal container. Put the metal container outside in the grass and water it down. Embers can burn inside a piece of firewood up to three days after a fire. Do not discard ashes in a garbage can.
- 5) Do not over stack wood in the fireplace or make the fire too big. The chimney is designed for heat and gasses, not large flames. Large flames will start the chimney on fire if there is a buildup of soot inside it.
- 6) Remember to check and make sure the flue is open before lighting a fire.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Brush Chipping Program

Saturday, December 4
8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.
Behind Administration Bldg.
8540 Kenwood Rd.

Dillonvale Luminaria

Saturday, December 11
6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.
Bechtold Pavilion
4312 Sycamore Road

Curbside Leaf Collection Ends

December 13

Christmas Tree Drop Off Sites

December 26 – January 17
Bechtold Park
4312 Sycamore Road
McDaniel Sports Complex
11797 Solzman Road





Parks & Recreation

DILLONVALE LUMINARIA 2021

After a break last year due to the pandemic, the annual Dillonvale Luminaria is back! Please join us for this holiday tradition on Saturday, December 11, 2021, from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at the Bechtold Park Pavilion, 4312 Sycamore Road. This event is co-sponsored by Sycamore Township and Dillonvale IGA. We encourage all Dillonvale residents to decorate the sidewalks in front of their homes with luminaria bags. The luminaria kits are available at Ace Hardware in the Dillonvale Shopping Center. Prizes will be awarded to the three best decorated homes! Bring the kids to see Santa Claus, take a hayride through the streets of Dillonvale to view holiday lights, and enjoy refreshments courtesy of Dillonvale IGA. The Dillonvale Luminaria is sure to get you and your family into the holiday spirit!



NEW BECHTOLD PARK PLAYGROUNDS!

We are excited to announce two new playgrounds in the works at Bechtold Park! The removal of the playset behind Shelter 2 occurred last week and construction began this week for the new Mega Playground! This construction is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year. The mega playground is partially funded with Community Development Block Grant Funds.



The removal of the playset next to Shelter 3 occurred the week of November 15th and construction of a new playground in that location is scheduled to begin by the end of the year! Once construction begins, it is expected to last two weeks. This playground is also partially funded with Community Development Block Grant Funds.





TOWNSHIP TIDBITS

10 TIPS TO WINTERIZE YOUR HOME

It seems to happen in the blink of an eye. First, the kids go back to school. Then, the leaves turn from green to yellow, orange and red. Next thing you know the holidays are here and then – hello, winter! But before you go “dashing through the snow,” there are some things both homeowners and renters should consider doing to prepare for the colder winter months ahead. When Old Man Winter appears, make sure your home is prepared with these 10 tips:



1. **Check the gutters:** Prevent ice dams by cleaning out your gutters, installing gutter guards (if feasible) and making sure the attic floor is properly insulated. The attic itself should be well-ventilated and about 10 degrees warmer than outside.
2. **Protect the pipes:** Protect against frozen pipes by insulating those that could be susceptible to freezing. With severe temperature drops, keep a stream of water running in a few faucets to guard against freezing and bursting.
3. **Seal the cracks:** Caulk around holes and openings to help prevent cold air from seeping in. Install weather stripping and seals around openings such as windows, doors, air conditioners and mail chutes.
4. **Stop the slips:** Keep driveways and sidewalks clear of ice and snow and repair any issues with steps and handrails.
5. **Install an emergency release:** Consider installing an emergency pressure release valve in your plumbing system. This will protect against increased pressure caused by freezing pipes and can prevent them from bursting. It is also a good idea to learn how to shut the water off and know where your pipes are located.
6. **Keep it cozy:** Set your thermostat for at least 65 degrees and make sure your house or apartment is well-insulated.
7. **Have heating checked:** Furnaces, boilers and chimneys should be serviced at least once a year to clear any buildup and to keep them running efficiently.
8. **Test your detectors:** Residential fires are more common in winter, so it is important that all of your smoke detectors work. Check them monthly and replace batteries as needed. You should also consider installing a carbon monoxide detector to avoid inadvertently trapping this toxic gas in your home.
9. **Clear the yard:** Keep the trees trimmed and remove dead branches and debris from your yard. Ice, snow and wind can weaken trees and cause branches to fall and potentially damage your home, car or even yourself and others.
10. **House the hose:** Remove all attached garden hoses, drain them and store them away. Shut off the valves and insulate the faucet.

And finally, if you are heading south for the winter, you need to take extra precautions. Turn the water completely off and consider having the plumbing system drained to keep pipes from freezing. Also, have a friend or neighbor check on your home regularly to look for any issues. If a problem is detected, time is of the essence.

Now, enjoy those fireplace-filled weekends knowing you are well-prepared for the winter!

WI-FI IN THE PARKS

Sycamore Township is pleased to announce that free Wi-Fi is now available to Township Park patrons at Bechtold Park, Bob Meyer Park, Kenwood Gardens, and Schuler and McDaniel Sports Complexes.



Fiber optic data runs were completed this summer and Wi-Fi access points were installed this fall by Township Staff. Patrons should expect to see broadband speeds when connected. Look for “Sycamore Parks” on your laptops and mobile devices when you need a connection while visiting us!





Planning & Zoning



Skylor R. Miller
Planning & Zoning Administrator

As winter quickly approaches, the Planning & Zoning staff is still working vigorously to keep up with development and property maintenance demands. With a steady flow of permit applications, it is great to know the economy is still strong in Sycamore Township.

The Township is happy to announce the hiring of our newest Planning & Zoning Assistant. Please help us in welcoming Angie Zammert. Angie has served as the Planning & Zoning Assistant since June on an emergency basis. Angie was appointed to the permanent position in September.



Angie Zammert
Planning & Zoning Assistant

Remember, all Township Planning & Zoning staff will have a Township ID badge with photo when conducting inspections. When the grass stops growing in the fall and winter months, we normally see a decline in property maintenance complaints. However, it is important to notify the Township if you see a property that may be abandoned. Call (513) 792-7250 or visit our website and click on the exclamation point on the left to report a property maintenance issue. Anonymous complaints are accepted.

A couple of reminders:

- The Township does not regulate property line disputes. The only true way to resolve this matter is to have a survey of your property completed by a registered surveyor.
- The Township does not regulate dead trees. This is a private matter to be resolved by the property owners involved. If a tree does fall and is sitting in the yard beyond a couple of weeks, the Township does look at this as a nuisance and will consider the fallen tree debris. Contact your home insurance company if you are concerned about a dead tree on neighboring property or call the Township if the tree is in the right-of-way.

In closing, thanks to all of those who take care of their property year after year. We do understand property ownership comes with a lot of responsibility and you are the reason Sycamore Township is a great place to live, work and play. Planning & Zoning questions can be directed to Skylor R. Miller, Planning and Zoning Administrator at smiller@sycamoretownship.org.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE ISSUE – LARGE ITEMS LEFT AT CURB

The Township sometimes receives calls from residents concerned about large items such as furniture left out at the curb by a neighbor. This can be unsightly and causes a property maintenance issue. Please remember to contact your waste collection provider before you bring large items out to the curb to make sure they will be collected in a timely manner and that there are no extra fees or requirements for pickup. Most Township residents are serviced by Republic 1-800-543-1339 or Rumpke 1-800-828-8171.





Maintenance Department



Tracy Kellums, Superintendent

ROAD PROJECTS UPDATE

If you have been out driving around the Township recently or this past summer, you have undoubtedly driven through road construction. For a while it seemed that every turn you made brought you into another work zone.

Now that winter is upon us, things are starting to slow down a bit, but we still have a couple of projects in the works at the time of this writing and another project about to begin.

The Kugler Mill Road Reconstruction Project is close to wrapping up. The contractor, Rack and Ballauer Excavating, has done an excellent job, and is preparing to install the final course of asphalt between Kenwood Road and Montgomery Road. Other than restoration in residents' yards which will take place next spring, this project should be complete by the end of the year.

Ford Development has begun work on the Dillonvale Subdivision Culvert Project which should be complete by the end of the year also.

Ford Development was also the successful bidder for the Larchview Drive/Plainfield Road Improvement Project. They will be installing new water main on Larchview Drive this winter and then start on a total reconstruction of Larchview Drive in the spring.

Please be cautious and drive slowly and carefully through all road work zones so everyone gets home safely. If you have any questions about these or other projects, please contact me at tkellums@sycamoretownship.org or at 513-792-7257 and I will be happy to answer them.

SNOW REMOVAL

With trucks, salt machines, plows, and plenty of salt on hand in our two salt domes, the Maintenance Department is ready to go in the event of snow or icy conditions in the Township. As a reminder, residents should remove their vehicles from the streets when it snows so that our crews can effectively and safely clear the roads. Let's work together to have a safe winter season!



CURBSIDE LEAF COLLECTION ENDING SOON

Curbside leaf collection ends the week of December 13th. All leaves must be raked to the curb by 8:00 a.m. on Monday, December 13th for guaranteed pickup.





8540 Kenwood Road
Sycamore Twp., Ohio 45236

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US POSTAGE
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PERMIT NO. 1693

Winter 2021

Tom James, Chairman

Jim LaBarbara, Vice-Chairman

Tom Weidman, Trustee

Robert C. Porter III, Fiscal Officer

Deepak K. Desai, Law Director

Ray Warrick, Administrator

513-792-7277 – rwarrick@sycamoretownship.org

Tracy Kellums

Superintendent/Assistant Administrator

513-792-7257 – tkellums@sycamoretownship.org

Skylor R. Miller, Planning & Zoning Administrator

513-792-7252 – smiller@sycamoretownship.org

Rob Penny, Fire Chief

513-792-8562 – rpenny@sycamoretownship.org

Michael Tarr, Lieutenant

District Three Commander

Hamilton County Sheriff's Office

513-683-3444

Fire and Police Emergency – **911**

Non-Emergency Dispatch – **513-825-2280**

Sycamore Township Administrative Office

513-791-8447 – Fax 513-792-8564

www.sycamoretownship.org

“There’s More in Sycamore”



Trustees Available to Better Serve You



Tom James
Chairman



Jim LaBarbara
Vice-Chairman



Tom Weidman
Trustee



Robert C. Porter III
Fiscal Officer

You may leave messages for your elected officials by calling the Sycamore Township Administration Office at 513-791-8447.