

News, Resources, Current Events and Other Information for Residents and Property Owners of West Chillisquaque Township -- Northumberland County

### In this edition:

**Winter Tips** -- See page 2 for some tips on issues related to the upcoming winter season.

**Frequently Asked Questions** -- See page 3 for some information on regulations that often bring up questions from residents.

**Information Distribution** -- See page 4 for information about how the township can better distribute information to you.

**Next Issue** -- Spring 2011

### Upcoming Township Meetings:

Monday January 3rd at 7:00 pm  
Monday February 7th at 7:00 pm  
Monday March 7th at 7:00 pm  
Monday April 11th at 7:00 pm

(all are subject to change)

### Help Wanted -- Community

**Disaster Assistance:** We are still looking for individuals to help the community in case of disaster. Please let us know if you are interested. The recent flooding is a reminder of what can happen. Our Emergency Management Team is looking to reorganize and we need help from you!

### "Who Ya Gonna Call??"

The following is contact information you may find useful for Township business and issues (570 Area Code):

Township Municipal Building – 523-3911

*This is an un-staffed office – leave a message and your call will be returned in several business days or call one of the other numbers below as appropriate.*

Township Maintenance Building/Roadmaster 742-8102

Township Supervisors:

Vaughn Murray, Chairman 524-0460

Doug Everitt, Vice Chair 524-2745

Willard Miller, Supervisor 524-9777

Code Enforcement/Zoning Permits

Richard Wolfe 524-0390 (leave message)

Building Permits

Light-Heigel and Associates – 524-7742

Sewage Enforcement Officer (septic systems)

James Sanders – 922-1218

Milton Regional Sewer Authority (public sewer)

742-3424

Township Secretary/Municipal Services Tax

Cherie Boyer – 524-9889

Township Treasurer

Clyde Boyer – 524-9889

Township Real Estate Tax Collector

William Phillips – **246-5490 (NEW NUMBER)**

911 Center Non-Emergency Number -- 523-1113

Milton State Police Barracks -- 524-2662

Email requests to: [WCcomment@dejazzd.com](mailto:WCcomment@dejazzd.com)

*(This information will be updated and repeated in each newsletter)*

## Tips for Snow Season:

Yes, the calendar says winter is approaching (OK, it is here based on the weatherman!). Whether you enjoy that sort of weather or if you consider it a nuisance, here are some tips:

- ◆ Do not shovel snow into the road or have your driveway plowed into the road. This can cause a serious traffic hazard. If possible, it is best to place snow on the side of your driveway opposite the direction the plow is traveling. By doing this, the plow will carry snow away from the driveway rather than back into it.
- ◆ If possible, wait until the road has been plowed before cleaning out the end of your driveway. There is no practical way to plow the road without depositing snow into your driveway.
- ◆ Help reduce the possibility of a broken mailbox post. Experience has shown that reduced visibility during a storm makes it difficult for a driver to see a post in time to avoid striking it or pushing it over with plowed snow. Any installation within the right of way, including a mailbox, is placed there at the owner's risk. Therefore, owners are encouraged to install mailboxes at the maximum usable distance from the edge of the roadway. Posts should also be checked for deterioration to reduce the possibility that the weight of the plowed snow may simply break the post. When mailboxes or newspaper boxes are knocked down, it is usually not the snow plow hitting it, but simply the force of the snow rolling off the plow.
- ◆ Don't be misled by trucks running with their plows raised. They may be returning for fuel or they may be headed to another area. The municipality is not responsible for all roads in the township. Some roads are maintained by the state and some roads are private.

The township tries to do the best we can to keep the roads open for your safety and convenience. Your cooperation can help this process and reduce your frustration as we just try to do our jobs.

## Snow and Ice on Sidewalks:

We have had numerous complaints about people not clearing snow and ice from sidewalks. We do not have any regulation in West Chillisquaque Township about this. However, as a property owner or renter (depending on your lease agreement) you are still legally responsible for making sure ice and snow are cleared. While you will not be subject to fines from the Township, you are likely to be liable for injuries caused if someone falls on your property. The best defense is a good offense of taking reasonable efforts to clean snow and ice from your sidewalks in a timely manner. This will help prevent your neighbors from falling and could save you a lot of money in legal costs.

## ...That Burning Question:

We continue to receive complaints on a regular basis about people burning improper items. However, as we've mentioned, there is currently no ordinance against that. We continue to ask everyone to be considerate to their neighbors and use common sense when burning. We will publish a common-sense guide to burning in a future edition (anticipated Spring 2011). If residents do not police themselves and be considerate to their neighbors, we will need to consider some sort of **limited** burning ordinance.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

**It's MY property, why are there so many rules?** This is one of the questions we get a lot, either directly or indirectly. Many of these requirements are State or Federal Requirements. This issue will focus on some of those.

**Floodplain Management** -- While these regulations are technically a local Ordinance that are detailed in Article 13 of the Zoning Ordinance, the Township is required to implement and enforce these regulations as a condition for residents and businesses in the township to qualify for flood insurance. Without these regulations in place, flood insurance would not be available in the township or else it would be subject to a much higher rate. These regulations are in place to not only protect you from future flood damages, but also to allow you to purchase flood insurance. There are two main designations of areas in the floodplain and are referred to as the **Floodway** and **Flood-Fringe**. These are both defined and mapped out by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Copies of the maps are available from the township. Before making any improvements to your property, you should consult with the Zoning Officer to make sure you are in compliance. Otherwise you may be required to modify or even tear down the improvements. If the Township does not enforce these regulations, you and your neighbors can lose your flood insurance.

**The Floodway** is the area closest to the river and creeks and are places that flood most frequently and actually become part of the body of water during many floods. Building or even significant upgrading/remodeling (even in the event of flood or fire) is subject to strict regulations and is virtually not allowed, unless elevated above the flood level or flood-proofed as defined in the Ordinance. In addition, any method used to provide the elevation must be constructed in a way that will not impact future flooding and subject to approval by the Dept of Environmental Protection. Almost all fences are even prohibited in the Floodway. Building Code regulations (see below), also provide additional restrictions.

**Flood Fringe** are areas further away from streams, but are subject to flooding up to certain elevations during what is known as the "100 year flood". Building/remodeling and future development are also restricted in these areas, but there is more flexibility. Building repairs, remodeling or construction require proof they are elevated above the 100 year flood level or that strict flood proofing requirements are met in commercial structures which include the elevation of utility outlets and use of building materials which are resistant to flood waters. Even in the flood fringe area, any elevation must be done using methods that will allow water to flow through.

**Sewage Enforcement** -- Through Act 537 of 1966 (and subsequent amendments) the Commonwealth of PA established regulations for the disposal of sewage. These are statewide regulations and the township is required to have a Sewage Enforcement Officer (SEO). Part of Act 537 requires municipalities to periodically perform a study of sewage issues in the township and determine where it is appropriate for public sewer and where it still makes sense to maintain on-lot systems. Based on a study conducted several years ago, some of the more densely populated areas were equipped with public sewer, but a large geographic area will remain with on-lot systems. Our SEO has provided some tips for maintaining these systems which we will publish in a future issue.

**Building Codes** -- Through Act 45 of 1999 (and subsequent amendments) the Commonwealth of PA established regulations for Uniform Construction Codes. These are statewide regulations and the township is required to either enforce these requirements or defer them to the Department of Labor and Industry where the Township would have no control over the rates charged to our residents or any other aspect of the enforcement. In association with several other municipalities, Light-Heigel and Associates, has been selected to enforce these in the township. Further information can be obtained from the Commonwealth's web site at:

[http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/uniform\\_construction\\_code](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/uniform_construction_code)

*In a future issue, we will discuss local regulations, such as Subdivision/Land Development and Zoning. A primary purpose of these is to actually protect you from having a neighbor use their property in a way that may be detrimental to the health, safety or character of a neighborhood.*

Question/Comment? Submit via email @ [WCcomment@dejazzd.com](mailto:WCcomment@dejazzd.com) or by mail at PO Box 252 Montandon

WEST CHILLISQUAQUE TOWNSHIP  
485 RAILROAD STREET  
PO BOX 252  
MONTANDON PA 17850

«Name»  
«Addr1»  
«Addr2»  
«City»

**Frequency of Information** We have asked residents to provide email addresses to allow us to distribute the newsletter in a timely and cost efficient manner. This has also allowed us to send out quick notices to residents, such as a notice about the County-wide burn ban that was in effect earlier this year.

Only a few of you have requested their newsletter be sent electronically. BUT, we are hoping more of you will do that, to reduce costs and speed delivery. Many of you may have thought of this, but never gotten around to do it. We remind you again to take a few minutes to contact us if you have email and would like to take advantage of this at: [WCcomment@dejazzd.com](mailto:WCcomment@dejazzd.com) and provide the following information: Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Your Email: \_\_\_\_\_

This will allow us to also notify you of other events in a timely manner that do not align to newsletter timelines. This information will only be used to distribute the newsletter or other related information directly from the township. It will not be sold/given to anyone else. We value your privacy. If you would ever like to have your email address removed from the list, simply send a note to the email listed above and we will remove your address.

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**Newsletter Frequency** -- We plan to continue to provide a newsletter three or four times per year. This will depend on items to report and time availability of the "editor". We will also begin to send out small "blurbs" of information to everyone on the newsletter distribution list, when appropriate. So, if you have email, that is the way to receive timely information from the Township! If you would like to receive information this way, please provide us with your email address as indicated above.