

# TOWNSHIP OF SUMMIT

2121 Ferguson Road  
Jackson, Michigan 49203  
517-788-4113 - [www.summittwp.com](http://www.summittwp.com)

## 2013 Newsletter

**From the Supervisor's Office** – As in prior years, we're taking advantage of the annual Assessment Change Notice mailing to include some information on current events in your Township. This year we are emphasizing two specific areas of Township service that need some detailed discussion to point out their value and importance to you. As in the past you may also access the Township website at [www.summittwp.com](http://www.summittwp.com) for specific information from each of the Township departments.

**Building Permits/Inspections** – Why should you have them? Believe it or not, they are there to protect your interests. Before building an addition, tearing down walls, or running electrical wiring or plumbing check with us to learn if your project requires a permit. Permits are usually required for:

- New buildings
- Additions (bedrooms, bathrooms, family rooms, etc.)
- Residential work (decks, garages, fences, fireplaces, pools, water heaters, etc.)
- Renovations (garage conversions, basement furnishings, kitchen expansions, re-roofing, etc.)
- Electrical systems
- Plumbing systems
- HVAC (heating, ventilating and air-conditioning) systems

Lately television programs geared toward home improvement and renovations have inspired many homeowners to tackle their own projects. While the initiative is rewarding, it can also be costly and dangerous if codes are not followed. Regardless of whether you do it yourself or hire a contractor, checking with our Building Department ahead of time can reduce the chance of having to do costly repairs to meet minimum safety standards and eliminate potential hazards.

By answering some basic questions (What are you planning to do? Where?), our Building Official will be able to provide the information needed for compliance with the Michigan Building and Residential Codes and an application for the appropriate permit. After documenting the "Who, What, When, Where and How" of the job, along with providing any sketches or plans of the proposed work a permit may be issued.

**Advice:** Whoever applies for the permit is responsible for completing the work, having it inspected and correcting any non-compliance issues. If you are having a contractor do the work, have the contractor apply for the needed permits and before making your final payment to the contractor, obtain a copy of the final inspection and make sure all corrections/deficiencies are addressed.

Separate permits are required for structural, electrical, plumbing, and heating or air-conditioning work. Our Building Official reviews all applications for compliance with local and state requirements. If the plan meets the requirements, a permit is issued. If not, the code official will request necessary corrections.

Permit fees are collected to cover the cost of the application, the review and the inspection process. When the final inspection is completed you will know that your project meets the appropriate code requirements and safety standards.

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**From the Department of Public Works** – Again this year there will not be a sewer rate increase. We continue to manage our costs very closely and conduct periodic rate studies to determine the need for an increase in sewer and/or water rates in the future. We also wish to remind residents that sump pumps are not permitted to be discharged into the sanitary sewer system. This practice results in ground water using up needed sewer capacity along with causing unnecessary treatment cost.

**Important notice – Wipes Clog pipes and pumps and septic tanks!!**

Although some products are labeled and marketed as disposable, such as baby wipes, this does NOT mean they can be flushed in the toilet. These products and others have the ability to clog and stop up sewer lines on homeowner properties as well as blockage and service problems in the public sewer system and pump stations.

Unlike toilet paper, these products do not break down once they are flushed. They can cause blockages in your on-site sewer which can cause significant repair bills.

On a larger scale, when these products make their way into the public sewer system they collect together and cause clogs in the main collector lines and get tangled in pump stations requiring repair or replacement of equipment which is very costly.

**What we all can do to help...**

The following items should never be flushed into the sewer system:

- Disinfecting wipes, baby wipes**
- Q-tips**
- Toilet cleaning pads**
- Mop or “swiffer” type refills**
- Paper towels**
- Disposable diapers**
- Feminine hygiene products**
- Moist towelettes**
- Dental floss**
- ANY consumer item that is not toilet paper**

Many homes or businesses have a sewer connection to the public sewer system. This connection runs from the home or business to the main where it connects to the public sewer system. The home or business owner is responsible to keep their portion clear to ensure no backups of wastewater.

Save yourself and your sewer utility from costly repairs and or replacement bills.

Do not flush the listed items; place them in the trash, not the toilet. **Thank you for your assistance!**

- The Water & Sewer Department continues to invest in the upkeep and maintenance of infrastructure to assure the integrity and reliability of these systems. This year major maintenance and painting of the water tower on Park Drive was completed.
- Three new DPW trucks were purchased
- ? Possible contract with Hydrodynamics to administer the cross connect program. ID badges will be provided.

**From the Assessor’s Office** – The enclosed Assessment Change Notice shows information of interest for the 2012 property tax cycle. Your property taxes are based on two factors – the CPI multiplier and the millage rate. This year’s Consumer Price Index (CPI) multiplier is 1.027. This multiplier times your 2011 taxable value is compared with your 2012 assessment. Whichever is less is the value used for your tax bill. The exception to this is if the property has transferred during 2011. If the property transferred, any benefit the previous owner had would be adjusted for the new owner of the property. Once again,

we expect that most residents will see a reduction in the taxable value of their property. The other factor needed for calculating the tax bill is the millage rate. The specific rate(s) being applied will be listed on the summer and winter tax bills.

This year the Assessing Department will continue conducting field work to verify data and update photographs of properties within the Township. Those conducting the field work will have Township issued identification with them. If you have any questions regarding this or any other property tax topic, please contact the Assessing Department at (517)788-4113, extension 233. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

If you have street lights in your neighborhood you will begin to notice a change in their appearance over the next several years. Consumers Energy no longer will be maintaining mercury vapor lights but will be replacing them with a comparable size and priced high pressure sodium light as they fail.

**From the Clerk's Office** – The Presidential Primary is February 28, 2012. It is a “closed” primary, so each voter must request a Republican or Democrat ballot or those in Hanover-Horton School District may also request an Issue Only ballot.

Voters wishing to obtain Absentee Ballots must submit their request in writing by letter or filling out an application prior to each election as Michigan Election Law requires.

Every 10 years following the U.S. Census, federal, state and local officials may redistrict their communities. Consequently redistricting changes have been made to our State Senate and County Commission districts as well as Summit Township precincts. In an attempt to conserve taxpayer dollars we have consolidated our 12 voting precincts into 8 with 3 voting locations. Our estimate is that this will save thousands of taxpayer dollars over the next 10 years as election costs continue to escalate.

Everyone will receive a new voter card in June with your updated Precinct number and voting location. These changes will be in effect beginning with the August 7, 2012 Primary Election. If an election is held in May, 2012 the present locations will be utilized.

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**From the Treasurer's Office** – Property tax and water & sewer bills may be paid at Citizens Bank branch offices at 2229 Fourth Street, 4515 Francis Street and 1514 West Morrell Street or at the Township offices at 2121 Ferguson Road. Also, please check our website, [www.summittwp.com](http://www.summittwp.com), for information on two electronic payment options. The first – a direct debit opportunity is offered at no cost to you. This can also save you time and money by eliminating check writing and postage. The second – use your credit card. There is a convenience fee charged to utilize this method.

**From the Building Official's Office** – If you have any questions about a construction/remodeling project you are considering, please contact your Building Inspection Department (517)788-4113, extension 257.

**From the Fire Chief** – Though we haven't had much snow this winter, we would like to remind you of the critical need for keeping a fire hydrant located on your property clear. This will help reduce the time it takes to set up for firefighting operations. If there is a fire in your home or neighborhood, time is of the essence for saving lives and property. Some other things to keep in mind – check your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors every month and practice your emergency escape plan. If you plan to do any burning, please call the fire department at 788-4115 to see what is permissible and to obtain a permit.

The Fire Department received a matching grant from the Township's insurance carrier to help build a facility constructed with cargo shipping containers to be used for various types of training such as technical rescues and search and rescue operations. In addition, the donation and retrofitting of an all terrain vehicle now enables the Fire Department to respond more effectively to medical needs and limited fire coverage at special events throughout the Township.

**From the Sheriffs Detachment** - If you're going to be away for an extended time, you may request periodic vacation checks of your residence by simply completing a request form which you can obtain at the Township office or the Sheriff's office website - [www.jcsd1.org](http://www.jcsd1.org). Just drop it off at the Township office.

All door-to-door solicitors are required to register with the Township. Please call 911 to report any suspicious activity or anyone you suspect may not be registered. A description of the person(s) and any vehicle(s) would be very helpful.

Also, be on the alert for phone and internet fraud. Before sending money or providing sensitive documents to anyone, ask for a call back number or physical address and verify the requesting party. Any reluctance to provide this information would be a strong indication the request is fraudulent.

**From the Department of Public Works** – Again this year there will not be a sewer rate increase. We continue to manage our costs very closely and conduct periodic rate studies to determine the need for an increase in sewer and/or water rates in the future. We also wish to remind residents that sump pumps are not permitted to be discharged into the sanitary sewer system. This practice results in ground water using up needed sewer capacity along with causing unnecessary treatment cost.

#### **2011 Accomplishments/2012 Plans –**

- The former Vandercook Lake High School has been rezoned and received site plan approval to be redeveloped into a senior/moderate income housing facility. Not only will this provide needed senior housing in the Vandercook Lake area, but also preserves an historic site.
- The rebuilding of W. Michigan Avenue from Brown Street to M-60 was completed during the year. This project included sidewalks on both sides of the street to the curve on Michigan Avenue. This year MDOT plans to rebuild the M-50/US127 overpass beginning in March. The bridge will be completely removed and is expected to re-open in early August.
- The Water & Sewer Department continues to invest in the upkeep and maintenance of infrastructure to assure the integrity and reliability of these systems. This year the water tower on Park Drive will undergo some major maintenance and be painted. Residents on the east side of the Township, primarily the Vandercook Lake area, will experience some water pressure fluctuations during this process which is expected to take place between April and August.
- Continuing contracts with the Jackson County Sheriff for police services, Jackson Transportation Authority for fuel purchasing, Leoni Township for sewer can maintenance and repair and Napoleon Township for building inspection services provides economies to all involved parties. We are always looking for opportunities to improve our efficiency and to add value for you.
- A new three year labor agreement was reached with Local 1639 IAFF.