

Rockaway Township Report



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www.rockawaytownship.org

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Mayor's Corner: Budget Message



It is commonly said that with the awakening of plants, grass and sleepy lawnmowers, spring is a time of rebirth. For residents, it is without question an exciting time of year. Students are entering the final stretch of their school year and families are planning summer time fun, planting flowers and wondering what is on the horizon.

For local government, it is a time of fiscal planning and engaging the year's important programs and projects. To that end, my administration has presented a budget and corresponding plans to the Township Council that reflect a decrease in the average property tax bill. I have been Mayor since elected by our residents in November, and have been working hard to preserve and improve our wonderful community. There are

exciting plans for park improvements, road paving, new additions to our business community and the rebirth of Rockaway Township Day (thanks to the work of the Township Day Committee), to name a few. The municipal staff has been very busy helping shape these plans and performing the work of the Township.

When I became Mayor, one of my promises was to work with all necessary parties in heightening security in our schools, so our children may be assured a safe and secure learning environment. I'm happy to say that Copeland School had a School Resource Officer (SRO) begin work on April 29. We are also moving forward with the presence of Class Three officers in our K-5 schools. Only through teamwork and collaboration – with one another and with our valued community partners – can we achieve success. The Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), which is the bargaining unit for our men and women in blue, has been instrumental in helping with this process. I wish to express sincere gratitude to the FOP and to everyone else involved in helping making this a reality.

Promises made, promises kept.

I feel brighter days are ahead for Rockaway Township. Together with the Department of Administration and staff, I strive to steer the Township in a positive direction. It is my firm belief that the majority of our residents seek momentum from their elected officials in doing the business of the Township. Please know that we are all ready and willing, and *we hear you*.

Finally, I hope to see you all on June 8 at Peterson Field for Rockaway Township Day, where we will celebrate the Township's 175th birthday. The event, which will feature live music, over 20 food trucks, local vendors and many other attractions, begins at 11:00am and ends with fireworks at 9:00pm. This will be a terrific family event, and I look forward to seeing you there!



Tick...Tick...Protect Yourself Against Lyme Disease

As the time approaches to pull out spring wardrobes and refuel lawnmowers, Rockaway Township residents are reminded to protect themselves against tick bites.

What is Lyme disease?

Lyme disease is a tickborne disease that has been bugging New Jersey residents since 1978, when it was first found in the State. While Lyme disease is now known to occur in the United States, Europe and Australia, most cases are found in the northeastern states. Although many species of ticks are found in New Jersey, only the Deer (Black Legged) Tick and the Lone Star Tick are known to transmit the disease, with the Deer Tick being the most prevalent. Female Deer Ticks are about ¼ inch in length and are black and brick red in color. Males are smaller and all black.

What are the signs and symptoms of Lyme disease?

Lyme disease is often difficult to diagnose because it has numerous symptoms. The most common early symptoms of Lyme disease include a rash that resembles a bull's eye (*erythema migrans*), fever, headache, fatigue and muscle/joint pain. If

not promptly treated, other progressive symptoms may develop in some patients. Early detection of Lyme disease and prompt antibiotic treatment is critical and usually prevents more severe health problems.



When the larva or nymph feeds on an infected animal, the tick picks up the spirochete, carries it through the next stage, and transmits it to the host the next time it feeds. Humans may get Lyme disease when an infected tick begins to take blood and passes on the spirochete to them. *Infected deer ticks generally must feed for at least 12 – 24 hours* before they can begin to transmit the Lyme bacterium, so frequent self-examination and removal of ticks is useful in preventing the disease.

How are ticks involved in Lyme disease?

Ticks spread Lyme disease by transmitting the spirochete (a type of bacterium) that causes the disease.



If bitten by a tick, what do I do?

Using small forceps or tweezers, grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible and apply firm and steady backward pressure. Never try to remove the tick by burning it or smothering it with noxious chemicals. These methods do not work and may cause injury to the skin. After the tick is removed, avoid infection by applying antiseptic to the wound. You may call the Morris County Rutgers Cooperative Extension office at 973-285-8300, and can make an appointment to have your tick identified by specialists under a microscope. If you develop symptoms, contact your physician.

How can I avoid being bitten by a tick?

Take the following steps to reduce exposure when outdoors:

- Wear light-colored clothing
- Wear long pants tucked into socks
- Avoid tall grass and shrubby areas
- Remove brush from your property
- Keep grass mowed
- Thin out low shrub vegetation
- Apply tick repellent (with *permethrin* or DEET) according to directions
- Perform 'tick checks' every few hours

Wildlife & Litter: Something to Bear in Mind

Due to the presence of wildlife and Rockaway's significant amount of preserved open space, the Division of Health periodically receives calls regarding bears and other animals getting into residential garbage. Household garbage, especially that containing putrescible (food) waste, is attractive to wildlife and is often easily obtainable. Black bears, in particular, will eat a wide variety of items including human food, garbage, pet food and birdseed. Given a bear's potential to cause property damage and provide a nuisance to residents, it is important to place garbage and other refuse in suitable receptacles with tight fitting lids. In addition, receptacles should not be kept at curbside for longer than 24 hours.

In addition to these tips, the Division of Health recommends several other techniques in preventing the attraction of wildlife with your waste:

- Store garbage containers near the *inside* wall of the garage or basement, or in a secure shed.
- Wash garbage containers with disinfectant solution at least once per week.
- Place garbage at the curb for collection in the *morning*, not the night before.

- Remove bird feeders between April 1 and December 1, when bears are most active.
- Do not place meat or sweet foods in a home compost pile.
- Clean outdoor grills thoroughly after each use.
- Consider purchasing a bear-resistant trash container. You may find information on such containers at: www.njfishandwildlife.com/bearinfo.htm or www.savenjbears.com.

Finally, please be reminded that food is an attractive nuisance to many forms of wildlife, including bears, deer, raccoons, squirrels, etc. In fact, attracting rodents or other wildlife with outdoor feeding is a violation of the NJ Public Health Nuisance Code, and the feeding of black bears in particular is punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 for each offense. Please follow the techniques listed above to prevent unwelcome encounters with wildlife, and to help reduce the risk of vectorborne disease or injury to you, your family and your neighbors.

The Rockaway Township Division of Health maintains educational brochures regarding bears and various other wildlife. Should you have any questions, please feel free to visit or contact the Division of Health at 973-983-2848.

Timely Tips from the Tax Collector

The 2019 second quarter property tax payments are due on May 1, 2019, with a 10 calendar day grace period. The last day to make payment without interest is May 10, 2019. To submit your payment online, please visit the Township website at www.rockawaytownship.org.

Please be advised that the Township has switched software programs and there are new account numbers. When paying online, you may use property block and lot with the owner's name as it appears on the tax bill.

Homeowners using their bank's website to make payments should use the block and lot or the new account number. The 2019 sewer maintenance bills will be mailed in May 2019, and payment will be due in June 2019.

To receive email notifications and reminders from the Tax Collector's office, visit the Township website, click 'Notify Me' and register for 'Finance Notifications.' By subscribing, you will receive quarterly reminders (email & or text) of your property tax due date. You may also sign

up to receive the Township's quarterly newsletter, as well as other important Township updates.

The 2018 Senior Freeze (property tax reimbursement) filing deadline is October 31, 2019. If you need assistance in determining eligibility or have any other questions, please call the State's hotline at 800-882-6597 or visit www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/ptr/Homestead_Rebate/. Credit information may be obtained by calling the State hotline at 888-238-1233.

Food Pantry for Affected Federal Employees

In an effort to provide assistance to government workers affected by the partial shutdown of the federal government between December 2018 and January 2019, Rockaway Township opened a food pantry. Federal employees residing in Rockaway Township were invited to visit the food pantry at the Township Department of Community Services, located at the Rockaway Township Municipal Building.

Many Township residents and employees made generous donations of non-perishable foods like pasta, jarred sauce, cereal, tuna fish, peanut butter, jelly, soup, canned vegetables and fruit, rice, pancake mix, syrup, baby food, and macaroni and cheese.

Shortly after the federal government shutdown ended, the Township donated all remaining food items to the Rockaway Food Closet at the First Presbyterian Church in Rockaway Borough. Mayor Michael Puzio wishes to thank all residents and employees who gave of their time and resources for this effort.



Bryan Coward, Recreation Supervisor, and Susan Gaeb, Recreation Aide, help stock the Department of Community Services' food pantry during the government shutdown.

Mayor's Special Recognition

Mayor Michael Puzio is pleased to welcome the following new employees to Rockaway Township, and to congratulate others on their change in title or work milestone.

- Liliane Ambrus, who reached her 25th year of service with the Township.
- Stephen Kupecz, hired as part-time Dial-a-Ride driver with the Division of Recreation.
- Karen Cosrove, hired through the NJ Clean Communities grant to assist the Divisions of Health and Parks in keeping our community free of litter.
- Alexander Della Torre, hired as Tax Clerk with the Finance Department.
- Patti McGown-Hardt, who retired after 15 years of service with the Dial-a-Ride program.
- Susanne Jackson, who left the Division of Health and joined the Department of Administration as Confidential Secretary.
- Amanda Smith, who left the Department of Administration and joined the Police Department as Records Clerk.
- Health Officer Peter Tabbot, who presented at the National Network of Public Health Institutes' national conference in Philadelphia.
- Brenda Christolin, hired as Payroll Supervisor with the Finance Department.
- Donald Reddin, hired as patrolman with the Police Department.
- Kevin M. Miller, hired as patrolman with the Police Department.
- Thomas Grohowski, hired as Public Safety Telecommunicator (Dispatcher) with the Police Department.
- David McAndreg, hired as patrolman with the Police Department.
- Brett Mitchell, hired as patrolman with the Police Department.
- Michael Hafley, hired as patrolman with the Police Department.



Residents are encouraged to attend the Rockaway, Marcella, Denville Memorial Association's 150 Year Remembrance Parade, scheduled for Main Street, Rockaway Borough, on May 27th!



Registration for the Township's Summer Recreation Program and Mount Hope Pond opens on May 1st. Residents may check the Township website or the links featured on page five of this newsletter for more information!

Update from Rockaway Township Recycling

Recycling News

Recycling calendars, flyers and other useful items are available on the Township website. If you haven't already visited the site, please go to www.rockawaytownship.org/189/Recycle, click on the *My Schedule* tab and input your home address. Here, you can view or print your personalized collection calendar and sign up for important collection reminders and service interruption alerts. Not sure how to dispose of something? Click the tab for *Waste Wizard* and enter the material you are looking to dispose of. Click on the *Facilities* tab for information about our locations and hours of operation. For additional information, click on the *Print Flyers* tab to learn about single stream recycling, hazardous household waste drop off events, and Rockaway Township's bulk clean-up and vegetative waste collections. Full printouts of the bulk and recycling calendars, flyers and stickers for labeling your receptacles are also available in the Municipal Building lobby.

Single Stream Recycling

Curbside collection of recycling is 'single stream' or 'no sort.' This means you may put cans, bottles, newspapers and cardboard out together. For large amounts of cardboard, you may also break down smaller boxes and place in one large box (three max). Recycling may be placed in tote-style cans (preferred) filled to capacity or in regular garbage cans loaded no heavier than 50 pounds each. Please label all recycling cans (stickers available at Municipal Building free of charge). With various collections of garbage, recycling and vegetative waste picked up on the same day in some cases, it is very important to label your cans to ensure proper collection. All the crews collecting these various materials appreciate your cooperation in this matter. *Please note that recycling brought to our depots is not single stream and must be separated into commingled (cans and bottles), cardboard and newspaper.*

Leaf and Brush Collection takes place weekly now through December 31. Please visit the aforementioned website and input your address for a collection schedule. *Please place at curb by 6:00am of designate day.* Yard waste must be in either brown biodegradable bags or cans labeled vegetative waste (stickers available at the Municipal Building free of charge), and brush must be tied and bundled, no heavier than 50 pounds per bundle and cut no longer than four feet (branches max 6" diameter).

Grass Collection takes place weekly through December 31. Check the aforementioned schedule for collection day and place at curb by 6:00am of designated day. Grass must be in either brown biodegradable bags or cans with a lid labeled grass

or vegetative waste. Cans *must* be labeled. Cans may up to 50 pounds each, with three cans maximum.

Bulk Collection/Clean Up Week

Once per month, residents may put out bulky items that would not generally be placed at the curb with your regular household garbage. Items may include, but are not limited to: mattresses, box springs, couches, toilets, hot water heaters, dressers, end tables, etc. The collection is intended for disposing of a few pieces per month, *not* for emptying a house when moving.

There is a limit to the amount that may be placed curbside – *not to exceed 150 pounds per collection.* Items must fit into the hopper of a garbage truck and must be able to be crushed. Items that are *not* acceptable include televisions, automotive parts, paint and building materials (hazardous household materials, sheet rock, spackle, tile, etc.). If you have a question regarding the suitability of items for bulk collection, either check the *Waste Wizard* or call 973-983-2891. Please see the link above to check your collection day(s).

Street Sweeping Underway

Every Road in Rockaway Township will be swept one or more times as necessary over the course of the spring, summer and fall. Roads are swept systematically section by section, generally starting with areas surrounding bodies of water, to prevent run off into our waterways and natural resources. Please rest assured your road will be swept. Unfortunately, with a Township this size, there is no way to effectively notify residents regarding a sweeping schedule. If your property permits, please park vehicles off road when possible to allow to road to be swept in its entirety.

Grass – Cut it and Leave it

Grass clippings are a major part of New Jersey's municipal solid waste stream, and as with other highly recyclable materials such as aluminum and steel cans, glass bottles and jars, paper and certain plastic bottles, the recycling of grass clippings helps reduce the amount of waste being collected for disposal. As a New Jersey resident, you are already reducing the amount of landfilled waste by recycling a variety of materials. You can easily recycle the clippings generated each time you mow your lawn, and save time and money by doing so.

Doing your part is simple – just leave the clippings on the lawn when you mow. Grass clippings provide a natural and healthy fertilizer for a growing lawn. For more information, see the *Recycling* section of the Township website.

What's Happening

MAY

- 1st Summer Recreation Registration Opens (ongoing)
Online registration through Community Pass:
<https://register.communitypass.net/reg/>
- 1st Mount Hope Pond Registration Opens (ongoing)
Online registration through Community Pass:
<https://register.communitypass.net/reg/>
- 3rd A Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns About Falls*
Robert A. Galdon Senior Citizen Building
10:00am - 12:00pm (May 3, May 10, May 17, May 24, May 31)
- 9th Blood Chemistry Screening*
Rockaway Township Municipal Building
9:00am - 10:15am
- 16th Free Blood Pressure Screening
Rockaway Township Municipal Building
11:00am - 11:30am
- 18th Second Clean Communities Annual Clean Up*
Parks Lake Gazebo - volunteers meet here
9:00am - 11:00am (free T-shirts and promotional items)
- 19th Rockaway Township Public Library Spring Festival
Rockaway Township Public Library
Games, crafts, music, book sale and more
12:00pm - 4:00pm
- 27th Rockaway, Marcella, Denville Memorial Association
150 Year Remembrance Parade
Main Street, Rockaway Borough
11:00am
- 27th Memorial Day
Rockaway Township Municipal Building Closed

JUNE

- 7th A Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns About Falls*
Robert A. Galdon Senior Citizen Building
10:00am - 12:00pm (June 7, June 14)
- 8th Rockaway Township Day!
Peterson Field, 98 Fleetwood Drive
Gourmet foods, vendors, fireworks, beer/sangria bar, live music
11:00am - 9:30pm
- 13th Skin Cancer Screening*
Location TBD
5:00pm - 7:00pm
- 20th Free Blood Pressure Screening
Rockaway Township Municipal Building
11:00am - 11:30am

* Pre-registration required for some Township events. Please check the Township Calendar at www.rockawaytownship.org for more information.

New Businesses for Rockaway

FedEx Freight Rockaway Service Center

In April, FedEx Freight opens a 28-door service center in Rockaway. The facility occupies more than 13,700 square feet and sits on five acres along Green Pond Road. The location was selected for its access to major highways, proximity to customers and a strong local community workforce.

Miller's Ale House

Despite the challenges of winter season construction, developers of the forthcoming Miller's Ale House, located on the Mall Ring Road in Rockaway Township, state that progress has been swift. Site work is nearly complete and crews are working toward the completion of the restaurant structure, with plans for an early to mid-May opening.

Orangetheory Fitness Rockaway

Orangetheory Fitness Rockaway, located in the mall area near Target and Dick's Sporting Goods, is now open. This exercise studio features a one hour total body workout focusing on heart rate-based interval training. Certified coaches motivate participants and results are viewed in real time on television screens throughout the studio.

Additionally...

Other new Rockaway Township businesses include Acai Express and Waxing The City, both of which are opening in the mall area. Acai Express's Rockaway restaurant, located at 395 Mt. Hope Road, offers fruit smoothies, grain bowls, desserts and more. Waxing the City, located at 343 Mt. Hope Ave., offers a wide variety of cosmetic services.

In addition, the Township welcomes a new Tesla Charging Station, located adjacent to the AMC Rockaway 16 Theaters. The station includes 12 'superchargers' where Tesla owners may visit area businesses while charging their vehicles.

Finally, Marcade Family Fun Center, located at the Rockaway River Commons, 437 Route 46, had its grand opening on April 12. The entertainment center features dozens of arcade games and party accommodations. Its location assures plenty of parking for pinball and Pac Man enthusiasts.



The new Tesla charging station, consisting of 12 superchargers, is up and running adjacent to the AMC Rockaway 16 Theaters.

Summer Recreation

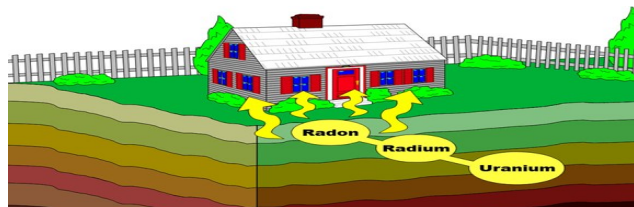
May 1 marks the opening of registration for Mt. Hope Pond and the Summer Recreation program. Please visit www.rockawaytownship.org or <https://register/communitypass.net/> for registration information.

Mt. Hope Pond badges are \$25, and children five and under do not require badges. Mt. Hope Pond opens Memorial Day weekend, and will remain open weekends, weather permitting, until June 24, when week long hours begin. The Summer Recreation program is \$55 per child, and children entering second grade through eighth grade are eligible. Camp begins June 24 and will run until August 2. Camp will be held at the Birchwood, Dwyer and Katherine D. Malone Schools.

Picatiny Arsenal opens Frog Falls Water Park on Memorial Day weekend. Township residents can join and enjoy the 520,000 gallon water park as individuals or families. Please call 973-724-7275 for more information.

Radon Test Kits Available!

Radon is a colorless, odorless gas that is estimated to cause about 21,000 lung cancer deaths nationwide every year. The Rockaway Township Division of Health is pleased to announce that free radon test kits are available to Township residents. The free test kits, available on a first come, first serve basis, were made possible through a grant promotion with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. To obtain your free radon test kit, visit the Division of Health at the Municipal Building, 65 Mount Hope Road.



Rockaway Township Recognizes Local Government Week



Township Sewer and Water Superintendent Gene Garabrant and Park Superintendent Dave Swanton greet the public.



Councilman Jack Quinn, Mayor Michael Puzio and Councilman Joe Jackson (from left) recognize Local Government Week.



Health Officer Peter Tabbot and Registered Environmental Health Specialist James Breiten share information with residents.



Assistant Business Administrator David Dyer and Public Works/Fire Director Robert Sheard promote the Township Fire Department.