

Rockaway Township Report



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www.rockawaytownship.org

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Mayor's Corner



I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy and prosperous 2023. I hope all had a great holiday season and were able to spend time with family and friends. The Township had a number of significant accomplishments during the fall, including several community-based events, and we look forward to engaging the community even more with events in 2023.

As we enter the winter storm season, I would like to remind everyone to visit our website and make sure you register for our RAVE Alert/Smart 911 systems. By signing up on RAVE, you will receive important alerts and advisories. Registering for Smart 911 will allow our first responders to be more prepared in the event you have an emergency.

Our hiking trails are open year-round, but on days when winter weather precludes hiking, think about getting in your steps at the Rockaway Townsquare

Mall. In doing so, you will notice many new businesses that you may not have seen before. Please consider visiting and supporting our local businesses.

Rockaway Township has several winter sports programs in progress, and registration for our usual slate of spring sports is just around the corner – please check [our website](#) for details regarding all of the Township's recreational programs.

We continue to recognize local businesses on our Facebook page, and you will find an article citing some of our newer businesses under separate title in this edition of the *Rockaway Township Report*. Please follow the Township on Facebook to find out about these

businesses and their services, and how you can take advantage of what they offer. If you own a local business and are interested in being recognized, contact [Dave Dyer](#), Recreation Director.

If you have any questions about any of the items outlined above, feel free to contact the Municipal Building. You can visit at 65 Mount Hope Road or call us at 973-627-7200. Our normal business hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm. Follow Rockaway Township on Facebook and make [our website](#) one of your bookmarks.

As always, I am honored to be your Mayor.

Joe Jackson
Rockaway Township Mayor



Holiday cheer in the Township: Members of Rockaway Township's governing body welcome Santa Claus at the Township's Christmas tree lighting and celebration. Pictured, L to R: Council Members Pawel Wojtowicz, Rachael Brookes, Mary Noon, Jack Quinn and Adam Salberg, and Mayor Joe Jackson.

Engineering Update

Rockaway Township is working on bids for 2023 projects. Presently out to bid is construction of a new building for the Township's Water Utility. In addition, a bid package for renovations to the Township Senior Center basement is under review by the County and soon will go out to bid. This project will largely be funded through a Morris County Community Development Block Grant, obtained collaboratively through the Division of Health and the Department of Engineering, Planning and Construction.

The Department of Engineering, Planning and Construction, the Department of Public Works and the Water Utility are working hard to complete the design and bid packages for several other 2023 projects. These include water main slip lining on Queens Road, improvements to the Park Lake Memorial area, improvements to Queens Road Section II (upper portion) and ADA accessibility ramp improvements in the Middletown and Edwin neighborhoods.

In other engineering news, private multi-family developments are advancing toward completion. Pondview Estates has completed construction of its firehouse and has broken ground on the second clubhouse in the development. The Rock Pointe residential development is working on the last two of nine multi-family buildings within its complex, with anticipated completion of all housing during 2023.

Finally, the Department of Engineering, Planning and Construction has worked closely with the consulting firm Princeton Hydro toward completing a municipal assessment of the watersheds and lakes within the Township. This comprehensive overview will be utilized as a road map for future water quality improvement projects and grant opportunities for the Township. The municipal watershed assessment may be viewed at the Department of Engineering, Planning and Construction or online [by looking here](#).

Volunteer Appointments by the 2023 Council

Multiple volunteer appointments of the Rockaway Township Council are currently vacant, and the Council wishes to make the public aware of the available appointments and identify candidates to fill them.

If you would be interested in serving in any of the Township's appointed positions, please contact the [Township Clerk](#). Thank you for your interest!



Holiday Cheer in Rockaway Township



Rockaway Township held its Annual Christmas Tree Lighting at Park Lake on December 2, followed by a visit from Santa, hot cocoa, cookies and Christmas carols from the Morris Hills Madrigal Choir at the Township Senior Center. Pictured, left to right: Volunteers from the Morris Hills Regional District provide crafts; Jacob, Anna and Noah Ibanez visit with Santa; Mayor Joe Jackson and wife Susanne share their Christmas list with Santa.



Residents are reminded that dog and cat license renewals are due to the Division of Health by January 31!



Dark Lake Spooktacular was held at Park Lake on October 29, 2022. The event, a wonderful collaboration between Rockaway Borough and Rockaway Township, is a fun and safe trick or treating opportunity for the community. A large turnout of young and not-so-young Halloween enthusiasts and many smiles were reported.

Winter Safety Reminders

Winter weather is here, and we would like to provide some safety tips for residents who wish to enjoy the many outdoor activities our area has to offer. Please be safe!!!

In General...

- Check the forecast. Weather can change quickly, so be prepared for anything. Carry backup clothing and supplies.
- Use the proper equipment. Be sure everything is in proper working condition before leaving home.
- Wear proper attire. Use clothing designed for the activity. Don't wear loose items that can be caught in equipment.
- Stay focused; commit 100% of your attention to the activity and the terrain. Rest when you are tired and hydrate often.
- Avoid alcohol. Don't drink before or during any outdoor activity. Alcohol cools the blood and decreases body temperature. It increases fatigue and impairs judgment.

Skiing & Snowboarding

- Stay on runs that are appropriate for your level of ability. Ski-run ratings can vary dramatically by area.
- Ski or snowboard in control at all times; maintain the ability to stop to avoid people or objects.
- Obey all posted signs and warnings. Do not cross ski area boundary lines.
- Do not ski or snowboard alone. Stay where others can see you in case you need assistance.

- Wear a helmet. Most ski areas require them; some rent them. Use goggles rather than sunglasses.
- Take breaks, stay well hydrated and avoid alcohol. Don't overdo it.

Sledding

- Never use roads unless they are blocked off from traffic.
- Avoid sledding directly into wooded areas, onto ice or into water.
- Be aware of sledders at the bottom and those returning up the hill. Wait until the path is clear before starting.

Ice Skating

- Skate in areas that have been approved and posted for ice skating.
- Avoid skating alone; stay where others can see you. Children should never skate unsupervised by adults.
- Ice thickness is never consistent on lakes and ponds, always beware of thin areas.
- Never skate after dark in dark areas.



Mayor's Special Recognition

Mayor Joe Jackson wishes to congratulate the following individuals on their employment with Rockaway Township, and wishes them long, fulfilling careers.

- Cossette Surye, Division of Health
- Zerlina MacDonald, Division of Health
- Noah Rathfon, Department of Public Works
- Deivi Perez, Department of Public Works

- Michael Rossmell, Department of Public Works
- Robert Klaar, Division of Construction
- Erica Letos, Water Utility

Mayor Jackson also wishes to congratulate the following employees on their retirements. Thank you for your dedicated service to our residents!

- Michael Dietrich, Department of Public Works

- Jeff Meudt, Department of Public Works

Mayor Jackson wishes to recognize Miriam Ogalo-Lebron, Public Health Nurse, who received her Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree in Population Health from Caldwell University. The Mayor also congratulates Lou Turk and Jamie Browne of the Construction Office, both of whom earned their Technical Assistant to the Construction Official (TACO) certifications.

From the Tax Collector

First quarter 2023 property taxes are due February 1, 2023. The last day for payment is February 10, 2023. Please contact the Tax Collector's office if you need to know the amount due.

Residents in need of *Senior Freeze* (property tax reimbursement) assistance may call the State's hotline at 1-800-882-6597. If you require assistance with New Jersey's *Homestead Credit* program may call the State's hotline at 1-888-238-1233. If you have any questions in reference to the above items, please feel free to contact the Tax Collector's office at 973-983-2822.

Payment Information

Residents may now make partial tax payments online through the Township website. Any partial payment must be *enough to cover all interest due* at the time of payment. Any credit left will go toward the oldest principal balance. Please also allow two business days for the payment to process and for the account to be updated. If you have questions or are unsure about how to make a payment, please call the office.

For homeowners using their bank's website to generate a payment, please be aware that these are not electronic

transfers between banks. Payments are in the form of material checks that are mailed to the Rockaway Township Municipal Building, so please allow enough time for the check to arrive. Your payment (check) is processed effective the date of receipt, and interest is charged accordingly

When using your bank's website for payment, we ask that you:

- Please review the account information and update if necessary.
- Please do not use Rockaway Township as your payor, but instead, be more specific. Please use Rockaway Township Tax Collector, Rockaway Township Sewer Maintenance and Rockaway Township Municipal Utility.
- Please provide as much information as possible so payments are applied correctly.
- Payments cannot not be held for over 24 hours, so please make sure date of payment is appropriate or it will be returned to you.
- If you are making partial, blanket payments, please reach out to the office so we can note your account. This will better ensure payments are applied correctly.

Connect with Health-Related Resources & Programs

The Rockaway Township Division of Health introduces *RockawayConnect*, a monthly email update containing information regarding health-related programs, clinics, resources, recreation programs and more. [Go here](#) to join the distribution list.



ROCKAWAY TOWNSHIP
New Jersey

January 2023 | News & Updates

Welcome to ROCKAWAYCONNECT! We will be providing you with information and reminders on future public events, resources, and reports. We hope to connect with our residents directly by providing them the most updated information and necessary resources to maintain a happy and healthy community.

To ensure you receive our monthly newsletter, sign up [here](#).

Don't forget to follow our [Facebook page](#) and [Website](#) for more frequent updates on other town news and activities.

Recognizing Rockaway’s Local Businesses

Supporting our local shops and services is important on a number of levels. Following are the local businesses that Mayor Jackson recognized in 2022 under his *Support Local Businesses* initiative:

Orangetheory Fitness

Tara Hudson, owner
Independently owned fitness franchise that offers group-based personal training classes.
 395 Mt. Hope Avenue
 Rockaway Township
 973 315-5155

ROCCO’S Cuts & More

Rocco Lopomo, owner
Hair and waxing services for women and men.
 321 Mt. Hope Avenue
 Rockaway Township
 862-209-1355

Caruso Della Ventura Home Improvements

Devin Caruso, owner
Home remodeling, including kitchens, bathrooms, decks, flooring and siding.
 973-997-7935

KB Plumbing & Heating

Ken Walters, owner
Plumbing and heating for commercial and residential properties.
 15A Upper Mountain Avenue
 Rockaway Township
 973-586-0156

Travelin Tat Airbrush Tattoos & Gellyball

Mike Sternlicht, owner
Eco-friendly water shooting booth and airbrush tattoos.
 973-975-8835

Tony and Vinnie’s Italian Bakery & Deli

Alonso & Olympia Calle, owners
Italian delicacies, pastries, salads and sandwiches.
 405 Route 46 East
 Rockaway Township
 973-366-3330

Designed Well To Sell: A Home Staging & Design Company

Michelle Sarkisian, owner
Home staging & interior design company
 973-974-4909

Rockaway Township Night at Peterson Field a Great Success



Rockaway Township Night, including a ribbon cutting ceremony for improvements at Peterson Field, was held on October 21, 2022. The event included food trucks, interactive games, exhibit tables, ‘touch-a-truck’ displays, and an opportunity to walk or run on the new turf field. *Photo left:* Michael Rotonde, representative from project contracting firm Dakota Contracting, Township Engineer Allison Ferrante, Mayor Joe Jackson, Township Principal Engineer Mahmoud Hassan, and Denis Keenan, project design engineer from French and Parrello Associates, walk the new turf at the ribbon cutting event. *Photo Right:* Brittany Bernstein, Miriam Ogalo-Lebron and Cossette Surye of the Division of Health meet with residents and provide giveaways.

Public Works Winter Tips

Plowing Policies

With winter upon us, here are some tips to avoid snow plowing rage!

- Park cars off the street
- To minimize multiple shoveling commitments, don't clear driveways near the street until plowing is complete
- Don't shovel driveway snow onto the street – This is a violation of Township Ordinances and creates a hazard
- Don't shovel sidewalks onto street – this is also a violation of Township Ordinances and creates a hazard
- Per Township Ordinance, residents have 24 hours to remove snow from sidewalks in front of their home
- If you wish to file a claim for damage to your vehicle caused by Township equipment, you must have a police report

Avoid towing and impound charges: Township Ordinance 7-6.3(a,b) imposes temporary parking

prohibition when snow has fallen and accumulated, at which point an emergency shall be declared until the snow has ceased and the streets have been plowed sufficiently. Any unoccupied vehicles may be towed and impounded at the owner's expense. Please cooperate with plow crews by parking off the roads until plowing is complete. This will ensure safe, clean streets.

To report an ice condition, call 973-983-2891. To report a snow or ice related emergency off hours, please contact the Rockaway Township Police Department at 973-625-4000.

Street Lights

Street lights are maintained by Jersey Central Power and Light (JCP&L). As a courtesy, the Township can report a street light outage to the utility company if you provide us with the exact street address. Outages and street light issues may also be reported directly to JCP&L by dialing 800-662-3115 or by visiting www.firstenergycorp.com/service_requests/report-lighting-problem.html?form and completing their on-line form.

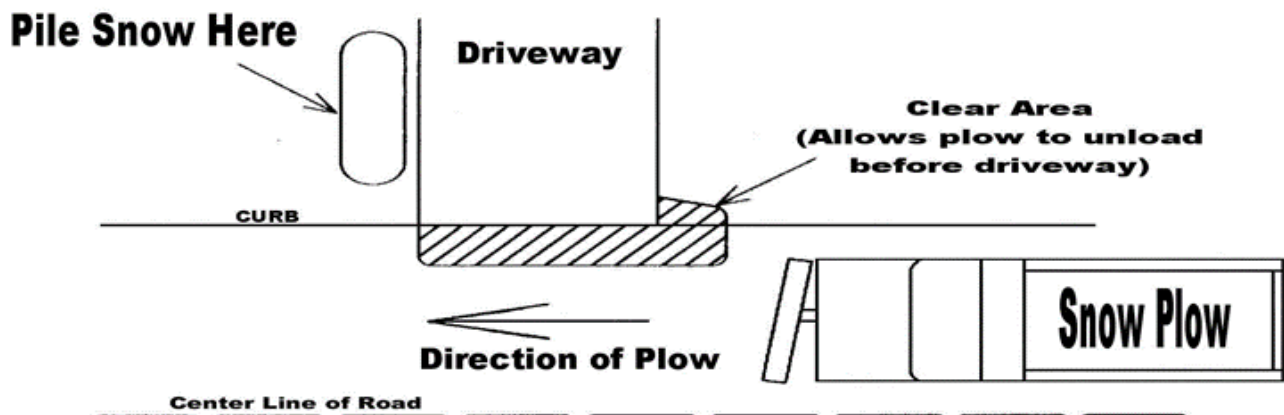
Proper Shoveling: Driveways, Sidewalks & Fire Hydrants

With winter here, the Rockaway Township Department of Public Works asks your assistance in keeping our streets, sidewalks and fire hydrants clear of snow. Residents are reminded to shovel

snow away from the street and fire hydrants when cleaning sidewalks, and to help neighbors who are elderly, handicapped or who have medical conditions. Please use the following guidelines when

determining where to shovel snow when cleaning your driveway, or when clearing sidewalks and fire hydrants. The Department of Public Works thanks you for your help!

Driveway Plowing Policies



Holiday Giving Campaign a Success

Challenges brought on during the past few years by the COVID-19 pandemic and the economy have led to a greater degree of need among local families. In response, the Rockaway Township Division of Health, partnering with Mayor Joe Jackson, created a holiday season food and gift card campaign to mitigate some of the financial burden incurred.

The holiday giving campaign was coordinated by the Division of Health's Local Health Outreach Coordinator, Brittany Bernstein, and Infectious Disease Preparedness Generalist, Marina Garcia. Rockaway Township worked with the Holiday Wishes program, managed by Brenda Budd Dunn, to distribute donated goods to underserved families of Rockaway Township and Rockaway Borough.

Donations were collected for one month, with the goal of raising \$1,000 and collecting 100 pounds of non-perishable food. Thanks to the generosity of our community, 350 pounds of food and \$1,850 in gift card/check donations were collected. The Faith Family Fellowship and Rockaway Township Police Athletic League (RTPAL) made particularly large donations.

Mayor Jackson and the Division of Health wish to thank those who donated. Thanks are also due to Brenda Budd Dunn and the Holiday Wishes program volunteers, for their hard work and dedication to residents of the Rockaways.



Your 2023 Governing Body

Mayor
Joe Jackson

**Council President,
Council at Large**
Howard Kritz

**Council Vice President,
Council Ward 2**
John 'Jack' Quinn

Ward 1 Council Member
Mary Noon

Ward 3 Council Member
Douglas Brookes

Ward 4 Council Member
Jonathan Sackett

Ward 5 Council Member
Emanuel Friedlander

Ward 6 Council Member
Rachael Brookes

At Large Council Member
Adam Salberg

At Large Council Member
Pawel Wojtowicz

Recycling News from the Township

Collection Schedule

Collection schedules are available for recycling (Routes A-F), yard waste and bulk collections. If you haven't already, please visit www.rockawaytownship.org/189/Recycle and click on the 'My Schedule' tab and input your home address. Here you can view your current collection month or click on 'Get a Calendar' to view or print your annual collection calendar.

Residents are encouraged to sign up for alerts and reminders with Rockaway Township's 'ReCollect' app. Click on 'Get a Reminder' to sign up for alerts, such as cancelled or postponed collection. 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 cardboard collection, you may break down up to three boxes and place them in one large box. Please note our recycling centers are *not* single stream.

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. No plastic bags, Styrofoam or garbage may be mixed with recyclables. All cans must be labeled. 'Recycling' and 'Vegetative Waste' stickers are available for your convenience. If you would like labels mailed to you, call 973-983-2891; provide your name and address.

The Rockaways Honor Four Star General & All Veterans



On Saturday, November 12, 2022 Rockaway Township, Rockaway Borough and the Rockaway Township Chapter of UNICO joined together to host an event honoring Four Star General Raymond Odierno and all Veterans of the Rockaways. A beautiful and moving ceremony and tribute was held at Park Lake honoring the men and women who gave their best when called upon to serve and protect our country.

General Odierno, a native of Rockaway Borough and Morris Hills High School graduate, was memorialized and honored by several speakers and dignitaries, culminating with a proclamation presented by Mayor Joe Jackson.

General Odierno commanded American and coalition forces in Iraq during the height of the war there, and capped his 39-year career by serving as the Army's chief of staff. Odierno was a 1976 West Point graduate and was stationed in Germany, Saudi Arabia, the Balkans and the United States during his career.

Photo left: Mayor Jackson honors General Odierno with a proclamation. *Photo center:* Members of the Rockaway Township Police Department's Honor Guard participate in the ceremony. *Photo right:* Residents of the Rockaways came out to honor General Odierno and observe the dedication of a commemorative stone.

Fall Events in Rockaway Township



Mayor Jackson reads 'Twas the Night Before Christmas at the Ford Faesch Ironmaster's House Dutch Holiday Celebration on December 10, 2022. The event included food, fun, crafts and some living history.



Rockaway Township Animal Control Officer Daniel McDonald and Veterinarian Ray Czarnecki of the Hodes Veterinary Group vaccinate a furry friend at the December 3, 2022 Rockaway Township free rabies clinic.



The Rockaway Township Police Department reminds residents that passing a school bus is a threat to children and their caretakers - and is illegal. Please drive safely!



Mayor Joe Jackson and Council Member Jonathan Sackett join Rabbi Asher Herson of the Chabad Center of Northwest New Jersey for the Township's Annual Menorah Lighting.

Water Utility Completes Significant Projects

The Rockaway Township Water Utility is pleased to advise residents that dramatic improvements have been made to our infrastructure and operations, in an effort to improve the quality of water delivery for our customers. Some of the exciting projects and improvements include:

Fully Developed SCADA Operating System

SCADA is a centralized computer application that will allow the Water Utility to oversee all system well house and distribution operations in a centralized command center. This will improve water quality and response times to problematic issues. Having a centralized command center will allow operators to adjust chemical treatments more efficiently, will improve troubleshooting with historical trends and live residual readings, will improve preventative maintenance by observing problems beforehand and more.

Fully Developed GIS and Hydraulic System Model

The GIS system is a complete inventory and mapped model of our entire Township. Customers may have noticed painted marks throughout town, usually blue and green in color. The Utility visited all customer service connections to locate sewer cleanouts and water curb stops, and also marked out all of the transmission mains. This will allow the Utility to know the location of every system component, so we may improve operations and efficiencies.

The hydraulic model is a software tool that allows the Township to run scenarios before implementing them in real time. This will provide a better understanding of how the system works and how water flows, and can help improve the system through engineering or operational adjustments before our customers are impacted.

Leak Detection Surveys and Repair

The Water Utility performed an extensive survey to locate leaks

in our system before they have surfaced. As part of this survey, six leaks were located and fully repaired. At the beginning of 2022, our water loss was 40 percent, but the Utility is proud to report that water loss was reduced to 26 percent by the end of the year.

Carbon Dioxide Well Rehab Treatment

The Utility successfully performed a carbon dioxide well rehabilitation to one of the raw water wells in the Township system. This well was found to be significantly reduced in operating capacity at the beginning of 2022, as it was expected to produce 110 gallons per minute but was only producing 20 gallons per minute. The well now produces 60 gallons per minute, a three-fold increase. Further monitoring will help determine whether the treatment is performed again for further improvement.

Employee Accomplishments

The Rockaway Township Water Utility encourages workforce development, not only to improve staff knowledge about water quality but to furnish the Township with more State-licensed operators. The Utility recognizes the following employees for their new credentials:

- Dennis Crothers passed the NJDEP State Certified C-2 Operator Licensing exam.
- Michael Kabasakalian passed the T-I Water Treatment Operations course and will be taking the NJDEP T-I Operator Licensing exam in 2023.
- Derek Simmons enrolled in both the C-I Collections Operations course and the T-I Water Treatment Operations course.
- Nick Wekilsy enrolled in the C-I Collections Operations course.

Health: Stay Warm During Extreme Weather



If you or someone you know is interested in senior exercise programs, contact the Division of Recreation at 973-983-2841!

When temperatures drop significantly below normal, staying warm can become a challenge. Extremely cold temperatures also may be accompanied by a winter storm, so you may have to cope with power failures and icy roads.

Although staying indoors may reduce the risk of car accidents and falls on the ice, there are indoor hazards to contend with. Power failures or inadequate heating systems can render a home too cold during extreme weather events. In addition, the use of space heaters and fireplaces for warmth may increase the risk of household fires or elevated carbon monoxide levels.

While infants and the elderly are most at risk during such events, anyone may be susceptible to accidents, hypothermia and frostbite.

Following are some tips to prevent cold-related health risks during emergencies.

Plan ahead at home with supplies like:

- dry firewood
- kerosene for kerosene heater
- furnace fuel
- electric space heater with automatic shut-off
- blankets, matches, flashlights
- dry-chemical fire extinguisher
- first aid kit
- battery-powered radio
- extra batteries
- non-electric can opener
- snow shovel & rock salt
- special needs (i.e., diapers, medications)
- food that needs no cooking or refrigeration
- bottled water
- regular maintenance, including antifreeze
- cold temperature wiper fluid
- replace worn tires & check pressure
- keep gas tank near full to avoid ice/condensation
- blankets, tool kit, first aid kit
- mobile phone
- windshield scraper
- booster cables
- road maps & compass
- sand or cat litter for traction
- tow rope & collapsible shovel
- flashlight & extra batteries

More Fall Happenings in the Township

Smoke Detectors Save Lives!

Please remember to check each smoke detector in your home for working batteries



Mayor Joe Jackson was pleased to swear in four new officers in January. Thomas Ferry, Ryan Keiper, Michael Dezenzo and Michael Bautista will train at the Morris County Police and Fire Safety Training Academy and subsequently will be deployed to serve and protect the residents of Rockaway Township.



On October 15, the Rockaway Township Fire Department hosted its 71st annual inspection of the Township's firehouses and apparatuses. The inspection was followed by a dinner and awards ceremony, attended by the Mayor, various Township officials and volunteer firefighters. Pictured is Bert Parks, past Department Chief.