

# Rockaway Township Report



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[www.rockawaytownship.org](http://www.rockawaytownship.org)

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## Mayor's Corner



Welcome to the summer issue of the Rockaway Report. I first would like to wish all residents a happy summer, and extend congratulations to all the Rockaway Township graduates and their families. Your hard work will pay dividends, and I speak for the entire community in telling you how proud we are of you.

I am truly honored and humbled to serve as Mayor for Rockaway Township, and I am committed to keeping Rockaway Township a great place in which to work, live and play. I am happy to announce that I submitted a budget with a decrease in the municipal portion of your tax bill, while maintaining all the important services our residents are accustomed to. I have the privilege of working with a motivated professional staff who truly care for this wonderful town that I call home.

Our Township staff has been busy writing and receiving grants to help defray costs while improving our Township facilities. The Morris County Office of Community

Development and Morris County Freeholders just authorized our grant application to restore the lower level of the Rockaway Township Senior Center, with final approval of same anticipated by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development in late August.

The County Historic Preservation Board has recommended funding of the Ford-Faesch House partial interior restoration project to the Morris County Freeholders, who will act on these recommendations at their July meeting. In addition, the State Department of Transportation has awarded the Township a grant to repave Kings Road. I would like to commend members of our staff who worked together in identifying these opportunities and submitting grant applications. This is just one of the means by which we realize efficiencies and help keep the budget from increasing, and our success in attaining such grants is good news for our community.

Back by popular demand is this summer's Township Gazebo Concert Series. From oldies to country to R&B, the popular annual music series offers something for everyone, so please check the schedule in this newsletter, grab your lawn chairs and come out. If sun and swimming are of interest, Mt. Hope Pond is open and summer badges are available

in the Division of Recreation. You may also purchase swimming passes online through the Community Pass program. Residents seeking swimming passes should visit [www.rockawaytownship.org/417/mount-hope-pond](http://www.rockawaytownship.org/417/mount-hope-pond) to register. If you are seeking fun daytime activities for youngsters, our Summer Playground day camp program is currently underway for children. The program is conveniently located at the Dwyer, Birchwood and Katherine D. Malone Schools. For more information on this enriching program, and for the latest announcements regarding any community activities, please sign up to receive news and updates at the Township website.

I am pleased to host the Annual Senior Picnic on Friday, September 13, and I look forward to seeing our residents at this terrific event. The Senior Picnic presents an opportunity to extend appreciation to our senior community with great food, festivity, prizes and camaraderie. I hope to see many of our seniors there.

Rockaway Township is moving forward - please know my administration is listening to and working for each and every one of our residents to ensure that the quality of life in our community is the best it can possibly be.

I wish you all a safe and happy summer.

Mayor Michael Puzio

## Rockaway Township Cleans Up!

**Did You Know:** According to a recent report by the NJ Clean Communities Council, the state experienced a 53% drop in litter on streets and highways between 2004 and 2017. Do your part to keep up this success!



On April 27 and May 18, the Rockaway Township Division of Health held its annual Clean Communities clean up days. Dozens of residents, including scouts, youth groups and community organizations, showed up to clean several Township parks and lake areas. The weather was lovely and all participating groups received mini-grants, T-shirts and other Clean Communities promotional items. Check [www.rockawaytownship.org](http://www.rockawaytownship.org) next March/April for information regarding the 2020 Annual Spring Clean Up Day, so your group may participate!

**Is there something you would like to see in this newsletter or other Township communications? Have tips for helpful information? Please email [rockadm@rockawaytownship.org](mailto:rockadm@rockawaytownship.org) with your suggestions!**

## Mayor's Special Recognition

Rockaway Township is blessed with enthused volunteers and an accomplished professional staff, who strive to elevate facilities and programs for our community. Mayor Michael Puzio wishes to recognize the following individuals and departments for their hard work and accomplishments:

- Christina Clipperton, who passed the New Jersey Municipal Clerk certification exam.
- The Departments of Engineering and Community Services, which oversaw restoration of the Senior Center roof, made possible by a \$60,000 Morris County Community Development Block Grant.
- The Department of Community Services, whose application for a \$53,426 Community Development Block Grant received Morris

County Freeholder recommendation for 2019 funding.

- Brenda Budd and the Municipal Alliance Committee (MAC), for helping secure an \$18,000 New Jersey MAC grant.
- The Historical Society of Rockaway Township and the Departments of Administration, Community Services and Engineering, who applied for \$33,660 to partially restore the Ford-Faesch House interior.
- All the employees and volunteers who helped make the June 8 Rockaway Township Day a terrific family event and an immense success.



## 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). In the event of rain, please call the Recreation Hotline at 973-983-2853 after 1:00pm.*

### JULY

- 7 Mike Goonan Band - Through the 60s and beyond
- 14 Sunset Soundz - Music to dance by
- 21 Tequila Rose - New country and mix
- 28 Four Man Trio - Popular rock and roll

### AUGUST

- 4 Thunder Hill - Old country
- 11 Davey and the Waverunners - Jimmy Buffet tribute band
- 18 Soul Groove - Pop, R&B and soul
- 25 Cameos - New Jersey's favorite oldies band

### SEPTEMBER

- 1 Desire - Music of the 50s and beyond

### UPCOMING TOWNSHIP PROGRAMS

### JULY

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

### AUGUST

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

### SEPTEMBER

- 13 Senior Citizen Resident Picnic  
Craigmeur Recreation Complex  
10:00am - 2:00pm
- 19 Blood pressure screening  
Rockaway Township Municipal Building  
11:00am - 11:30am
- TBD Blood chemistry screening  
Lipid profile, CBC w/differential and CHEM23  
Rockaway Township Municipal Building  
9:00am - 10:30am

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

## Tax Collector's Update

The 2019/2020 tax bills will be issued and mailed in July 2019, with the date to be determined. Please retain this copy in your records for proof of property tax amounts when filing your income tax returns for 2019.

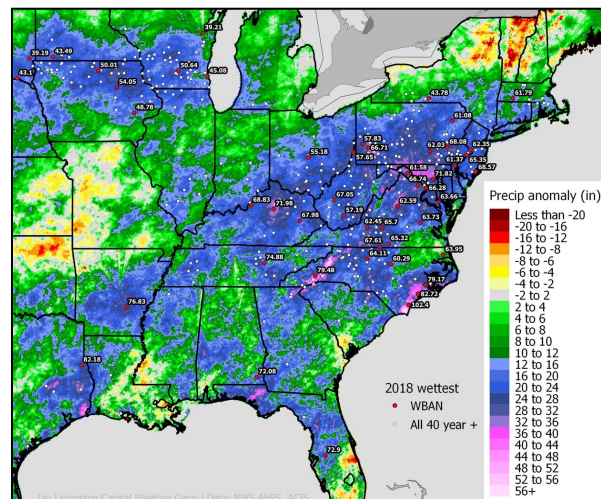
The third quarter tax payment is due within 25 days of mailing of bills (actual date will be printed on your tax bill). The date by which payment may be made interest free will be posted when established.

The 2018 Senior Freeze (property tax reimbursement) filing deadline is October 31, 2019 (unless the date is extended by the State). If you require any assistance in determining eligibility and/or to check status on filed applications, please call the State's hotline at 1-800-882-6597. If you require Homestead Credit assistance, please call the State's hotline at 1-888-238-1233.

## Wettest Year in NJ History

According to the National Weather Service, 2018 was the wettest year on record in New Jersey, and Rockaway Township, with 79.89" of precipitation, had the third highest total of all municipalities in the state. In fact, approximately 40 percent of all days last year had measurable precipitation (defined as minimum 0.01"). This will come as no surprise to those who remember the string of nor'easters that buried the state in snow last March...or to those who suffered lousy beach days or rained out barbecues.

Don't put your umbrellas away yet - with 29.7" of rain in Morris County through June 29, this year's rain total is already 19% above the average to date. NOAA's (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) May 2019 precipitation rankings show that New Jersey is still in the throes of its wettest 18 month period ever. Let's hope for a 'brighter' remainder of 2019!



Map of the eastern United States, depicting excessive rain differentials throughout the mid-Atlantic states.

## Solutions to Stormwater Pollution



Please note some of the following elements of the *Stormwater Rules for Municipalities*, as established by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

### What is Stormwater?

Stormwater runoff is generated from rain and snowmelt events that flow over land or impervious surfaces, such as paved streets, parking lots, lawns and building rooftops, and does not soak into the ground. The runoff picks up pollutants like trash, chemicals, oils and dirt/sediment that can harm our rivers, streams, lakes and coastal waters.



### What can we do to help?

By sharing the responsibility and making small, easy changes in our daily lives, we can keep common pollutants out of stormwater. It all adds up to cleaner water, and it saves the high cost of cleaning up once it's dirty.

### As a commercial property owner, it's important to know these local requirements to protect our waters:

- Dumpsters and other refuse containers that are outdoors or exposed to stormwater must be covered at all times and shall prevent the spilling, dumping, leaking or other discharge of liquids, semi-liquids or solids from the containers.
- Existing storm drain inlets on private property must be retrofitted when in direct contact with any repaving, repairing, resurfacing or direct contact with any reconstruction or alteration of



facilities. These retrofit standards can be found under *Attachment C - Design Standards for Storm Drain Inlets*, located under the stormwater section at: [www.rockawaytownship.org/200/Engineering](http://www.rockawaytownship.org/200/Engineering)

- The spilling, dumping or disposal of materials other than stormwater to the municipal storm sewer system is prohibited.

### As a residential property owner, it's important to know these local requirements to protect our waters:

- All pet owners and keepers are required to immediately and properly dispose of their pet's solid waste deposited on any property, public or private.
- Do not feed wildlife, such as ducks and geese, in public areas.
- Properly maintain yard waste: Keep leaves and grass out of storm drains. The owner or occupant of any property shall not sweep, rake, blow or otherwise place yard waste, unless the yard waste is containerized, in the street. Please follow the Township policies on yard waste found under our Recycle page at: [www.rockawaytownship.org/189/Recycle](http://www.rockawaytownship.org/189/Recycle)

Additional information can be found in the Solutions to Stormwater Pollution education brochure at: [www.rockawaytownship.org/200/Engineering](http://www.rockawaytownship.org/200/Engineering)

We thank you for your assistance with the Stormwater Rules and Regulations.

## Rockaway Township Day Deemed a Huge Success



An estimated several thousand Rockaway Township residents attended a fun-filled Rockaway Township Day on Saturday, June 8. The event featured fireworks, crafts, pony rides, vehicle exhibits, Mayoral presentations, over 20 food vendors and many smiles.

## Public Works & Recycling: News You Can Use

### Public Works News

#### **Dangerous Road Conditions**

As a resident, you are the eyes and ears of our community. Should you see a dangerous road condition such as a pothole, collapsing storm drain, downed street sign or tree/limb in the road, please contact the Rockaway Township Public Works Department at 973-983-2891, or call the Police after 3:30pm and on the weekends at 973-625-4000 to report these issues. The Public Works Department sincerely appreciates your notifications, which help facilitate safer roads.

#### **Berm Repair**

You may have noticed some minor damage as a result of snow plowing this past winter. If you see damage to the asphalt berm in front of your property, please contact the Rockaway Township Department of Public Works, and leave your name and address and the extent of damage. A supervisor will assess the damage, and your property will be placed on a list to be repaired as soon as weather and materials permit.

### Recycling News

#### **Receptacles to be Labeled**

Residents occasionally call to report that their receptacles have not been collected. It is imperative that residents label their receptacles, identifying the commodity that is in it. Rockaway Township makes 'YARD WASTE' and 'RECYCLING' stickers available to residents at the Municipal Building. If you are unable to pick these stickers up, please call 973-983-2891, leave your name and address, and stickers will be mailed to you.

The drivers who collect recycling, yard waste and trash appreciate the labeling of waste receptacles, as it eliminates the need for collectors to stop at every single receptacle, only to find that it doesn't contain the material they are collecting. In turn, it ensures proper collection for you.

#### **Calendars**

Collection schedules are available for recycling (Routes A-F), yard waste and bulk collections. If you haven't already done, so please visit [www.rockawaytownship.org/189/Recycle](http://www.rockawaytownship.org/189/Recycle) and 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 alerts and reminders with Rockaway Township's 'ReCollect' app. 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 the Township's bulk clean-up and vegetative waste collections.

#### **Single Stream Recycling**

Curbside collection of recyclables is 'single stream' or 'no sort.' This means you may put cans, bottles, newspapers and cardboard out for collection together. For large amounts of cardboard, you may also break down smaller boxes and place them in one large box (three maximum).

Recyclables may be placed at the curb in tote-style containers (preferred) filled to capacity, or in regular garbage receptacles no heavier than 50 pounds each. No plastic bags or garbage may be mixed in with the single stream recyclables, and receptacles with plastic bags *will be rejected*. Please note that our recycling centers are *not* single stream, and recyclables must be separated into commingled (cans and bottles), cardboard and newspaper.

#### **Grass, Leaf & Brush Collection**

Brush and leaves are collected curbside weekly April through December. Please visit [www.rockawaytownship.org/189/Recycle](http://www.rockawaytownship.org/189/Recycle) and input your address for a collection schedule. Items must be at the curb by 6:00am on your designated day. Leaves must be in either brown biodegradable bags or cans labeled *Yard Waste* (stickers available at the Municipal Building free of charge), *no heavier than 50 pounds per can or bag*. Brush must be no more than six inches in diameter, and tied and bundled in four foot lengths weighing no more than 50 pounds each.

Dirt, rocks, mulch, stumps, plastic bags and garbage are not accepted with yard waste. If your yard waste collection day falls on a holiday, your materials will be picked up the following week. There is *no make-up day* for yard waste collection.

Rockaway Township's McVeigh Recycling Center, located at 63 Mt. Hope Road, 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.*

#### **Bulk Collection**

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 – please consider obtaining a bagster or dumpster if you are cleaning out a house, as the bulk program does not cover that amount of debris.

There is a limit to the amount that may be placed curbside – 150 pounds per collection. Items must fit into 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.).

*(continued on page six)*

## Bicycle Safety from the RTPD

The school year has ended and summer is here, bringing with it enjoyable weather and days of family fun. We would like to remind everyone of the following safety tips:

- Wear the proper bike helmet
- Always inspect your bicycle before using it
- Adjust the bicycle to fit the operator
- Be in control of the bicycle at all times
- Use the proper reflectors and lights
- Avoid riding at night
- Be on the lookout for road hazards
- Know where to ride safely
- Always follow the rules of the road



For more information, please refer to the following National Highway Safety Administration link:

[www.nhtsa.gov/Bicycles](http://www.nhtsa.gov/Bicycles)

Summer safety information may be found at:

[www.cdc.gov/family/kids/summer/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/family/kids/summer/index.htm)

## The Mayor Invites You...

All Rockaway Township senior residents are invited to our Annual Senior Picnic, scheduled from 10:00pm - 2:00pm on Friday, September 13 at the Craigmear Recreation Complex. Delicious food, music and good fellowship will be offered to the Township's senior residents. Representatives from municipal departments, health agencies and area organizations will be present to meet with residents and to disseminate information. The Annual Senior Picnic is open to all Rockaway Township seniors, and proof of residency will be required at the gate. No pets or children will be permitted at this event. For additional information, please contact the Office of the Mayor at 973-983-2800. We look forward to seeing you there! *Please note: Rain date is September 20.*



Rockaway Township residents enjoy the 2018 Senior Picnic. This year's event takes place on Friday, September 13.

## Public Works & Recycling

*(continued from page six)*

If you have a question regarding the suitability of items for bulk collection, either check the Waste Wizard at [www.rockawaytownship.org/189](http://www.rockawaytownship.org/189) or call 973-983-2891. There is no additional fee for this – it is a service included in your taxes. Bulk collection is contracted to Waste Management and is picked up according to collection schedule. Please see the link above to check your collection day(s). For items not accepted by bulk collection, please contact the Morris County MUA Transfer Station at 973-347-8106.

### Paint

Rockaway Township recycling does not accept paint, stain, sealer or solvents. Latex paints may be disposed of with normal household garbage, but *only in the following manner*: Sand or kitty litter should be placed in the paint can, and the can should air dry with the lid removed until it is solid. It may then be disposed of. All other listed items must be taken to the Mt. Olive Transfer Station, 168 Gold Mine Road, Flanders. Call 973-347-8106 to make an appointment or check ReCollect flyers for the next free household hazardous waste event held by the MCMUA at various locations.

## Green Pond FD Gets Tender

The Green Pond Volunteer Fire Department has always bought preowned fire trucks, funded completely by donations from residents of Green Pond. The department's old tender (truck) was built in 1972 and was purchased from another local department.

Last year, the department's tender suffered mechanical issues that were too costly to fix, and past Chief Joe Finkel appealed to Green Pond residents for help. Residents responded and funds were raised, and the new tender was delivered on June 25. The department is grateful for all the support received from Green Pond and the Rockaway Township Fire Department, and decided to name the new tender 'The Spirit of Green Pond' to honor all those residents that responded to their call for help.



## Mayor Puzio Honors Individuals with Iron Spirit Award

### NBA Star Honored on May 30

The Rockaway Township Substance Abuse Alliance (RTSAA) held its annual *Breakfast with the Stars* on May 30. The event, which is held at Copeland Middle School each spring, is designed to bring former professional athletes, media personalities, musicians and others

into the classroom to speak about making positive choices in one's life.

At this year's event, the late Tim Bassett, longtime NBA basketball player and advocate for the RTSAA's mission, was honored with the Mayor's Iron Spirit Award.

The Iron Spirit Award, a small anvil engraved to honor its recipient, is a symbol of Rockaway Township's historic contributions through its forges and iron mines. The award recognizes recipients for their civic-mindedness, dedication, strength, charity and leadership. Until his passing, Bassett generously gave of his time and effort to numerous community organizations and causes over the years, and was a constant supporter of Rockaway Township, the RTSAA and its mission.

### Resident Doug Abe Honored at Rockaway Township Day

Mayor Michael Puzio recognized resident Doug Abe with the Iron Spirit Award during Rockaway Township Day festivities on Saturday, June 8.

Abe has for many years been of tremendous support to Rockaway Township, helping document Township functions and meetings on his own time, with his own resources and of his own volition. Abe was honored for his exemplary volunteerism and generosity, for helping enrich the community, and for his many contributions to the Township over the years.

As Winston Churchill said, 'We make a living by what we get...We make a life by what we give.'



Les Wexler, RTSAA Coordinator, honors the late Tim Bassett. Recipients are Tim's children, Tim and Courtney.

## Tree Planting for the Late Mayor Michael Dachisen

On Friday, June 7, approximately 75 family members, friends, colleagues and residents gathered to dedicate a memorial plaque and tree in memory of the late Mayor Michael Dachisen, who passed away on August 15, 2018. The plaque and tree, located between the upper parking lots at Peterson Field, were purchased by the Rockaway Township Shade Tree Commission. The Township Public Works Department planted the tree and arranged/affixed the plaque onsite. Mayor Michael Puzio and Cathy Dachisen, wife of the late mayor, dedicated the tree in Mayor Dachisen's honor, and all in attendance were offered seedlings to plant, which were also purchased by the Shade Tree Commission.



## Barbecue Safety: From the Grocery to the Table

Now that the sun is shining brightly and we are firing up our barbecues on a routine basis, it's important to follow food safety guidelines to prevent harmful bacteria from multiplying and causing foodborne illness. Use these simple guidelines for grilling food safely!

### **From the Store: Home First**

When shopping, buy cold food like meat and poultry last, right before checkout. Separate raw meat and poultry from other food in your shopping cart. To guard against cross-contamination, which can happen when raw meat or poultry juices drip on other food, put packages of raw meat and poultry into plastic bags.

Plan to drive directly home from the grocery store. You may want to take a cooler with ice for perishables. Always refrigerate perishable food within two hours. Refrigerate within one hour when the temperature is above 90°F. At home, place meat and poultry in the refrigerator immediately. Freeze poultry and ground meat that won't be used in one or two days; freeze other meat within four to five days.

### **Defrost Safely**

Completely defrost meat and poultry before grilling so it cooks more evenly. Use the refrigerator for slow, safe thawing or thaw sealed packages in cold water. You can microwave defrost if the food will be placed immediately on the grill.

### **Marinating**

Meat and poultry can be marinated for several hours or days to tenderize or add flavor. Marinate food in the refrigerator, not on the counter. If some of the marinade is to be used as a sauce on the cooked food, reserve that portion of the marinade before putting raw meat and poultry in it.

### **Transporting**

When carrying food to another location, keep it cold to minimize bacterial growth. Use an insulated cooler with sufficient ice or ice packs to keep the food at 40°F or below. Pack food right from the refrigerator into the cooler immediately before leaving home. Keep the cooler in the coolest part of the car.

### **Keep Cold Food Cold**

Keep meat and poultry refrigerated until ready to use. Only take out the meat and poultry that will immediately be placed on the grill. When using a cooler, keep it out of the direct sun by placing it in the shade or shelter. Avoid opening the lid too often, which lets cold air out. Pack beverages in one cooler and perishables in a separate cooler.

### **Keep Everything Clean**

Be sure there are plenty of clean utensils and platters. To prevent foodborne illness, don't use the same platter and utensils for raw and cooked meat and poultry. Harmful bacteria present in raw meat and poultry and their juices can contaminate safely cooked food.

If you're barbecuing away from home, find out if there's a source of clean water. If not, bring water for preparation and cleaning, or pack clean cloths and wet towelettes for cleaning surfaces and hands.

### **Precooking**

Precooking food partially in the microwave, oven, or stove is a good way of reducing grilling time. Just make sure that the food goes *immediately* onto the preheated grill to complete cooking.

### **Cook Thoroughly**

Cook food thoroughly to destroy harmful bacteria. Meat and poultry cooked on a grill often browns very fast on the outside. Use a *food thermometer* to be sure the food has reached a safe internal temperature. NEVER partially grill meat or poultry and finish cooking later. Please adhere to the following minimum internal temperatures:

- Whole poultry - 165°F
- Hamburgers - 155°F
- Ground poultry - 165°F
- Beef, veal and lamb steaks, roasts and chops - 145°F
- Pork - 150°F

### **Reheating**

After cooking meat and poultry on the grill, keep it at 135°F or warmer until served. When reheating fully cooked meats like hot dogs, grill to 165°F.

Keep cooked meats hot by setting them to the side of the grill rack, not directly over the coals where they could overcook. At home, the cooked meat can be kept hot in a warm oven (approximately 200°F), in a chafing dish or slow cooker, or on a warming tray.

### **Serving the Food**

When taking food off the grill, use a clean platter. Don't put cooked food on the same platter that held raw meat or poultry. Any harmful bacteria present in the raw meat juices could contaminate safely cooked food. In hot weather (above 90°F), food should never sit out for more than one hour.

For more information about food safety, regardless of cuisine or season, please visit the Division of Health or call us at 973-983-2848. We wish residents enjoyable and safe summertime barbecues!