



Township News

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<http://www.ktwp.org>

Winter Edition 2020

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Subscribe to the Newsletter – fill in your information on our website, under Quarterly Newsletter Sign Up, to get our newsletter in your email.

Follow Us on Facebook – at [Kalamazoo Charter Township](https://www.facebook.com/KalamazooCharterTownship) to get more information faster.

Get the Neighbors app. Ring - The Township Police Department is partnering with the Neighbors app., Ring, a free way to receive real-time local crime and safety updates on their smartphones, whether or not they own a Ring device.

You May Need to Know...

Sidewalks Need Your Help

Property owners and occupants are responsible for keeping sidewalks free of snow, vegetation, debris, vehicles, and other obstacles. Please be considerate of people who need a safe path to, use a wheelchair, push a stroller, exercise, visit neighbors, travel to a bus stop, or walk to a store.



Accumulation of snow exceeding a depth of 2 inches must be removed within 24 hours.

Please help neighbors who may be physically unable to clear their sidewalk.

Violations of Kalamazoo Township's Ordinance 604 can be reported to the Ordinance Enforcement Officer at 567-7523.

2020 Census is Coming

The 2020 Census is more than a count. It's a chance to stand up for the places you call home and the people you call friends, neighbors, and family. Each home will receive an invitation to respond to a short questionnaire—online, by phone, or by mail.

From new clinics, to new schools, to new roads, the 2020 Census can help shape your community's future. The census provides critical data that lawmakers, business owners, teachers, and many others use to provide daily services, products, and support for you and your community. Every year, billions of dollars in federal funding goes to hospitals, fire departments, schools, roads, and other resources based on census data.

The results of the census determines the number of seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives and they are used to draw congressional and state legislative districts. It's also in the Constitution: Article 1, Section 2, mandates that the country conduct a count of its population once every 10 years. The 2020 Census will mark the 24th time that the country has counted its population since 1790.

Recycling

More things are coming to us in cardboard boxes all the time. Be sure to recycle them and if you have several that are too big to fit in your cart you can drop them off at Republic Services, 3432 Gembrit Circle, for a small fee. Also, please be

sure to recycle your old electronics and batteries at County Household Hazardous Waste or where you purchase your electronics. You'd be surprised at what you can recycle if you take it to the right place. Check out the [Recycling Raccoons on Facebook](#) or go to <https://www.kalcounty.com/hcs/eh/hhw/2019%20Don't%20Take.pdf> for more information on what you can recycle.

Adopt a Fire Hydrant

In the event of a fire emergency, could firefighters find the hydrant near your home? We encourage residents to "adopt a fire hydrant" near their home and keep snow shoveled away and vegetation trimmed back. This will ensure hydrants are visible and will greatly speed the response time in case of an emergency. Time spent by firefighters searching for and clearing hydrants buried in drifts or plowed snow is precious time lost in saving a victim's life or fighting a spreading fire. At minimum, fire hydrants need to have enough snow or vegetation cleared away to be visible from the street. The best option is to clear a 3 foot circle around the fire hydrant so firefighters have complete access in an emergency. In addition don't forget to keep hydrants and fire lanes clear of vehicles at all times. If you believe there is an issue with a fire hydrant needing repair or attention please feel free to contact Fire Marshal Todd Kowalski at 269-381-8080.

Winter Tips from the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County

- Keep snow from being pushed into your driveway by shoveling your driveway in the direction of traffic and keeping an area before the end of your driveway clear so snow being pushed by the plow will fill that space instead of your driveway.
- Don't assume snow plows can see you, they have a limited field of vision and never pass on the right. Plows push snow and spread sand to the right.
- Remember that the Road Commission is responsible for 1,267 miles of roadway in Kalamazoo County. Their order of priority is: designated snow route roads, balance of primary road, through local roads then subdivision or plat streets.
- Don't push or deposit snow, ice or slush onto or across a roadway in a way that obstructs the vision of drivers.

In Michigan the county road commissions and townships share transportation-related responsibilities. Road commissions are responsible for maintenance and construction of local roads, while townships are responsible for non-transportation uses of road rights of way and law enforcement. This is why when you call the Township with a plowing, pot hole or road drainage issue, all of which are roadway maintenance responsibilities, you will be referred to the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County. You can report issues such as damaged road signs on their [website](#) or call (269) 381-3171.

Your Community

Westwood Neighborhood Association (WNA)

WNA is currently working with a volunteer group who wishes to help Westwood residents who are experiencing difficulty with their yard maintenance and might need help with a spring or fall yard clean-up. The Association is also asking you to send us the address of any of your neighbors who you believe do not have smart phones or internet access. The Association will do the rest to see if we can keep them in the loop of the happenings in Westwood. Please send any information regarding either project to us at: wnakzoo@aol.com. In addition WNA is distributing magnets to help us remember to "See Something – Say Something" with the non-emergency phone number for police. We all need to work together to keep crime in check.

If you are interested in Westwood shirts visit: <https://www.purekalamazoo.com/westwood> Shirts are printed each month. We will be adding sweatshirts, soon.

The Neighborhood Association meets at 7 pm on the third Wednesday of each month at the Westwood Fire Station on Nichols Road. Hope to see you there! You can visit us on Face Book or at www.westwoodkzoo.com

Eastwood Neighborhood Association

The Neighborhood Association meets at 7 pm on the second Tuesday of each month in the Community Room of the Eastwood Fire Station, 1211 Woodrow Dr.

Prepare Now For Winter Storms and Spring Flooding

If you weren't around in 1978 you may not realize how isolating a snow storm can be. It helps to get to know your neighbors ahead of time so you know who might be vulnerable and can offer them help or inform authorities if you think they're having problems. Be sure you have a way to receive emergency warnings. Make sure you have back up batteries or chargers so you don't lose contact. Tune in to a station that gives local news and alerts. Help make sure storm drains in your area are kept clear before the snow hits so when the snow melts the water doesn't back up.

Keep a supply of food and water on hand. Be prepared, don't think it couldn't happen here. You can go to <https://www.ready.gov/> for more information on how to prepare for a variety of emergencies.

If you are contacted and told to evacuate by emergency personnel please follow their instructions. They will be happy to provide official identification.



Churches and Other Houses of Worship Leading the Way

Many religious institutions are taking the lead on addressing climate change due to their commitment to stewarding the planet and because it can actually free up money for ministries. Michigan Interfaith Power and Light www.miipl.org has information to help you get started with two programs developed in conjunction Consumers Energy. [Light the Way](#) includes an energy analysis of your House of Worship facilities. You can receive free LED exit signs and other energy saving devices and come away with a plan for further improvements and rebates that can save hundreds of dollars on utilities. With [House of Worship Rewards](#) your congregation can earn up to \$5,000 by holding an energy efficiency workshop and scheduling congregants and friends for free home energy analysis.

Free Home Energy Analysis

If you aren't a member of a house of worship that is participating in a rewards program but want to be proactive about climate change and reduce your home energy costs you can schedule a walk-through of your home by a trained energy analyst on your own. The analysis can include free LED lights, a programmable thermostat, and faucet aerators that could save you up to \$150 a year. Learn more by calling Consumers Energy at 888-316-8014 or go to <https://www.consumersenergy.com/residential/save-money-and-energy> You'll find lots of ways that you can save money and energy while making your home or business a nicer place to be.

Communications from the Office

Clerk's Department – Election News

Absentee Voting -Thanks to passage of proposal 13-3 in Michigan, all eligible and registered voters in Michigan may now request an absent voter ballot without providing a reason. You can request an absentee ballot for any election or request to be put on a Permanent Absent Voter List. Voters on this list will automatically receive an application to vote absentee for each election held in Kalamazoo Township. Voters must complete, sign, and return the application for every election in order for the absent voter ballot to be sent. The application must be received before a ballot can be mailed.

Precinct Consolidation - We have made some changes to the precincts in Kalamazoo Township. The changes include eliminating precinct locations of Hillside Junior High School, Westland Meadows Community, West Main School and Northeastern Elementary School; adding new precinct locations: Westwood United Methodist Church (538 Nichols Road), Agape Christian Church (609 Cherokee Street), and Eastwood Library (1112 Gayle Avenue). There will also be changes to precinct numbers. All voters will receive a new Voter ID card which will include the new precinct information. You can find the list of precincts and a link to the new precinct map on the [Clerk's page](#) on our website.

From the Treasurer's Office

Winter taxes are mailed by December 1 and due in the office in the drop box, online, through mail or in person on February 14th. Note, we do not accept postmarks. Beginning September 17th 1% interest per month will be charged on unpaid taxes.

From the Planning and Zoning Department – Warning On Lot Acquisitions

Several property owners have been surprised by a provision of the Kalamazoo Township zoning ordinance regarding nonconforming lots. Back in the last century, the Planning Commission set the minimum lot size for residential lots at 13,200 square feet and minimum width at 80 feet. Very few of the pre-1950 plats have lots this large. Prior to 2016, it was possible to have two adjacent small lots side by side and still be able to build a house on each. This changed with the new zoning ordinance. Now, even if you have separate property tax numbers on each lot, so long as any land you sell off does not have 80 feet of width and 13,200 square feet of area, the land will be in violation of the zoning ordinance and neither property can obtain a building permit.

The Planning Commission has decided to take up this issue at the January 2, 2020 meeting but it will take several months to decide on and adopt a solution, if one can be reached. If you have any thoughts on this matter you are welcome to attend any Planning Commission meeting (first Thursday of each month) or send a letter to the Township Hall or e-mail the Zoning Administrator planner@ktwp.org.

Recognition and Thanks

Boards and Commissions

We want to thank Henry Dingemans for 10 years of service to the Township on the Planning Commission. Henry brought expertise and professionalism to the position and graciously took on leadership roles. Thank you Henry. The Township is currently looking for Mr. Dingemans' replacement on the board. If you would like to learn more about the boards and commissions please go to our website for descriptions of the duties. You can download an application to serve on a board and send it to the Township c/o Supervisor Martin.

Dispose of Drugs Safely



Properly disposing of unused and unwanted medications helps to protect the environment. It also helps to protect our community against prescription abuse, addiction and accidental or intentional overdose. Red Med Box is an easy and secure way to dispose of your unused or expired medication. There is a Red Med Box located in the entryway to the Police Department on the Mt. Olivet side of the Kalamazoo Township Hall. It is available for you to drop off your expired and unused medications from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

An advertisement for a "Clean Out..." event. It features a collage of household hazardous waste items like Westone, Prestone, and various cleaning products. Text includes "HOME & AUTO CLEANERS & CHEMICALS", "ELECTRONICS • BATTERIES", "FLUORESCENT & LED BULBS", and "household hazardous WASTE". Contact information: 373-5211 • kalamcounty.com/hhw, hhwcenter@kalamcounty.com, 1301 Lamont Ave. • Next to Fairgrounds. Hours: Tues. & Fri. 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. • Wed. 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. • 2nd Sat. 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. (weather day 1st Sat. only).

Meeting Dates and Times

Board of Trustees - 2nd & 4th Mondays of every month at 7:30 p.m. (unless otherwise noted).

Planning Commission - first Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Zoning Board of Appeals - third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

All meetings are at the Township Administrative Offices at 1720 Riverview Drive. Check website for schedule changes.

Watch Board Meetings from Home

Board meetings are broadcast live on Charter Communications channel 190 and AT&T U-verse channel 99: Check the PMN website for replay days and times. Meetings are also online at <http://publicmedianet.org/>.

Upcoming Township Office Closures

Martin Luther King Jr. Day, January 20, 2020

Memorial Day, May 25, 2020

Presidents' Day, February 17, 2020

Independence Day observed, July 3, 2020

The mission of Kalamazoo Township is to provide government services that promote a safe, healthy, accessible, and economically viable community to live, work, learn, and play.