

Supervisor's News

Tom Hooker, Supervisor

Treasurer's Forum

Carol Houseman, Treasurer

It is wonderful to live, work and raise a family in Byron Township. I just began my second year as supervisor and want you to know I desire to be available to help you if the need arises. Our Byron staff are available to help you and answer any questions you may have. Byron continues to grow because of our Blue Ribbon Schools, low taxes, great businesses and strong family values.

- While our community is enduring a cold winter, our Recreation Center is open for exercise, fellowship and activities. Memberships are available to [keep those New Year's Resolutions](#).
- Wednesday, February 14 is the deadline for residential winter tax payments and Valentine's Day. [Remember both](#).
- Our offices are open 8AM-5PM daily. Board meetings are the 2nd and 4th Monday's at 7:00PM.
- The Byron Township Board has adopted an ordinance to implement a residential rental inspection program. Together with the Township and the Fire Department, this program is designed to improve compliance with health and safety standards and enhance overall rental housing quality.
- Thanks to our Byron and Cutlerville Firefighters who set new records in response to fire and medical emergencies. Special thanks for serving even during the Christmas and New Year's Days.
- Thanks also to our Kent County Deputy Sheriff's and School Liaison Officer protecting our community.
- The Kenowa Trail will finish its connection this spring with work on Quincy (68th) to Kenowa and 56th Street.
- We finally have all our streets open from many road projects including M-6 this past year. Thanks to our Kent County Road Commission for partnering with us on many projects each year.
- Our offices will be offering a free dump pass for Byron Township residents to the Kent County Landfill located off 100th Street for the month of April. Pick one up at the township hall.

Our Clerk, Treasurer, Assessor and Building Departments are ready to serve your needs. If I can help you please contact me at 878-1222 or tomhooker@byrontownship.org. Our Nationally recognized schools appreciate your support at they build, grow and work toward continued excellence.

FROM YOUR BUILDING OFFICIAL RANDY ZOMERLEI

WOW, can you believe it is 2018 already? Where did 2017 go? I know it is only January, but now is the time to start planning your spring projects. Getting plans drawn up, and getting all your permits so that when spring arrives, you will be ready to go.

With all the cold and snow we are receiving, be aware of how much snow and ice is accumulating on your roof. You may remove the snow with a roof rake and remove the ice with salt or an ice melt material.

Also, once the snow is melted, it is a good time to walk around your house to make sure the grade slopes away from the foundation. This will help keep water from seeping into your basement. Also, spring is a good time to check if your shingles, siding and windows are in good shape.

Wishing everyone a happy and healthy 2018.

Happy New Year and welcome to our Michigan Wonderland.

The winter statements were mailed the 1st of December and are due by 5pm on Wednesday, February 14, 2018. Payments can be made in person, by mail, or on our website at byrontownship.org. We accept late payments at the township until Wednesday, February 28, 2018. If payment in full is not possible, partial payments are accepted. Interest and penalty is applied only to the unpaid balance. On March 1, unpaid taxes are turned over to Kent County for collection and additional fees will be applied. Delinquent personal property taxes remain at the township for collection. ALL BUSINESS OWNERS: Make sure to complete your personal property statements as well as the exemption forms. You may be eligible to have your personal property taxes waived or exempted. If you have questions on the forms, you may call the Assessing Office at 878-6033

Dog licenses are now available in our office all year and can be purchased for 1 year or 3 years depending on the rabies expiration date. The license is due the same month as the rabies vaccination was given. Remember to bring in your letter from Kent County, if you received one, proof of rabies and proof of altering.

Did you know that we have 3 notaries on staff? One of us is usually in the office most days. To be sure, just call ahead 616-878-9066. There is not a fee for this service.

If you ever have any questions, you may stop in or call 878-3196 and Jacki or I will be happy to help you.

FROM YOUR TOWNSHIP ASSESSOR CRAIG DEYOUNG

TRANSFERS OF OWNERSHIPS AND UNCAPPING OF TAXABLE VALUES

According to Proposal A, when a property (or interest in a property) is transferred, the following year's State Equalized Value (SEV) becomes that year's Taxable Value. In other words, if you purchased a property in 2017, the Taxable Value for 2018 will be the same as the 2018 SEV. The Taxable Value will then be "capped" again in the second year following the transfer of ownership. It is the responsibility of the buyer in a transfer to file a Property Transfer Affidavit with the Assessors Office within 45 days of the transfer. Failure to file a Property Transfer Affidavit could result in a penalty of \$5 per day for each day after the 45 day period with a maximum penalty of \$200. Property Transfer Affidavit forms are available from the local assessor or online.

It is important to note that a property does not uncap to the selling price, but to the SEV in the year following the transfer of ownership.

PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE EXEMPTION

If you own and occupy your home as your principal residence, it may be exempt from a portion of local school operating taxes. You may check your percentage of principal residence exemption on your "Notice of Assessment". If the percentage exempt as "Principal Residence" is 0% on your assessment notice and you wish to claim an exemption for the current year, a Principal Residence Exemption Affidavit must be completed and filed with the Assessors Office prior to June 1 for a full year exemption and prior to November 1 for an exemption for the Winter portion only. Furthermore, if you currently have a Principal Residence Exemption on your property and you no longer own and occupy the property as your primary residence, you must rescind the Principal Residence Exemption with the Assessors Office.

Clerk's Corner
Joel H. Hondorp, Clerk

2018 Election Schedule

August 7 – Primary Election

November 6 – General Election

Absentee Voting

Please call my office at 878-9104 if you have the desire to vote absentee and fit the following qualifications: 60 years or older, absent from the community on Election Day, physically unable to attend the polls, prohibited from attending due to religious beliefs, in jail awaiting arraignment or trial, or working in as a precinct inspector on Election Day. You can also download a form from our website or the Secretary of State's Website.

Notary Service

If you have the need for Notary Service, we have notaries on staff and we provide the service at no charge. A notary is available usually Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Bring your unsigned documents and proof of identity.

**NEW WATER AND WASTEWATER RATES
EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2018**

The Byron-Gaines Utility Authority works very hard to provide clean, safe drinking water and sanitary sewer services as transparent to our customers as possible. You shouldn't have to think about it; that's our job. We do, however, need you to take a moment to think of how much it costs to keep the water flowing and wastewater draining away.

Byron Township's Water & Sewer Department along with Gaines Charter Township Water & Sewer Department faces sizeable expense in providing life-sustaining water and wastewater services. The Water & Sewer Department does not receive revenue from property taxes or any other financial support from the Township Government. The Water & Sewer Department is an enterprise fund; an organization that provides goods or services to the public for a fee that makes the entity self-supporting. The total cost of the operations and maintenance of the Water and Sewer Department are financed entirely from user Ready to Serve fees – that are paid by you every quarter.

Every year the two Townships review their rates based on the last fiscal year's expenses and local income to make sure they are sufficient to cover the cost of providing services.

Regular rate adjustments are necessary to make sure the rates generate the right amount of revenue and cash flow to provide reliable and sustainable services to the community. The City of Wyoming provides our water and treatment of our wastewater; therefore, rates are also in direct correlation to what Wyoming charges us for the commodity. Rates must keep up with the increasing cost of operations, including increases in electricity, raw materials like fuel and chemicals, insurance and labor, and changing regulatory requirements. Rates must also include depreciation expense and provide funds for emergencies.

On December 11th, 2017, at a regularly scheduled meeting, the Township Board approved the latest rate study and its recommended rates. The 2018 Water and Sewer rates will remain the same, as adopted in 2017. Please call our office if you have questions about the 2018 rates or you can view them on the Byron Township website, posted under Water and Sewer Department.

POTABLE WATER RATES

Billed at approximately 92-day intervals, the water rates consist of two separate charges:

Water Ready to Serve Fee ~ based on meter size and applicable to each domestic water meter account regardless of the consumption quantity.

Consumption Charge ~ the charge applicable to each 1,000 gallons of water that passes through the water meter.

WASTEWATER RATES

Just like potable water rates, wastewater rates consist of two separate charges ~ a sewer ready to serve fee based on water meter size and applicable to each account, regardless of the consumption quantity, and a consumption charge applicable to each 1,000 gallons of water that passes through the domestic water meter. There are NO ready to serve fees charged for water or sewer on an irrigation meter nor are there consumption charges for SEWER on an irrigation meter.

Payment Options

We have several different payment options. Of course, you are always welcome to step into the Township Treasurers Office and pay in person with cash, check or credit card. We accept Master Card, Visa, and Discover. We do not take payments over the phone.

Remember you can always pay after hours by using the drop box located by the East entrance. Payment must be received by 5:00 p.m. on the date it is due.

You can find a form on our website for an automatic withdrawal out of your checking or savings account quarterly. There is no charge for this from the township and it is a one time set up for continuous withdrawals on the 20th of the month that your quarterly bill is due. You will still receive a utility bill; however, on the bottom left it will say "**Auto-Draft Do Not Pay**". If you chose to pay it before the 20th that month, it will not be deducted from your account that month.

Also available is a customer initiated debit/credit or checking or savings withdrawal when you receive your bill. On our website: www.byrontownship.org. When you use your debit or credit card the merchant will charge approximately 3% in a convenience fee that will be added to your total. For a checking or savings withdrawal, the merchant will charge a nominal fee of \$0.25 to be added to your total amount.

Helpful Hints

We have paperless billing available to you. Email debbie@byrontownship.org and let us know that you would like to set up paperless billing for your quarterly water & sewer utility bill.

Watch for messages on your bills, and glance at the back side of your bill for important information about leaks and penalties. Also located on the back of your bill is a link to view the current Water Quality Report.

Please inform us when you will be gone for an extended period of time as the post office will no longer forward your postcard bill. Sometimes it can take weeks for the postcard to be returned to the Water and Sewer Department, and then placed in an envelope to be mailed out again. This process can result in late fees assessed to your water and sewer account.

Irrigation Meter

If you use a large volume of water or installing a new irrigation system for your new lawn and landscaping, you may wish to consider purchasing a second water meter for irrigation before next summer. Remember, additional water use results in additional sewer usage charges as well. With the second meter, you will not be billed for any sewer usage when you irrigate your lawn. For example, if you sprinkled your lawn over a billing period of 3 months using a total of 80,000 gallons, the sewer use charge alone would be about \$200.00. If you had a second meter there would be no sewer use charge.

Most people use more water for sprinkling than they think they do.

Depending on how much you sprinkle, we anticipate that you will be able to save money on your water and sewer bill during the sprinkling season and recoup your initial investment over a 2-3-year period.

The actual meter and inside plumbing inspection would cost approximately \$625.00. The actual plumbing work costs will depend on the complexities of your plumbing system and the plumber who does the work. We don't require that you hire a licensed plumber, if the plumbing is set up properly.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to call us at (616) 878-0660 or visit our website at www.byrontownship.org and click on water & sewer.