Independence Township Times
OAKLAND COUNTY

FROM THE DESK OF **Supervisor, Chuck Phyle II**

Independence Township Updates

As we welcome the warmer summer months, Independence Township continues to focus on delivering quality services, keeping the community safe, and being good stewards of taxpayer dollars.

At the May 20 Board of Trustees meeting, the Township approved a new agreement to provide assessing services for Springfield Township. This partnership is a win-win — helping both communities improve efficiency and maintain high standards in property assessment. It's another great example of how working together with our neighbors can benefit everyone involved.

The Board also approved a change to the summer meeting schedule. Starting in June, the Board of Trustees will meet once a month instead of twice. Things tend to slow down a bit during the summer months, and this adjustment helps us keep things running smoothly while still making sure all decisions are made transparently and in the public eye. The meeting dates are June 24, July 22, and August 19.

This month also brings a chance to recognize some truly outstanding members of our public safety team. Firefighter/Paramedic Ron Bray has been named Firefighter of the Year by the Clarkston Area Optimist Club. Ron is the kind of person who quietly makes a big difference — whether it's keeping the stations in top shape, updating uniforms, or helping design the department's first true command vehicle. He's a veteran, a team player, and a true leader. This honor is well deserved, and we're proud to have him on the Township team.

Deputy Taliercio from the Independence Township Substation of the Oakland County Sheriff's Office was also recognized by the Optimist Club, receiving the Law Enforcement Officer of the Year award. His professionalism, dedication, and compassion make a real impact every day. Deputy Taliercio represents our community with integrity, and we're grateful for the work he does to keep Independence Township safe.

In other good news, the Township has identified an additional $100,000 in budget savings this year. Thanks to smart planning and more efficient staffing, we're able to lower costs while still delivering the high level of service residents expect. Every dollar saved helps ensure a stronger future for our community.

Finally, we're also excited to share that the Maybee Road Water Main Replacement project has been selected by Representative Lisa McClain as one of her top 15 submissions for possible funding in the FY2026 Interior appropriations bill, with a $4,525,000 grant request. I recently met with Rep. McClain to discuss the importance of this project for our community, and I want to thank our Director of the Department of Public Works, David McKee, for completing the application. While this is a great first step, the project must still go through several stages, including review by the House Appropriations Committee, passage by Congress, and a final signature from the President. We're grateful for Rep. McClain's support and will continue advocating for this critical infrastructure investment in Independence Township.

Each of these updates—whether it's partnering with other townships, celebrating our public safety heroes, or finding ways to save money—reflects Independence Township's commitment to doing what's best for the community.

— Chuck Phyle II, Township Supervisor



Summer Is Here, Common Code Enforcement Questions Answered

When the snow melts and the weather gets warmer, Code Enforcement activity in the Township picks up steam. Last year, Code Enforcement handled 492 cases and picked up over 3,200 signs at street corners throughout the year. We wanted to provide a Frequently Asked Questions to some common Code Enforcement complaints we receive:

1. Parking on the front lawn. It is a violation of the Zoning Ordinance to park on the front lawn. Vehicles must be parked in the driveway. However, cars can be parked elsewhere on the property behind the front of the home.

2. Parking of Recreational Vehicles. The Zoning Ordinance provides a broad definition for a "recreational vehicle". It covers trailers, work trailers, boats, jet skis, snowmobiles, campers, motorhomes, etc. Residential properties are not permitted to have more than two recreational vehicles on a property. Additionally, they cannot be parked on the front lawn. However, they may be parked on the side or rear of the home or in the driveway, provided you are not creating a parking issue in the driveway or blocking a sidewalk.

3. Noxious Weeds. Even though it sounds like this refers to weeds in a garden bed, this actually can be anything over eight inches. Typically, this is long grass because people move out of homes, or it occurs on small vacant lots in new subdivisions where there has not been a home constructed yet.



Brian Oppmann
PLANNING & ZONING DIRECTOR

4. Unlicensed/ Inoperable Vehicle. The Township gets many complaints about inoperable/unlicensed vehicles. The Zoning Ordinance states that a vehicle must be properly licensed and operable. Otherwise, it must be stored in an enclosed building, such as a garage or an accessory structure. Inoperable vehicles include flat tires, visibly damaged due to an accident, no license plate, expired license plate stickers, or have not moved in six months (180 days).

5. Garbage/Debris. The Township has adopted the International Property Maintenance Code by reference, which was developed by the International Code Council. The Property Maintenance Code has many standards for garbage and debris on properties. All garbage must be stored in a container on the property. Additionally, building materials and other similar items cannot be stored outside unless they are being used for an active construction project.

6. Home/Property Maintenance. The International Property Maintenance Code also has provisions for general home and property maintenance. Homes must be kept in good condition and not have areas to allow animals to enter the home. Homes must be secured from outside elements. Properties must also be maintained. For example, fences cannot be falling down. This does not apply to trees and shrubs. The Township does not have a tree ordinance.

To access the application, click Reference Center & Interactive Maps, from the Township's website. Next, click Code Enforcement Reporter in the interactive map gallery. Once in the map, residents can login as a guest or with their social media credentials. Once in the application, residents can select the type of complaint, then click on "Submit a Complaint" and enter details about the complaint, upload photos and either select a parcel on the map or provide the address. Once reported, the Planning Department receives the complaint immediately and will investigate the complaint. Additionally, the status of the complaint can be viewed on the Code Enforcement Hub website or in the application with notes from the Planning Department on the progress of the investigation. Finally, if the complainant provides an email address, status notifications will be sent with a short customer experience survey once a complaint is closed. The surveys help us gauge our response time and customer service.

Since 2018, Independence Township has offered an online Code Enforcement Reporter to help residents easily file non-emergency complaints—such as tall grass, inoperable vehicles, or blight—right from their smartphone, tablet, or computer. To date, over 2,500 complaints have been submitted through the platform. Residents can also visit the **Code Enforcement Hub** to track complaint status, view statistics, and provide feedback on service. To file a complaint, visit the **Reference Center & Interactive Maps** on the Township website, then select **Code Enforcement Reporter**. You can log in as a guest or with social media, choose your complaint type, upload photos, and enter a location. The Planning Department receives reports immediately and updates the case status as it progresses. If you provide an email, you'll receive notifications and a short satisfaction survey once the case is closed. **Scan the QR code** to quickly access the Code Enforcement Problem Center and get started!

Stay Safe, Stay Smart: Fire Prevention Tips for Every Home

Did you know that most house fires can be prevented with just a little extra awareness and preparation? As your local fire department, we're committed to not only fighting fires—but also helping you avoid them in the first place. Here are some simple steps every household can take to stay safe all year long.



Dave Pichè
FIRE CHIEF

1. Check Your Smoke Alarms

Smoke alarms are your first line of defense. Make sure you:

- Have smoke alarms on every level of your home, especially near bedrooms.
- Test them monthly.
- Change the batteries at least once a year (a good habit during Daylight Saving Time).
- Replace the whole unit every 10 years.

2. Practice Safe Cooking

The kitchen is the leading cause of home fires.

- Never leave cooking unattended.
- Keep flammable items like towels and paper away from the stovetop.
- Turn pot handles inward so they don't get knocked over.
- In case of a grease fire, never use water—cover the pan with a lid and turn off the heat.

3. Be Cautious with Heaters

As seasons change, space heaters come out—but they can be dangerous.

- Keep heaters at least 3 feet away from anything flammable.
- Never leave them on when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- Make sure they're plugged directly into a wall outlet (not a power strip).

4. Mind Those Candles

Candles can set the mood, but they can also set fires.

- Never leave a candle burning when you leave the room.
- Use sturdy holders and keep them away from anything that could catch fire.
- Better yet, consider battery-operated LED candles for that cozy glow.

5. Plan and Practice Your Escape

In the event of a fire, every second counts.

- Make a home escape plan with at least two ways out of every room.
- Practice it with everyone in your home—day and night.
- Designate a safe meeting place outside of your home.

6. Keep It Clean

Clutter can feed a fire and block your escape.

- Keep your home tidy, especially around heat sources.
- Don't overload electrical outlets or power strips.
- Regularly clean dryer lint filters and vents.

7. WHEN IN DOUBT, CALL US OUT!!

If you smell smoke or see something suspicious, don't wait, call 911 right away. We'd rather check things out and find nothing than arrive too late.

Fire prevention is a community effort, and we're proud to be part of this community. If you'd like a free home safety inspection or want more tips, feel free to contact us at 248-625-5304 to schedule an appointment.

Let's work together to keep our homes and families safe. One smart step today can prevent a tragedy tomorrow.

Stay safe,
Independence Fire Department

FROM THE DESK OF
Cari J. Neubeck, Clerk

SPREAD THE WORD! PRECINCT CONSOLIDATIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE

Ahead of the 2026 election cycle, Independence Township made multiple changes to voting precincts and polling locations, reducing the number of precincts from 13 to 8 sites. These changes were made possible by Public Act 227 of 2023, which allows jurisdictions to increase the number of voters per precinct due to the expansion of Early

Voting and Permanent Absentee Voting. The Township will realize significant cost savings because of these changes.

Most township voters are impacted. The April edition of the Township Times highlighted the changes and featured a map outlining the new precinct boundaries. You can view the updated map and full details on the Clerk's election page at indtwp.com

In early May, all voting households received a postcard of the upcoming changes.

Then, the week of May 19th new voter information cards were mailed to all registered voters. The new cards indicate the voting districts, the precinct number, and the polling location. Please discard your old voter information card and keep the new one for reference.

If you receive a voter information card for an individual no longer living at your address, please mark it as "Return to Sender (RTS) - voter does not live here" and return it via mail or drop off at the Township Clerk's office. If you know the person's new address, sharing that with us may help us update their registration. Returned voter identification cards help us flag outdated records in the Qualified Voter File, which then require verification before the individual can vote again.

Voter information cards provide voters with their voting details whether you are a permanent absentee voter, early voter or Election Day voter and are not required to be presented when voting.

Solicitors in the Township

Many companies, such as lawn/home improvement/critter control, recruit solicitors to market their businesses during the Spring – Summer months. Each person that canvasses in Independence Township is required to register with the Clerk's Office.

Any solicitor that comes to your door must clearly display proper photo ID issued by the Clerk's Office also known as a Solicitor Certificate of Registration. Solicitor Certificate of Registrations are issued for 60-day periods. Exception: Political, charitable, and religious groups who are not attempting to sell a product or service are exempt from obtaining a permit.

As part of the ordinance, solicitors must abide by any "No Soliciting" signs that may be posted on residents property or at the entrance of subdivisions. If a solicitor does not comply, you may contact the Sheriff's office and report the incident at the non- emergency line: 248-620-4968.

All residents may go to the Clerk's page on the township website at *www.indtwp.com/departments/clerk* or scan the QR code to view the active list of solicitors:

The following citizen organization does not require registration and has provided notice that they will be in our community:

— Seventh-day Adventist Church will be sending student literature evangelists door to door from June 1 – August 22, 2025. They will be distributing free religious literature, praying with community members, enrolling interested individuals in bible studies, and seeking donation to support the program.

FROM THE DESK OF
Paul A. Brown CPA, Treasurer

Understanding your 2025 Summer Tax Statements

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF INDEPENDENCE

Summer Tax Bill Explained
What does it all mean?

% DECLARED AS P.R.E

This field indicates whether you declared this property as your principal residence and significantly impacts your taxes. If the home is your primary residence and this field is not 100%, contact the Assessors office at the Township to discuss. 248-625-8114

STATE EQUALIZED VALUE

This amount should be approximately 50% of the current market value of your home.

TAXABLE VALUE

This amount will be less than or equal to the State Equalized Value. State law caps how quickly taxable value can increase each year. If you've owned your home a long time, there can be a big gap between these 2 numbers. Your taxes are based on the Taxable Value.

TAX DESCRIPTION

TAX DESCRIPTION - This field indicates WHO is taxing you.
CLK SCH Debt - Clarkston School District Voted Millage
State Educ Tax - Levied by the State, these funds are distributed to to public Schools across the state.
Oak Com Coll Vot - Oakland Community College Voted Millage
Oak Int Sch Vot/All - Oakland Intermidiate School Districts This organization provides services for all public schools in Oakland County
County Operating - This Millage funds Oakland County operations.

RATE PER $1,000

Tax is calculated by dividing your taxable value by 1000 and multipling the result by the millage rate listed. Try calculating yourself.

*P.R.E TAX BASE	PARCEL I.D NUMBER / SCHOOL DIST.		
185,150			63190
% DECLARED AS P.R.E	*NON-P.R.E TAX BASE	TAXABLE VALUE	STATE EQUALIZED VALUE
100%	0	185,150	228,600

TAX DESCRIPTION	RATE PER $1,000	AMOUNT
CLARKSTON COMM SCH DIST		
CLK SCH DEBT	7.0000	1,296.05
CLK SCH OPER	18.0000	EXEMPT
STATE EDUC TAX	6.0000	1,110.90
OAK COM COLL VOT	1.4891	275.70
OAK INT SCH VOT	2.9777	551.32
OAK INT SCH ALL	0.1881	34.82
COUNTY OPERATING	3.9686	734.78

TOTAL	PENALITY/ INTEREST	TOTAL PAID	BALANCE
4,003.57			4,003.57

Still looking for answers? I'm happy to help. Give me a call to discuss your tax bill and we can review it together. 248-922-6209

Summer tax bills will be mailed out by the end of the month. We are providing the example above, so you'll have a reference point when reviewing your bill. We hope the information is helpful. If you have additional questions, we are available to review your tax bills with you. Please give us a call at 248-625-5115.



Is your water well?

If you have a private well, you should understand the importance of having your well tested. Knowing the water quality of your well not only informs you of potential problems but also gives you assurance that the water you drink, bathe and cook in is healthy and safe.

To learn more and find out how to have your well tested, please contact The Independence Twp Department of Public Works at:

248-625-8222

M-Thu 7am to 5:30pm

Water is essential for life!



David McKee
DIRECTOR OF DPW

Honoring Freedom, Celebrating Community

We invite you to join us on **Saturday, June 28** at Clintonwood Park for our community's biggest celebration of the year- Independence Fest! Enjoy a full day of family fun with live music, food, kid's activities, vendors, our annual Veterans Celebration, and more! And you won't want to miss the spectacular fireworks show at 10PM that is sure to light up the sky in true red, white, and blue. A time to connect with neighbors, friends, and family, this community tradition is a must; after all we are Independence Township!

Visit *www.indtwp.com* for full event details, including the schedule of events and parking information.



Lisa Christensen
DIRECTOR OF PRS