



Your Township Officials

Supervisor

William Frey

Clerk

Jolene Upchurch

Treasurer

Cindy Baum

Trustee- Denise Gordy

Trustee- Tad Cousino

Your Township Office

Sue Smith

Diane LaPlante

Dan Smith- Assessor

Michael Demski- Building /
Zoning Official

Bill Hines – Chief of Police

Newsletter Coordinators

Diane LaPlante

Michael Demski

Inside...

Treasurer News 2

Burn Permit Info

Clerk News 3

Park Commission

Assessing News 4

Swimming Pool Info

Police & Fire News 5

Storm Water Tips 6

Library News

Building News 7

FROM THE SUPERVISOR'S DESK

Trash to Power Plant Proposed for Township

The Township has signed a letter of intent with SunCrest Energy LLC, a Michigan Company which has obtained 500 million financial backing to build 100-megawatt waste solids to energy fuel plant. This is not a Host agreement as no agreement has been reached. The letter of intent simply means that the Township is open to discussion with the developers and is willing to explore the concept. The economics of plasma arc gasification technology to produce energy and liquid fuels from a municipal solid waste energy stream suggests a potential for wide-scale energy savings. The plant would use the municipal solid waste (MSW) as the resource for a gasification power plant utilizing integrated gasification combined cycle, or IGCC technology to generate energy. With this new technology MSW can be gasified and converted to electrical/steam energy. The MSW is essentially converted to CO and hydrogen, known as synthesis gas or "syngas". Plasma Arc Gasification is considered the most efficient gasification process, with temperatures up to 30,000 degrees F. During this high temperature process the organics of solid waste are converted to syngas, and the inorganic material and minerals of the waste solids produce a rock-like byproduct. The slag material can be used to produce other byproducts such as rock, wool, floor tiles, roof tiles insulation and landscaping blocks, or be recycled as a road aggregate material.

Gasification byproducts are benign, consisting of 99%+ pure element sulfur plus an inert non-leaching slag that is used in road construction. Unlike Power Company plants no fly ash is generated, so not only are incremental treatment and disposal costs avoided, there is the potential to sell the gasification byproducts at a profit. SOx and NOx levels are extremely low. By capturing CO2 at the source rather than after it has gone up the stack, gasification can capture CO2 at a fraction of the cost of even the most advanced conventional technology.

It is estimated that approximately 1,000 jobs would be created as well as 140 permanent jobs to operate the plant. The Counties and Townships Solid Waste Management Plan would require a "Tipping Fee" for each of Solid Waste which is estimated to exceed \$1,000,000.00 per year.

**FROM THE TREASURER
CINDY BAUM:**



It's tax time again and 2008 summer tax bills will be mailed on Monday June 30th. Summer taxes are due and payable from **July 1, 2008 – September 15, 2008** without penalty or interest. Summer deferments are available for qualifying agricultural properties, senior citizens, eligible veterans and servicepersons and persons with disabilities. Deferment applications are available at the township hall. If you have any questions regarding eligibility please call (734) 848-5915 ext. 3.

Taxes can be paid at the township hall, Monroe Bank & Trust Erie Branch, by mail (postmarks are accepted), or in the drop box in front of the township hall.

The township summer hours are 7:30 a.m. TO 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The following is the list of holiday closures for this tax season:

- July 4, 2008 - Independence Day
- September 1, 2008 - Labor Day

Please look over your bill carefully for any clerical errors or discrepancies regarding your Principal Residence Exemption, or the description of your property and notify the office.

For those of you with an escrow account your tax bill will be sent directly to your mortgage company. If you would like a duplicate copy of your tax bill mailed to you for your records please call the office.

For any of our senior residents or those who are having financial difficulties there are a number of programs and agencies available to assist you.

- MCOP - various senior programs (734) 241-2775
- Monroe County Senior Legal Service (734) 241-7644
- Commission on Aging (734) 240-7358
- Area Agency on Aging 1-B (800) 852-7795
 - Reverse Equity Mortgages
- Michigan Veteran's Trust (734) 240-7359
 - Department of Human Services (734) 243-7200
 - State Emergency Relief Form
 - Help with Property Forfeiture
 - Salvation Army (734) 241-0440
 - Food Programs
 - Prescription Drug Assistance

From the Supervisor's Desk - Continued

If and when this project progresses it will need to have the most positive benefit to the environment and financial reward to the Township. A fully transparent involvement, with public participation and trust is necessary. At this time no plans have been submitted and no public hearings have been scheduled. This concept was advocated at a Township Board Meeting at which time a special meeting was scheduled with the proposed developers and the public invited to attend.

The attractiveness of Plasma Arc Gasification is the generation of renewable energy from a widely available resource, with useful byproducts such as liquid fuels.

As always your comments and suggestions are appreciated and will be considered as this project is considered in the future by the Township.



BURN PERMIT UPDATE

You now need to have a copy of your burn permit in your possession when you burn. Call the township at 734-848-5915 and we will be happy to fax or e-mail a copy of the permit. We also have a resident pick up box outside the township hall, if residents need to stop at the township to pick up a copy of the burn permit after office hours. No fire shall be set at a time when a high wind is blowing. NO burning shall be done on OZONE ACTION DAYS. All fires shall be supervised by an adult with a copy of the permit in their possession.



From the Clerks Desk

The Presidential Election will be here before we know it! In preparing for the 2008 Presidential Election, the precincts will be split so Erie will no longer have Precincts 1A, 1B and 2A, 2B. The new precincts will be divided according to County Commissioners. Many voters will be in a different precinct, so all registered voters of Erie Township will receive a new voter ID card before the August Primary 2008 Election. Please check your new ID card to find out your voting location.

Anyone going to the polls to vote in 2008 remember to bring a form of I.D. The state requires a voter to show a driver's license, state I.D. or other form of acceptable identification to vote. Election Inspectors will need to see this before they can issue a ballot.

The Clerks office is always looking for new election workers. If anyone is interested please contact my office, 734-848-5915 ext. 2.

Just a reminder all cemetery plots at Union Cemetery and Brigham Cemetery must be cleaned of all Holiday arrangements. The Township Board passed new cemetery rules that went into affect February 19, 2008 that addresses many issues. I would suggest if anyone owns a plot at either cemetery please inquire at the Township Hall for a copy of the new rules.

I am open to any comments or suggestions you might have for the clerk's office. I hope everyone has a Safe and Happy Summer.

Jolene Upchurch, Erie Township Clerk



PARK COMMISSION NEWS

A special thanks to BJ Home Improvements and Curtis Construction Company for helping with the installation of the roof for the new shelter at Maplewood Park. Also thanks to the volunteers that came out and gave us a hand.

Also a special thanks to Mark Jones for helping with the water & electrical lines and Larry Kinsey for donating the electrical at Maplewood.

We had the cement poured by Meredith Construction for the two shelters in the middle of April. We will be adding some new grills and a drinking fountain (at Maple wood) here shortly.

Early on the park has been packed with kids playing basketball and playing on the new playground which we are glad to see.

Once again thanks to everyone who helped with the project. It is really appreciated.

Everyone have a fun and safe summer and we look forward to seeing you at the park.

Erie Parks & Recreation



www.erietownship.com

As a reminder, we have a new web site to assist you in obtaining information. Items on the site include: New resident info, Meeting times & minutes, building information & applications, plus much more. Please visit our site and our comments are always welcomed and appreciated.



ERIE TOWNSHIP REAPPRAISAL WINDING DOWN

The reappraisal of Erie Township is continuing through this summer and fall mostly in the waterfront subdivisions and part of sections 6, 20, 28, 29 and 33. A field representative will be visiting each property to gather structural data including exterior measurements and interior features. Correct exterior measurements are essential and necessary to develop equitable property values. The field representative has Township logo signs on their vehicle and picture identification visible on their person.

The field representative is gathering data that will be used to verify, update and computerize the existing records and computer systems. If no one is home a memo with a pre-addressed post card will be left in your door requesting property information.

Taxable values will not be affected unless new construction has taken place since the last review. Taxable values are capped the year following a change in ownership and annual increases are based upon the consumers price index or 5% whichever is less plus any new. (2.3% CPI for 2008)

Assessments are based upon 50% of market value. Market trends are determined by neighborhood locations, by analyzing sales that have occurred during a two year period commencing on April 1, 2006 through March 31, 2008 or sales from the current year ending September 30, 2008.

PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE EXEMPTION'S (P.R.E.)

If you own & occupy your residence, it may be exempt from a portion of your local school operating taxes. To claim an exemption, you must complete an affidavit and file it with the assessor by May 1st of the year of the claim. If you have proof that you owned & occupied the home by May 1st, but failed to file by the deadline, you may file with the assessor for consideration by the July or December Board of Review. If you qualify, the assessor will adjust your taxes on your next property tax bill. Note that this is an exemption from part of the taxes and does not affect your assessment.

You may have only one principal residence at a time. If you claim an exemption then stop using it as a principal residence, you must notify the assessor within 90 days of the change or you may

be penalized. If it is determined that you claimed property that is not your principal residence, you may be subject to additional tax plus penalty and interest.

CONDITIONAL RESCISSION OF P.R.E.

The P.R.E. defined above was amended on April 8, 2008 by enabling a person who has established a new principal residence to retain a PRE on property previously exempt as the owner's principal residence simultaneously if certain criteria are met. An owner may receive the PRE on the previous principal residence for up to three years if that property is not occupied, is for sale, is not leased, and is not used for any business or commercial purpose. To initially qualify form 4640 must be filed with the assessor before December 31 of the year of the claim



Swimming pools, spas and hot tubs

Private swimming pools, spas and hot tubs are regulated by code and local zoning ordinance, requiring specific installation standards, permits and inspections. The definition of a swimming pool is any structure intended for swimming that contains water over 24 inches deep. This includes hot tubs, spas, in-ground and above-ground pools. In the past there was little regulation, but for obvious safety reasons pools are now regulated by building and property maintenance codes and local zoning requirements. The Building Department shall be enforcing code and ordinance requirements for **all swimming pools, spas and hot tubs** including new and existing installations. Pools require setbacks, barriers/enclosures, limited access, proper electrical and bonding to provide safety to their users and area residents. One of the more recent safety concerns is the increase of "inflatable" pools and spas. Their low cost makes them appealing, but all code requirements still apply and almost always will require an enclosure to safely restrict access. Please plan ahead and visit the Building Department page of our web site or contact the Building Official by email or phone when planning the installation of a pool or to make your current installation code compliant and safe.



ERIE TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Spring is upon us and Summer is just around the corner. As the warmer weather comes along more people are involved in outdoor activities and a little safety in mind is good injury prevention. Please do not forget to check the batteries in your smoke alarms. Renewal of the Fire millage is to be voted on in August. The Fire millage is necessary for the future needs of the Fire department. We have an Engine (Pumper) that is 14 years old that will need to be replaced within the next 3 years. Repairs and maintenance cost have increased yearly. In the future the possibility of adding another truck bay could also happen. This millage would help with the cost of this large priced vehicle and other large cost in the future. In the late 1920's the Erie Township Volunteer Fire Department was started. There was a need to protect the community. We need your support. Remember to vote in August.

In April we taught 116 Seniors at Mason High School, CPR. This is one of their requirements to graduate. We have been doing this for the High School for the last 6 years as community service. We just acquired 2 new members to the department. If anyone is interested in helping the people in our community and becoming a member on the Fire Department applications can be obtained at the Township Hall.

The member of the Fire Department responds to calls 24 hours a day 7 days a week. They train and sit through classes to better serve our community. Support your Fire Department.

Dave Duvall, Chief



MORIN POINT FIRE DEPT

Congratulations!! Jessica Close, Kayla Mehki, Kameron Jacoby, and Mark Henry for having completed their Firefighters I and II requirements.

Presently we have 26 members on our roster, but we are always looking for new recruits. We drill every Wednesday from 7p to 9p stop down or call the station at 848-8942 and leave a message if you are interested.

We would also like to make you aware that we will be having a blood drive this summer. We usually are scheduled in July at the station. Keep an eye posted for date and time on our billboard or in the Monroe evening news.

The summer season is upon us please be careful enjoying your activities. Take care and have a safe summer.



FROM THE ERIE POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Erie Township Police Department, in conjunction with the Monroe County Sheriff Department and the Michigan State Police will be stepping up Drunk Driving Enforcement in Erie Township for the summer months. Please remember that the legal blood alcohol limit is now .08 in the State of Michigan. It should also be noted that a driver may be arrested with ANY amount of alcohol in their system if the officer can articulate that the alcohol is causing the driver to operate their vehicle in an unsafe manner. The law has also been changed from the old law that stated the third alcohol driving violation conviction in 10 years is a felony. The law now states that the third alcohol violation conviction in a person's lifetime is a felony and the arrested person faces possible prison time if convicted.

Thousands of innocent people, including children, die every year due to intoxicated drivers. If you or someone you know has had too much to drink, please do not get or allow them to get behind the wheel. Drunk driving truly does kill innocent people every day in the United States.

Chief William Hines



Allied Waste (BFI) Services

A reminder: Bags for individual pick-up service are available at the Township Hall at a cost of \$2.00 each.

Also available are tags, for use with your bags, at a cost of \$1.50 each.

This year at the township we are introducing yard waste bags for yard clippings. The bags will be \$.40 each or \$2.00 for a bundle.

DEQ ENCOURAGES PROPER DISPOSAL OF HOUSEHOLD MEDICATIONS

A remedy for Residential Drug Disposal

Managing unused medications is a safety as well as an environmental concern. Traditionally, we were told to flush unwanted medications down the drain or toilet rather than keeping them around so they would not be misused. Although effective in removing medication from potentially being misused, flushing creates a new and growing problem in the environment. Antibiotics and other medications in a septic system can destroy beneficial bacteria necessary for the septic system to operate. Wastewater treatment plants are not designed to remove or process many compounds found in medications that end up being discharged into our surface and ground water. A study by the United States Geological Survey done in 1999 showed that in 80% of the streams sampled contained detectable levels of compounds found in common medications. National attention is growing to develop more appropriate methods of safely disposing of unwanted medications

1. CHECK WITH YOUR PHARMACY TO SEE IF THEY HAVE A DRUG TAKE BACK PROGRAM. Your pharmacy can help identify controlled substances, or see the controlled substances schedules and "drugs and chemicals of concern" at www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov.

2. Find out if there is a special collection for unused and expired drugs in your area, a list of local contacts is at www.michigan.gov/deqreswastecontacts.

3. Dispose of unwanted medicines in the trash if a collection program is not available---

DO NOT FLUSH DRUGS DOWN SINK DRAINS OR TOILET.



Catch the Reading Bug This Summer...

Youngsters need to catch the reading bug to keep them reading all summer long and there's no better place to do that than at the library. This year's Summer Reading Program, with its fun bug theme, will kick off at the Erie Branch beginning on June 18th.

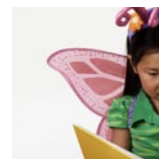
School-aged children are encouraged to stop by the library and sign up to take part in the program which includes special bug themed events, crawly crafts and tasty chocolate covered insects. Weekly prizes will be awarded as well as a special surprise at the end of the program.

Special programs include Nature's Nursery of Whitehouse, Ohio providing hands on experience with wildlife, and Bird's Butterflies of Ida will explain the lifecycle of the Monarch butterfly.

Join us on Wednesdays at 11:00 AM for fun and educational programs at the Erie Branch Library.

June 18-Catch the Reading Bug

June 25-Bug Predators presented by Nature's Nursery



July 2-Catch the Olympic Bug by participating in our Summer Games

July 9-Take me out to the backyard



July 16- Bird's Butterflies of Ida

July 23-Celebrate the bookworm in you with a Party to end Summer Reading



MASON HIGH SCHOOL FAMILY SUMMER SWIM PROGRAM

Mason High School Pool * June 9 to July 25, 2008

Monday-Friday * 7:00-8:00 PM and 8:00-9:00 PM

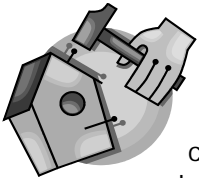
CERTIFIED LIFE GUARDS ON DUTY AT ALL TIMES

Buy a FAMILY PASS for only \$17.50 for the summer. FAMILY PASSES include parents and school age children. INDIVIDUAL PASSES, \$5.00 or pay \$1.00 per session at the door. Passes may be purchased at the Swimming Pool starting May 21. FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL GRACE AT 734-848-4257



When Do You Need A Permit?

The best way to find out is to call the building department before starting your project. Permits are usually required for all projects including building, electrical, plumbing, and heating/AC work. In the past, some maintenance type projects such as roofing and siding did not require a permit which is not the case today. Most of these types of work require specific items for code compliance and therefore a permit and inspections are required for code compliance. For some projects such as sheds and fences which do not require a building permit, it still may be necessary to obtain a permit for zoning compliance. Please contact the Building Department before beginning your project.



Property maintenance seems to have become a bigger concern to area residents. In the past, the Building Department would receive complaints from tenants and adjacent property owners regarding unsafe conditions; however, the Township did not have the enforcement power to take any action. There was a gap between new construction code requirements and what could be defined and enforced as blight. Typically after the original certificate of occupancy there wouldn't be any legal avenue for inspections on existing properties thus opening the door to unsafe conditions. As properties age and more vacancies occur, this can create problems. The State of Michigan adopted the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) by reference, which provides for minimum safety standards for all existing residential and nonresidential structures. In 2007 the Township Board also adopted the IPMC and the Building Department has been enforcing it on a complaint basis.

When structures are not properly maintained it affects the public health, safety and general welfare, as well as, the aesthetic value of the community at large and can have a direct effect on property values. It is our duty to ensure that all residents, including our tenants, are living in safe conditions. Further, many furnaces, water heaters, changes to electric service, etc. are being installed improperly, without permits, creating unsafe and hazardous conditions. The IPMC was adopted to correct unsuitable conditions and to establish mechanisms for continued maintenance of structures thereby promoting health, safety, and welfare of the community and the residents.

Purpose – The IPMC includes provisions that are intended to maintain a minimum level of safety and sanitation for both the general public and the occupants of a structure, and to maintain a building's weather-resistant and structural performance. Following is a brief outline of the code and descriptions of some of the items covered:

Chapter 1 covers Administration of the code

Chapter 2 includes Definitions

Chapter 3 covers General Requirements

- Section 301 identifies the scope of Chapter 3 and establishes who is responsible for complying with the code. This section also provides minimum maintenance requirements for vacant structures.
- Section 302 establishes criteria for maintaining exterior property areas and accessory structures.
 - Including: sanitation, grading, garages, sheds, walks and drives.
- Section 303 contains the requirements for swimming pools, spas and hot tubs and provides requirements for protective barriers and gates.
- Section 304 establishes maintenance requirements for the structural, weather resistance, sanitary and safety performance of the exterior of a structure.
 - Including: paint protection, foundations, walls, roofs, stairs, porches, handrails, windows, doors and screens.
- Section 305 establishes maintenance requirements for the structural, sanitary and safety performance of the interior of a structure.
- Section 306 provides for the safety and maintenance of handrails and guardrails.
- Sections 307 and 308 establish the responsible parties for exterminating insects and rodents, and maintaining sanitary conditions.

Chapter 4 covers Light, ventilation and occupancy limitations

Chapter 5 covers Plumbing facilities and fixtures

Chapter 6 covers Mechanical and electrical

Chapter 7 covers Fire safety

For questions or more information on the International Property Maintenance Code you may visit the Building Department page of the web site or contact the Building Official by email or phone.

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We're on the web!
Visit us at:
www.erietownship.com

Erie Township – At Your Service

Summer Hours – 7:30AM to 4:00PM – Monday thru Friday.

**Support
Your Local
Businesses**

Inside you will find some advertising pages which are new to the township newsletter. In an effort to lessen the cost of producing the newsletter we have asked local businesses to contribute and in turn we have provided a small ad to remind you of their services. This partnership with our local businesses has greatly reduced our costs and will provide for us to publish a fall newsletter to keep you better informed.

Please support our businesses whenever possible.

The Erie News

Please look inside for Important Information
From Erie Township!

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CURRENT RESIDENT

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