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## Residential Zoning 101

Like many communities in the Cincinnati area, Sycamore Township maintains zoning and property maintenance rules which regulate the use of land. These land use laws generally lay a groundwork for how land can be used. In the case of commercial developments, land use rules regulate things like parking requirements, building sizes, and the actual commercial uses that occupy commercial buildings.

In the case of residential settings, land use rules regulate things like the location of sheds, how far your house is from the property lines, home businesses, and property maintenance. For example, these rules do not regulate things such as the color of a house but would regulate an instance of a dilapidated property. Another example, residential land use rules stipulate where a pool could be located in a rear yard and strictly prohibit a pool in a front yard (to the neighbor's relief).

The following are frequently asked questions that the Township receives:



**Q: I have a property line dispute with my neighbor; what should I do?**

**A:** Property line disputes can be cases where water is discharged from one residential property to another; where someone constructs a fence on a property line; or maybe tree limbs from a neighbor's tree crossing a property line. Sycamore Township does not get involved with civil matters such as property line disputes. The impacted resident may wish to seek the advice of a real estate attorney. In the case of determining the location of a property line, the only definitive way is for the property owner to hire a licensed surveyor to conduct a boundary survey.

**Q: Why does Sycamore Township require a survey for all residential additions?**

**A:** Sycamore Township requires a boundary survey for all residential additions to ensure that proper setbacks (the distance of the structure from a property line) are met. Especially in areas where there are limited house setbacks between property lines (in other words, houses are close together), it is important to ensure these setbacks are met. If you are planning a future addition, please give Township staff a call at (513) 792-7250 before you begin the project. Both a Township Zoning Certificate and County Building Permit are required for all house additions.

**(Continued on Page 3)**





**Tracy Schwegmann**  
Chairman



**Tom Weidman**  
Vice-Chairman



**Tom James**  
Trustee



**Jonathan T. Deters**  
Fiscal Officer

**ADMINISTRATION**



**Tracy Kellums**  
Administrator

513-792-7257 [tkellums@sycamoretownship.org](mailto:tkellums@sycamoretownship.org)

Debbie Campbell, Finance Director  
513-792-7259 – [dcampbell@sycamoretownship.org](mailto:dcampbell@sycamoretownship.org)

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513-792-7248 – [bgunderson@sycamoretownship.org](mailto:bgunderson@sycamoretownship.org)

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513-791-8447 – [info@sycamoretownship.org](mailto:info@sycamoretownship.org)  
[www.sycamoretownship.org](http://www.sycamoretownship.org)

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**Brush Chipping Program**  
October 14/ November 4/ December 2  
8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.  
Behind Administration Bldg.  
8540 Kenwood Rd.

**Fall Curbside Leaf Collection**  
October 16 – December 18

**Halloween Trick-or-Treating**  
October 31  
6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.

**Election Day**  
November 7th  
Polls Open 6:30 A.M. - 7:30 P.M.

**Letter from the Vice-Chairman**

As we wind down the warm weather and head into the cooler temperatures of fall, we hope you enjoyed a relaxing summer.

After a three-year absence, the Festival in Sycamore was back this year and was a great success. The Festival included two days of family fun with live music, food, and unlimited rides for the kids. The positive response from our residents was overwhelming. This has always been a popular community event, and we are looking forward to an even better Festival next year. Thank you to Tire Discounters for supporting the Festival as a Diamond Sponsor.



Our road program has been in full swing for the last few months with a continued effort to keep our roads in top shape using the most cost-effective methods. Our Capeseal project extends the life of our roads an additional 10-12 years at a fraction of the cost to mill and apply new blacktop. This allows us to continue to have the best roads in Hamilton County while keeping your taxes low.

For our residents in the Northern part of the township, the bridge improvements on the Snider Road overpass of I-71 are completed, and we are in the process of preparing Township identity signage that will be placed on the south fence of the overpass. Sidewalks on Kemper Road are also in the engineering stages from Snider Road to Baen Road, which will connect our residents to Schuler Park. Also, the Gideon Culvert Project was completed ahead of schedule, and that road has been re-opened as well.

For our residents in the South, our Montgomery Road Sidewalk Project has been completed from Ken Arbre Road to Stewart Road. Walkability has been a major focus for your Trustees over the last 12 years, and with the completion of this project, residents may now walk safely along Montgomery Road from the City of Montgomery to the Village of Silverton.

At our Trustee meeting on August 15th, the Trustees issued a Proclamation declaring September Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month in Sycamore Township. Ovarian Cancer is called the "Silent Killer" and takes far too many lives each year. Know the subtle signs of Ovarian Cancer by going to the Ovarian Cancer Alliance of Greater Cincinnati website at [www.cincyovariancancer.org](http://www.cincyovariancancer.org).

Fall is the time for changing colors and raking leaves. Our hard-working maintenance crew, led by Superintendent Steve Reutelshofer, is gearing up for the Fall Leaf Pickup Program. Please remember, as you rake or blow your leaves to the curb, to keep them on the edge of your lawn and out of the street.

Your Trustees are committed to keeping Sycamore Township a great place to live, work and enjoy life. If there is anything that we can do to help you, please contact us at 513-791-8447 or through our website at [www.sycamoretownship.org](http://www.sycamoretownship.org).

On behalf of Trustees Tracy Schwegmann and Tom James, our Fiscal Officer Jonathan Deters, and Administrator Tracy Kellums and his entire staff, we encourage you to take some time to get outdoors and enjoy the changing colors of Fall.

**Tom Weidman**

*Vice-Chairman of the Board of Trustees*

## Sycamore Township Car Show Winners



Sycamore Township Trustees congratulate Best of Show winner Terry Mahurin, shown here with his winning 2020 Camaro 2SS 1LE.



Sycamore Township Trustees congratulate Trustees' Choice winner Tim Sheff, shown here with his winning 1936 Auburn.

(Continued from Page 1 - Residential Zoning 101)

### Q: Can I run a business out of my home?

**A:** Residential zoning districts mean just that: residential use. If you would like to run a business, it would likely be required to occur in a commercial or retail district. For example, a retail business or a landscaping business could not be run in a residential district. There are some limited cases where the Township could consider issuing a home occupation zoning certificate – an example would be a passive home office use. Such businesses are regulated by Section 10-4 of the Sycamore Township Zoning Resolution and have restrictions so that the residential character of the neighborhood is not negatively impacted – for example, outside employees are not allowed. If you are interested in a home-occupation zoning certificate, please do not hesitate to give Township staff a call at (513) 792-7250.

### Q: What happens after I submit a property maintenance complaint to the Township? I called last week, but my neighbor's grass still hasn't been cut.



**A:** The Township investigates property maintenance and zoning complaints, exercising required due process. In the case of tall grass, for example, a notice is sent to the property owner, and if the grass is not cut within a 10-day period, the Trustees could vote at a public meeting to declare the property a nuisance. The Planning & Zoning Inspector must then post the nuisance resolution on the property and allow seven days for the property owner to cut the grass before the Township may legally enter private property and cut the lawn.

Another example would be a house in disrepair with peeling paint and broken gutters. The Planning & Zoning staff would send the property owner a 10-day Courtesy Notice. If no action is taken, the Township follows up with a 21-Day Violation Notice. If the property owner does not call the Inspector to set up a timeline to make the repairs or show signs of progress, the Township will refer the case to the Township Law Director for adjudication. (See page 6 for Housing Court information)

While the Township seeks to work quickly and diligently to resolve property maintenance and zoning violations, we must follow due process. Therefore, these matters do take time and generally are not resolved overnight. If you feel your neighborhood is being negatively impacted by a potential property maintenance or zoning violation, please call the Township Planning & Zoning Department at (513) 792-7249 or file a complaint online at <https://cagismaps.hamilton-co.org/csr/sycamore>.

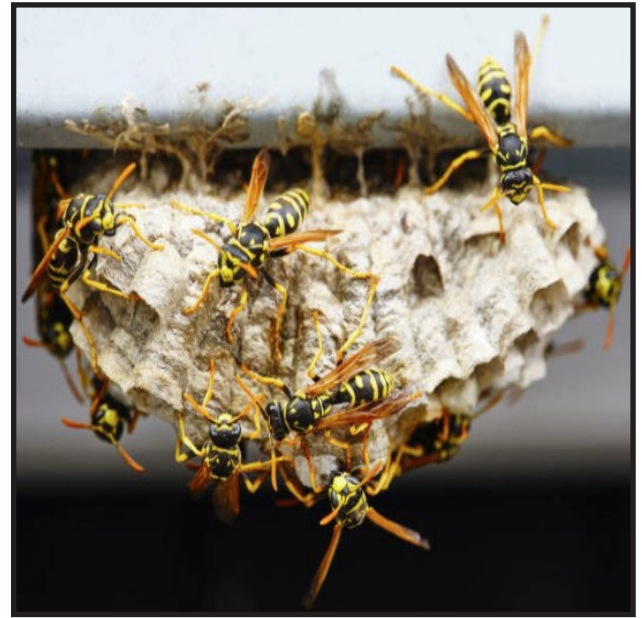


**Fire Chief Rob Penny**

513-792-8562

[rpenny@sycamoretownship.org](mailto:rpenny@sycamoretownship.org)

In the heat of the summer and fall, you may have problems with stinging insects. Extreme heat makes yellowjackets, wasps, and hornets more aggressive and more likely to sting. These insects may build nests in or around your home or in the ground. The BEST way to get rid of them is to call a professional pest control technician. The technician will locate the nest and put poison dust in the entrance. The hornets will come in contact with the dust and bring it into the colony, eventually killing the queen.



If you choose to try get rid of them yourself, be sure to use caution and follow proper removal methods:

- Approach the nest after dark. This is when the insects are dormant and not flying around.
- They are attracted to light, so keep any light source away from you.
- Cover your body with clothing to protect your skin.
- Use wasp and hornet spray and apply it directly on the nest.
- Only spray from ground level, do not climb a ladder to get to the nest. After you spray, you need to get away from the nest quickly. You can't climb down a ladder fast enough without falling.
- Do not use flammable products or attempt to burn them out. Nests are very dry, and this could cause a fire. On a hot day, flammable products may build up heat when mixed with insulation in your home and cause a fire.
- Do not try to drown them with water, this will only make them more aggressive.
- If you can't see the nest, do not try to spray the opening where they are going in and out, this method will make them aggressive, and they will come out of the nest in droves. If you have an area where they are hiding in your home and can't see the nest, the best way is the insecticide dust method.

### **What to do if you get stung:**

- Wash the area with soap and water.
- Apply a cold or ice pack wrapped with a thin cloth to help reduce swelling. This should be done for 10 minutes on and 10 minutes off for a total of 30 to 60 minutes.
- If the sting happens in the arm or leg, keep the arm or leg raised to reduce swelling.
- If you become dizzy or have problems breathing, call 911.

### **To do list BEFORE turning on your furnace:**

- Check the filter for debris and replace as needed (every 2-3 months)
- Check if the thermostat is working properly
- Test smoke & carbon monoxide detectors & replace batteries if needed
- Clear the area around the furnace
- Inspect your home for leaks
- Clean your ducts and vents (indoors and out)
- Order professional service for furnace inspection & cleaning



# Police and Crime Prevention



**Lt. Michael Tarr,**  
**District Three Commander**  
Hamilton County Sheriff's Office - 513-683-3444  
Fire and Police Emergency - 911  
Non-Emergency Dispatch - 513-825-2280

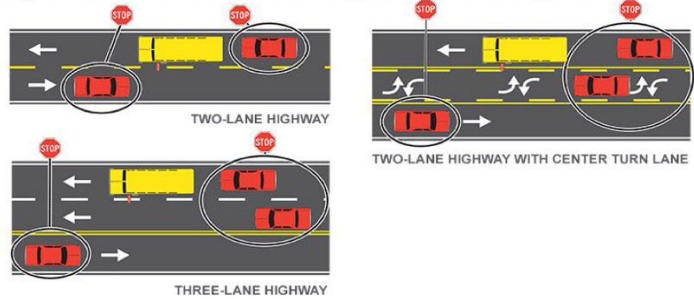
Around this time of year, we get many questions about a driver's responsibilities when approaching stopped school buses. I like to use the illustration to the right as it provides a very straightforward explanation.

Additionally, school bus drivers in Ohio are required to report the license plate number and a general description of any vehicle failing to stop for their bus to their local law enforcement agency. That agency will then attempt to establish the identity of the vehicle's driver at the time of the violation. If they are able to do so, that driver can then be cited to court. The Sheriff's Office frequently receives these notices of violations, and we have been able to go back and cite drivers after the fact.

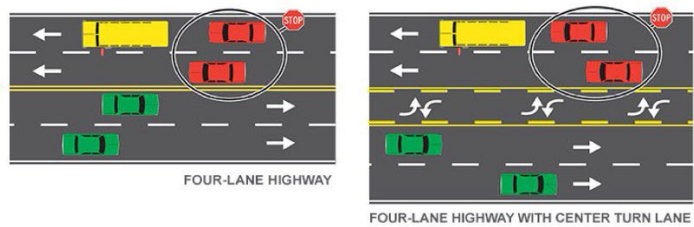
If it's been a while since you took that driver's test, please take some time to familiarize yourself with what to do should you approach a school bus while it is dropping off or picking up students. I hope everyone has a safe school year.

## When to stop for a school bus in Ohio

On a road with fewer than four lanes, all traffic approaching a stopped school bus from either direction must stop at least 10 feet from the front or rear of the bus and remain stopped until the bus begins to move or the bus driver signals motorists to proceed.

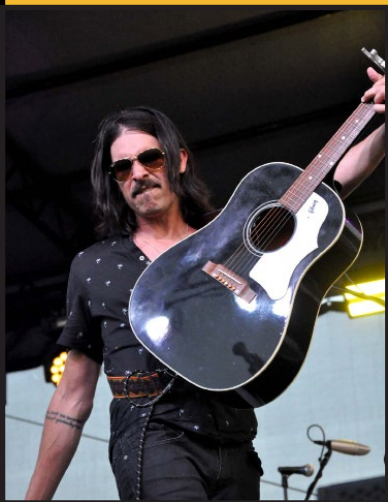


If the bus is stopped on a street with four or more lanes, only traffic proceeding in the same direction as the bus must stop.



Failure to stop for a school bus adds 2 points to your license in Ohio and is punishable by fines up to \$500. You must appear in court and the judge has the discretion to suspend your driver's license for up to one year. A driver who injures a pedestrian while failing to comply with school bus safety laws can face both criminal charges and civil liability. Those liabilities can include the victim's medical expenses, lost wages, rehabilitation, and non-economic damages, such as pain and suffering.

## Thank you to all who made the Tire Discounters Festival in Sycamore a success!





**Jeff Uckotter**  
**Planning & Zoning**  
**Administrator**

513-792-7252

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## Sycamore Township Gains Access to the Hamilton County Housing Court

Presided by The Honorable Judge Bernie Bouchard, the Hamilton County Housing Court is a specialized Municipal Court docket that adjudicates cases related to residential property violations and issues. Unique to Hamilton County (most Ohio Counties do not have housing courts), the Housing Court only hears criminal cases. From serious zoning violations to issues that negatively affect the health, safety, and welfare of the community, the goal of the docket is to resolve serious residential housing matters. This aligns with the Township's goal, too: to clean up properties.

At their July 5, 2023, Trustee meeting, the Sycamore Township Board of Trustees, acting on a favorable recommendation from the Sycamore Township Zoning Commission, approved a Zoning Resolution text amendment that allows the Township to charge a criminal misdemeanor citation. This will allow the Township to gain access to the Housing Court to resolve serious residential zoning and property maintenance violations.



The Township's property maintenance and zoning enforcement posture will remain the same: The Planning & Zoning staff will always remain fair and seek to work with property owners through communication, due process, and professionalism. After proper due process and after attempts to work with the property owner have been exhausted, a case may be referred for further enforcement. In consultation with the Township Law Director, the Township now has the ability to use the Housing Court as an appropriate venue to preserve the health, safety, and welfare of Sycamore Township.

# Maintenance Department



**Steve Reutelshofer,  
Superintendent**

513-792-7258

sreutelshofer@sycamoretownship.org



## Montgomery Road Sidewalk Project

The Montgomery Road Sidewalk Project from Ken Arbore Drive to Stewart Road is completed. Many Township residents and visitors are already using the new sidewalks on the north and south sides of Montgomery Road. We are happy to report that the project was completed ahead of schedule and under the project budget of \$713,611.57.

## Euclid Road Sidewalk Project

The Euclid Road Sidewalk Project, from Hosbrook Road to Michael Drive, will be the next sidewalk project within the Township. The project consists of the construction of a sidewalk on the north side of Euclid Road. The project is in the early design phase, with construction expected to commence in the summer of 2024. The estimated construction cost of the improvements is \$996,030.00.

The Euclid Road and Montgomery Road sidewalk projects are funded through a grant from the Transit Infrastructure Fund (SORTA) and Sycamore Township.

Future sidewalk improvements in the fiscal years of 2026 and 2027 include the East Kemper Road Sidewalk Improvements from Deerfield Road to Snider Road and the School Road and Solzman Road Sidewalk Improvements.

Our sidewalk improvement projects are part of the Township's strategic planning to increase public safety and walkability within our community.

## Gideon Lane Culvert Project

The Gideon Lane Culvert Project was completed in August. The project's location is approximately 300 feet west of Kemperknoll Lane. The cost of the project was \$431,518.16 and was funded by a grant from the Ohio Public Works Commission and Sycamore Township.

## 2023 Cape Seal Project

One of the largest pavement preservation projects to date for Sycamore Township has been completed on thirty-two streets and thirteen miles of Township roadway. The cost of this project was \$862,960.50 and was funded by Sycamore Township. The project extends the useful life of the streets by more than eight years!

*The Township staff would like to thank our residents for their patience during the construction season.*





SYCAMORE  
TOWNSHIP

8540 Kenwood Road  
Sycamore Twp., Ohio 45236

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 1693  
CINCINNATI, OHIO

## Save the Date

### Dillonvale Luminaria Bechtold Park December 9, 2023

*There's More in Sycamore!*

### Curbside Leaf Collection Information

Sycamore Township is pleased to provide you with prompt and efficient leaf pickup service from October 16th to December 18th. Leaves should be raked to the public right of way beside the street. PLEASE DO NOT PUT LEAVES IN THE STREET. Sticks, grass clippings, and 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. to 4:30 p.m. five days a week, rain, or shine, to collect leaves in a timely manner. Many factors, such as the number of leaves to be collected and the availability of temporary laborers, have an effect on collection and make it impossible to predict exact pickup times; however, every effort will be made to service each street weekly.