

Rockaway Township Report



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Mayor's Corner



Congratulations to all the Rockaway Township students who have graduated. Whether you are off to Morris Hills or Morris Knolls High School or college in the fall, I wish you a safe and enjoyable summer with your family and friends. There are many exciting events and projects going on within the Township this time of year, and I trust you find this issue of the Township newsletter helpful and informative.

Rockaway Township aggressively pursues grant opportunities to offset the cost of large capital

projects, and the Township has been very successful in securing grants from the New Jersey Department of Transportation's (NJDOT) Local Aid program. The Township just completed a curb, driveway apron and resurfacing on Daniel Street, having received a \$205,000 grant from the NJDOT.

In addition to State Department of Transportation funds, the Township receives money from the Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP) Clean Communities program. The monies from the Clean Communities program are used for programs targeted at changing attitudes that cause littering, and supporting volunteer efforts to clean up trash throughout our community. Rockaway Township was awarded more than \$55,000 by the NJDEP this year to support these efforts.

Rockaway Township also received \$550,000 to replenish its Green Acres Planning Incentive Grant for the acquisition of the Beaver Pond I & II projects. The Township wrote a letter to the NJDEP's Green Acres program requesting \$600,000 in July 2014. Both projects combined total 25 acres.

The Township Council is currently considering changes to the Regional Business District, which would allow for outdoor dining at the Rockaway Townsquare Mall. The changes to these zoning regulations will allow for a pedestrian and community destination. The addition of outdoor dining would create a livelier and more active retail center for residents and visitors to the Townsquare Mall.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the Township's newsletter. Don't forget to like us on Facebook and visit www.rockawaytownship.org for Township news and events.

Open House at Ford-Faesch on July 4 & 5

The Rockaway Township Historical Society invites residents to visit the Ford-Faesch Ironmaster House this Independence Day weekend. Historical Society members in Revolutionary War period attire will offer insight into the history of the property, its owners and Rockaway Township.

Come enjoy self-guided tours, historical displays and more! Admission to the public is free and open house hours are 11:00am – 2:00pm on July 4 and 5. The Ford-Faesch Ironmaster House is located at 629 Mount Hope Road, Rockaway Township.

For more information and updates, email rockawayhistory@verizon.net.



Tips for a Healthier Summer



Enjoy Summer by Avoiding Pests

With soaring summer heat comes increased pest activity in and around the Township. The Rockaway Township Division of Health wishes to remind residents that pests like ticks and mosquitoes can cause more than an itchy bite. In limited cases, bites may cause Lyme disease or West Nile virus, respectively.

You can help reduce risk to your family and other residents with some simple property maintenance measures. Residents are reminded to remove standing water, trim vegetation and keep grounds free of food, which may attract unwanted animals. The Division of Health thanks you for your part in preventing undesirable insect and rodent activity. For more information on pests and health, visit the Division of Health or call 973-983-2848.



Healthy Summer Sun

Everyone enjoys a little time in the sun. Soaking up some warm summer rays can make us feel good and can provide us with a bit of a tan. It is important to remember, however, that excessive sun exposure has its drawbacks, as well, including non-melanoma skin cancers. In fact, non-melanoma skin cancers are the most common form of cancer in the United States.

We can all help control our risk of skin cancer by applying appropriate sunscreen when spending time outdoors in warm weather months. We can also prevent increased risk by detecting early signs of skin abnormalities. To this end, the Rockaway Township Division of Health will be holding a free Skin Cancer Screening this summer. For more information, check the Township website in the coming weeks.

Safe Pools and Spas

Residents with pools or spas are reminded that by asking and answering some critical questions, you can gauge the effectiveness of your water safety measures, and determine what steps need to be taken to protect children from drowning and submersion injuries:

- Is there a fence around the perimeter of your pool or spa?
- Are there self-closing and self-latching gates?
- Are there door, gate or pool alarms in use?
- Does your pool have anti-entrapment drain covers that are compliant with the P&SS Act?
- Are all pool and spa covers in working order?
- Has someone in the family received training in CPR, first aid and emergency response?
- Has everyone learned to swim?

Remember to like Rockaway Township on Facebook! You will find regular announcements, news, photos and more!

Batter Up! History of Baseball in the Township

The 'when and where' regarding the origin of the game of baseball' is historically debatable. Likewise, it is impossible to pin down precisely when and where the first ball was pitched in Rockaway Township.

Baseball gained popularity amongst and through Civil War soldiers, who played the game during downtime, and is thought to have been introduced to various communities after their homecoming in 1865. The earliest reference to an organized game in Rockaway Township was on October 8, 1871, when the Mount Hope Hopefuls played the Morris Club of Morristown. Five (5) innings were completed and Morristown won 34-22.

The sport provided natural recreation for men in the iron industry, who made a living using their brawn. Virtually every mining community formed teams. 1870s matchups included contests between the Hibernia Stars, the Mount Pleasant Bruisers, the Teabo Jolly Rogers and the Mount Hope Diamond Dusters. Games expanded out to other Morris County teams, with occasional matches against Newark, Hoboken and New

York clubs. Games could be colorful in the "rough miners" era. An infamous game played in the late 1800s ended abruptly when a Mount Hope team disputed a call in the sixth inning, punched the umpire, stole the opposing team's baseball and walked off the field.

Through periodic mine closings, the Great Depression and wars...and from membership in the 1930s Twilight League to the dedicated Rockaway Township Recreation Department's baseball program, our residents continue to play ball!



What's Happening

GAZEBO CONCERT SERIES

Rockaway Township residents are reminded to come out and enjoy the Annual Summer Concert Series, held every Sunday afternoon from 3:00pm - 5:00pm at the Parks Lake Gazebo on Mt. Hope Road. *In the event of inclement weather, the concerts will be held at the Rockaway Townsquare Mall (Macy's Lower Level).*

JULY

- 5th Thunder Hill - Country Western
- 12th Jersey Sound - Music for Dancing
- 19th Last Kall - Dance and Party Music
- 26th Carnaby Street - 60s Magical Music

AUGUST

- 2nd Tequila Rose - Country
- 9th Blue Skies - Soft Jazz
- 16th Desire - Doo Wop
- 23rd Cameos - Back by Popular Demand
- 30th Joan Oakes - Contemporary Music

UPCOMING TOWNSHIP PROGRAMS

JULY

- 8th Blood pressure screening
Rockaway Township Municipal Building
11:00am - 11:30am
- 9th Child health clinic*
Hibernia Health Center, 419 Green Pond Road
9:30am - 10:30am
- 23th Adult immunization clinic*
Hibernia Health Center, 419 Green Pond Road
4:00pm - 5:00pm

AUGUST

- 12th Blood pressure screening
Rockaway Township Municipal Building
11:00am - 11:30am

SEPTEMBER

- 9th Blood pressure screening
Rockaway Township Municipal Building
11:00am - 11:30am
- September is Hunger Awareness Month!
Please look for food donation bins at the Rockaway Township Municipal Building, Public Library and schools throughout the month of September.

* Pre-registration required for some Township events. Please call the appropriate department for information.

Police Department Update

On June 2 at approximately 8:00pm, Rockaway Township Police Officers Hatzimihalis and Caron responded to a 911 call for an unresponsive male at the Rustic Ridge Apartments. Upon arrival, Officer Hatzimihalis found a 27 year old male with no pulse or breath and suspected a possible drug overdose.

Two sprays of naloxone, used to counter the effects of opioids, were administered to each of the male's nostrils, and within one to three minutes, the individual regained consciousness. Care was then administered by ambulance personnel, who brought the individual to a local hospital. Congratulations and kudos to Officers Hatzimihalis and Caron for their quick, life-saving efforts!

Tax Collector's Notes

The 2014 Senior Freeze (property tax reimbursement) filing deadline has been extended from June 1, 2015 to October 15, 2015. If you require assistance to determine eligibility and/or to check status on filed applications, call the State's hotline at (1-800-882-6597).

2015 Sewer Maintenance Bills were mailed on May 26, 2015, and interest-free payments were due by June 26, 2015. To submit your payment online, please visit www.rockawaytownship.org.

2015 Property Tax Bills are scheduled to be mailed in mid-July this year. Please visit the Township website for updates.

Summer Yoga for Adults

The Rockaway Township Municipal Alliance Committee is pleased to announce Summer Yoga for Adults. This new program will run on Thursdays from July 9 through September 3 at the Municipal Building meeting room. Yoga combines physical exercise with breathing techniques to strengthen the muscles, improve balance and reduce stress. All classes are led by a certified instructor, and equipment is provided. Summer Yoga for Adults costs \$15.00 per attendee. Registration is limited to the first 25 attendees, so do not delay! Please contact the Rockaway Township Division of Health at (973) 983-2841.



The new Rockaway Township Dial-a-Ride bus is in circulation!

The effects of pollution



Polluted stormwater runoff can have many adverse effects on plants, fish, animals, and people.

- ◆ Sediment can cloud the water and make it difficult or impossible for aquatic plants to grow. Sediment also can destroy aquatic habitats.
- ◆ Excess nutrients can cause algae blooms. When algae die, they sink to the bottom and decompose in a process that removes oxygen from the water. Fish and other aquatic organisms can't exist in water with low dissolved oxygen levels.
- ◆ Bacteria and other pathogens can wash into swimming areas and create health hazards, often making beach closures necessary.
- ◆ Debris—plastic bags, six-pack rings, bottles, and cigarette butts—washed into waterbodies can choke, suffocate, or disable aquatic life like ducks, fish, turtles, and birds.
- ◆ Household hazardous wastes like insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, used motor oil, and other auto fluids can poison aquatic life. Land animals and people can become sick or die from eating diseased fish and shellfish or ingesting polluted water.



- ◆ Polluted stormwater often affects drinking water sources. This, in turn, can affect human health and increase drinking water treatment costs.



What is stormwater runoff?



Stormwater runoff occurs when precipitation from rain or snowmelt flows over the ground. Impervious surfaces like driveways, sidewalks, and streets prevent stormwater from naturally soaking into the ground.

Why is stormwater runoff a problem?

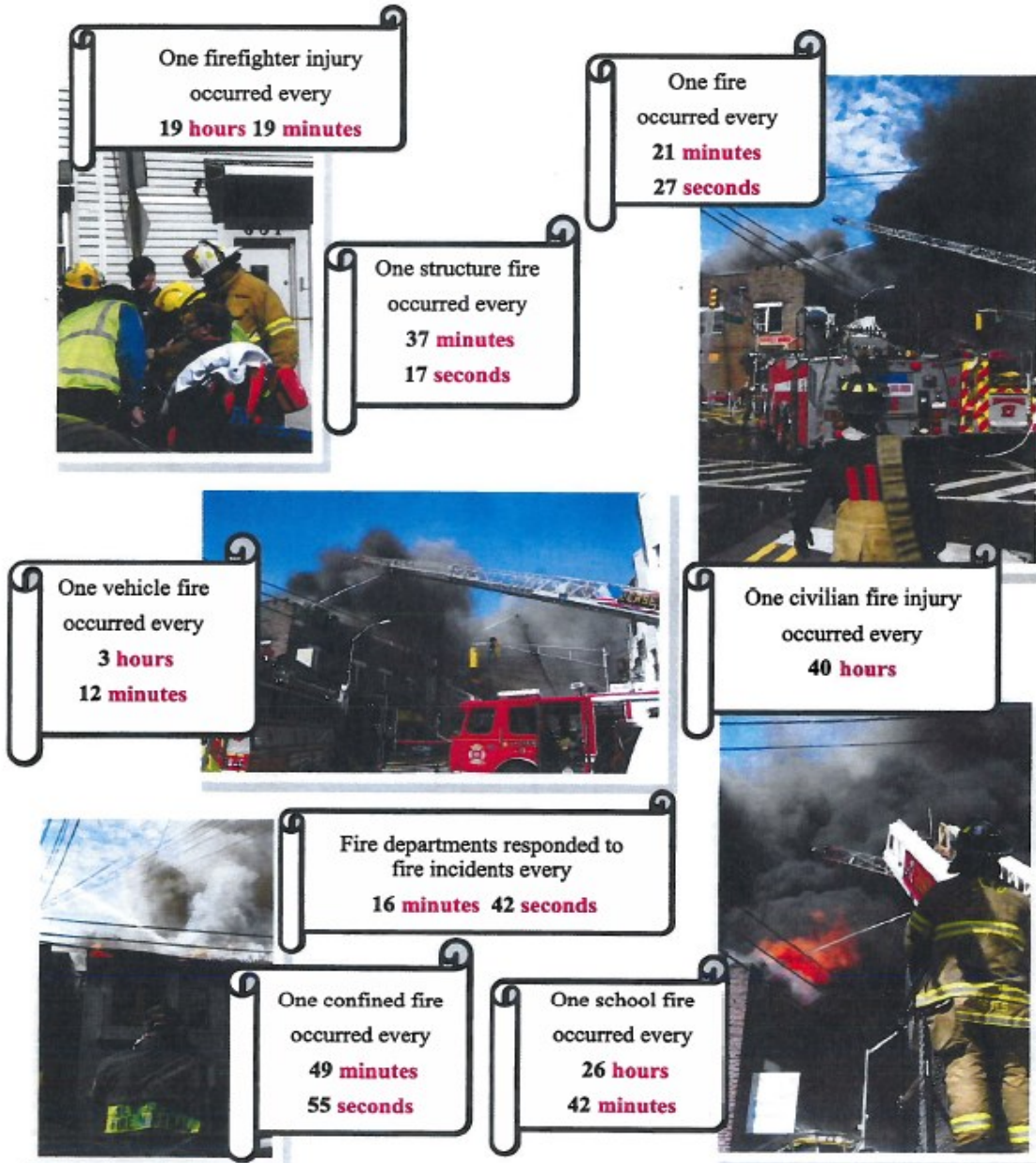


Stormwater can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt, and other pollutants and flow into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river, wetland, or coastal water. Anything that enters a storm sewer system is discharged untreated into the waterbodies we use for swimming, fishing, and providing drinking water.

“The Rockaway Township Fire Department participates in NFIRS—National Fire Incident Reporting System. This is part of the U.S. Fire Administration, an entity of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency. Records for New Jersey are compiled and published by the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety. The most recent stats available are for 2013”

From the Office of the Rockaway Township Fire Marshall

2013 FIRE CLOCK



Picture courtesy of Ron Jeffers: Harrison, NJ, March 10, 2013

Have questions? Call Fire Prevention at 973-983-2865 or
Email Fire Marshall Craig Babcock at: cbabcock@rockawaytownship.org

www.state.nj.us/dca/divisions/dfs

Rockaway Township Gypsy Moth Update

Some Rockaway Township residents, particularly those in Green Pond, Marcella and Upper Hibernia, have become well acquainted with the destructive power of the gypsy moth caterpillar, having observed a significant degree of defoliation from gypsy moth activity this year. Historically, gypsy moth caterpillars have caused varying amounts of defoliation in New Jersey since 1966. Three major population cycles have occurred – one in 1972 when 256,000 acres were defoliated, another in 1981 when 798,000 acres were defoliated, and another in 1990 when 431,000 acres were defoliated.

The Council President and Health Officer are working hard to address residents' concerns and to assure that the State – which bears responsibility for identification and treatment of gypsy moth infestation – addresses Rockaway Township's concerns moving forward. Participation in New Jersey's gypsy moth spraying program is completely voluntary, and Rockaway Township has vied for the state's assessment of the town's gypsy moth burden each of the last several years. The New Jersey Department of Agriculture (DOA) annually conducts a summer aerial defoliation survey, and contacts municipalities in writing the following fall to ask if they wish to have a gypsy moth egg mass count. This is done to determine if the infestation will continue and what areas qualify for the State's spray program. Rockaway Township has enthusiastically requested the egg mass survey each year it has been offered, but the State determined that based on acreage affected and/or egg masses, the Township had not qualified for the DOA's gypsy moth suppression program and spraying.

The resulting spring gypsy moth population is considerably larger than anticipated by the State. DOA officials, including the director of the gypsy moth abatement program, advised Township representatives that spraying of pesticides was not an option for this year. The DOA leadership is working collaboratively with the Rockaway Township Division of Health to take any steps necessary in preventing a similar invasion of the pests during the next season. This includes detailed mapping and documentation of areas currently affected, early requests for fall 2015 egg mass surveys and a strong appeal for spring 2016 aerial spraying.

It is expected that State inspectors will perform a thorough egg mass survey in Rockaway Township, and that the magnitude of this year's gypsy moth presence will result in treatment with *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt), the DOA's chosen biological insecticide for the spray program. Bt is effective and highly selective for this target species, so it won't adversely affect other beneficial insects like honey bees or aquatic insects. The low toxicity toward non-target organisms, especially in the highly residential areas where gypsy moths are more of a nuisance, makes the biological insecticide more acceptable by the public.

Rockaway Township officials will continue working with the State throughout the summer and fall to assure that the Township receives priority consideration as the State's spring spraying program is planned. The Division of Health appreciates the regular correspondence it has had with residents in identifying and addressing this issue.

If you are planning a move and have large amounts of trash, please schedule a pick-up with the trash hauler you use for weekly collection. Remember: bulk pick-up is for large items, not for moving purposes.

Swim Lessons for Residents

Teaching children to swim and encouraging regular swimming provides significant benefits to their health and safety, and residents are encouraged to join the Rockaway Township Division of Recreation at Mount Hope Pond this summer.

Registration for Mount Hope Pond beach badges and swimming lessons is now open at register.communitypass.net/rockaway. Lessons are held Monday through Thursday during several two week sessions. Classes are 30 minutes in length and cost \$15 per child per session. Schedules are available at the web address noted above or by calling the Division of Recreation at 973-983-2841.



Rockaway Township residents enjoy festivities at the 2015 Memorial Day Parade.

1,000 Seedlings Distributed

In celebration of Arbor Day, the Rockaway Township Division of Recreation helped distribute over 1,000 tree seedlings on April 25. Seedlings were made available through a New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection grant and were provided by the Morris County Soil Conservatory, and were distributed at the Mount Hope and Hibernia Firehouses. Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops from the Rockaway area helped with identification of species, distribution of seedlings, and also kept the trees from drying.

Trees of all ages are available year round at the Morris County Soil Conservatory. The best day to plant a tree was 20 years ago, but the next best day is today.



Happy volunteers help distribute tree seedlings in Rockaway Township on Arbor Day.

Acquiring Public Records

What is a Government Record?

By definition, a government record is any paper, written or printed book, document, drawing, map, plan, photograph, microfilm, data-processed or image-processed document, information stored or maintained electronically or by sound-recording or in a similar device, or any copy thereof, that has been *made, maintained or kept on file*, or that has been received in the course of official business. There are several exemptions under the Open Public Records Act (OPRA) that prohibit certain documents from being released.

How do I Submit an OPRA Request?

A request for access to a government record must be made in writing and hand-delivered, mailed, emailed or otherwise conveyed to the Township Clerk. A records request cannot be made verbally. Requestors must be as specific as possible when requesting records. Requests for information or requests in the form of questions are not valid OPRA requests.

The Open Public Records Act also states that the Township Clerk must permit access to a government record and must provide a copy of the record(s) in the medium requested. A special service charge may be applied if the Township does not maintain the record in the requested format. A request will be fulfilled no later than seven (7) business days after the request is received, provided that the record is currently available and not in storage.

If additional time is required, the Township Clerk will contact the requestor and advise him/her of the extra time needed, and will provide an approximate timeframe when the document will be ready. A document may contain non-disclosable information and that will be *redacted*, which means editing the recording to prevent public viewing of material that lawfully cannot be disclosed. When this is done, the Township Clerk will explain why parts of a record are redacted.

If an OPRA request does not name specifically identifiable records or is overly broad, the Township Clerk may deny access (i.e., 'any and all records pertaining to the construction of the new high school'). The term 'records' does not reasonably identify a specific government record. The Township Clerk is not required to research all files to determine which records, if any, might be responsive to a broad and unclear OPRA request. The Township Clerk may also ask the requestor to clarify his/her request.

The Township Clerk's office responds to approximately 350 OPRA requests per year. If you would like to request a public record, contact the Clerk's office if you have questions regarding the procedure. Transparent government is the goal.

Splitrock Dam Near Completion

The dam restoration project at the Splitrock Reservoir is expected to be completed by mid to late July. Jersey City, which owns the structure, was directed by the NJDEP Bureau of Dam Safety and Flood Control to make certain repairs to the dam infrastructure. The project, which began in the spring of 2014, raises the dam height on both ends to reduce flood hazards, provides critical repairs to the dam structure, itself, and restores the emergency police and fire boat access point. In addition, a new traffic signal will be installed on each side of the dam, improving safety for vehicular traffic across the span.

Splitrock Road has been closed to the public since the beginning of the project and will reopen upon its completion. In related news, the State of New Jersey recently purchased the reservoir from Jersey City, adding significant open space to the existing state-held Wildcat Ridge Wildlife Management Area.



Mayor's Special Recognition

Mayor Michael Dachisen wishes to congratulate the following Township employees and departments:

- Recycling Coordinator Al Knoth for securing Rockaway Township's NJ Recycling Tonnage Grant in the amount of
- The Department of Community Services for enhancing its senior exercise program by offering a summer program for the first time.
- The Division of Health for providing another successful Clean Communities spring cleanup day on April 25, with 38 residents in attendance to make Rockaway glitter.
- The Division of Recreation and the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of the Rockaway area, for distributing over 1,000 tree seedlings on Arbor Day, April 25.
- Community Services Director Joe Fiorilla and staff for writing and receiving a \$550,000 Green Acres Planning Incentive grant.
- James Skutka, for 40 years of exemplary volunteer service in Rockaway Township.
- Sean Kuhn, Patrick Wolf, Nicholas Clegg, John Devries, Matthew Adamson, Andrew Vex, Sean Ponteliona and Forrest Sysniak, for earning the rank of Eagle Scout.
- Brian Coward, Rockaway Township's new Recreation Supervisor
- Township Administration, whose purchasing initiatives have saved Rockaway Township over \$30,000.



Public Works & Recycling

Never miss your recycling or bulk collection day again! Visit the Township website to confirm your waste collection day. You may also sign up for weekly reminders, print a personalized calendar or download dates into your personal electronic calendar. You may now also download our recycling app onto your smartphone!



Scheduled Paving

The Department of Public Works wishes to advise residents that the following streets are scheduled for paving. Notes in parentheses indicate the current status.

- Old Beach Glen Road (complete)
- Crescent Ridge Road (complete)
- Telemark Road
- North Cape Trail
- Troll Lane
- Darlington Drive
- Chandler Terrace
- Lake End Road (complete)
- Jacobs Road (complete)
- Elizabeth Lane (complete)
- Teabo Road (complete)
- Hilltown Road (complete)
- Mineral Springs Road (complete)
- Sunnyhill Road (pending gas line completion)
- Sylvan Way (pending gas line completion)
- North Street (pending gas line completion)
- Jefferson Street (pending gas line completion)
- Berkshire Avenue (pending gas line completion)
- Garrison Avenue (pending gas line completion)

Preventing Pollution

Pollution on our streets, parking lots and lawns – by way of our storm sewer system – may ultimately end up in our drinking water supplies and the recreational waters our families enjoy. Familiar materials like pet waste, fertilizer, pesticides, motor vehicle fluids, paint, yard debris and other hazardous items enter our storm drains. These drains are connected to local bodies of water and the water is not treated.

By sharing responsibility and making small changes in our daily lives, we can keep common pollutants out of storm water, thereby keeping them out of our precious potable and recreational waters. A small measure of prevention and common sense saves communities the high cost of cleaning up water supplies once they're contaminated.

Disposal of Electronics

Residents are reminded that electronics are *not collected or accepted at curbside pick-up*. These items must be brought to one of the Township's two recycling centers. To determine which electronics are recyclable and which may be placed in the trash, go to the Township website, click on the recycling logo and look up the item in the 'Waste Wizard.' You will be advised how to dispose of each item you look up with this unique new feature on our website.

Paint

Rockaway Township Recycling does not accept paint, stain, sealer or solvents. For latex paint *only*, mix the paint with sand or kitty litter and let it air dry with the lid removed until it is solid, and dispose of with regular household garbage. All other listed paints must be brought

to the Mt. Olive Transfer Station, 168 Gold Mine Road, Flanders. The transfer station is open 7:30am – 3:00pm Monday to Friday, and 7:30am – 11am on Saturdays. To make an appointment for disposal, call 973-347-8106.

Grass – Cut it and Leave it

Remember to simply leave your grass clippings on the lawn when you mow. Grass clippings leave a natural and healthy fertilizer for a growing lawn. Try mulching as well. A mulching blade chops up grass clippings into fine pieces, which slip easily into the soil. These tips will also save money. You won't have to invest in fertilizer, since clippings left on the lawn recycle nutrients like nitrogen back into the soil. Clippings do not create thatch in the lawn. Thatch is formed from the accumulation of dead grass roots and stems, and the more you fertilize and water your lawn, the faster thatch accumulates.

Place grass for disposal in a reusable trash container labeled *grass*. It is collected weekly on the corresponding day of your recycling collection. Do not mix grass clippings with brush or leaves, as it will not be collected. Some leaf matter is expected but it must be segregated from the bulk of your leaf collection.

Leaf and Brush

Rockaway Township's McVeigh Recycling Center accepts leaves, as well as brush up to four inches in diameter. No grass is accepted. *No landscapers are permitted to use the recycling drop-off for brush, grass or leaves.* Brush and leaves* are collected curbside weekly on the corresponding day of your recycling collection. Brush must be no more than six inches in diameter, and bundled in manageable four foot lengths weighing no more than 150 lb. total (50 lb. bundles). Leaves must be in reusable trash containers or biodegradable paper bags only – no plastic bags.

*Please note that curbside leaf collection has been temporarily suspended due to issues with the compost facility. Leaves are still being accepted at the McVeigh Recycling Yard (no bags). Please check the Township website for information regarding the reinstatement of curbside leaf collection.



Rockaway Township staff and residents work the spring Clean Communities Clean Up Day.