

AMHERST TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

www.amhersttownship.us

Fall 2013

Vol. XVIII No. 3

Recycling Report

Amherst Township recycled the following quantities in the 2nd quarter of 2013.

Cardboard	17.74	Plastics 1's & 2's	3.69
Mixed Paper	16.28	Plastics 3's to 7's	1.20
Newspaper	9.19	Glass	13.75
Bi-Metal Cans	1.42	Other	0.13
Aluminum Cans	0.84	Residual	15.73

*Above quantities are all listed in tons.

0.73 tons of various paper through the "ABITIBI Paper Retriever" program

2.82 tons of scrap metal through the dumpster program

For questions concerning the "Curbside Recycling Program", contact **Allied Waste Services** at **458-5191**.

"2013" Dumpster Days

Amherst Township has set the following dates for "Dumpster Days" in 2013:

October 3, 4, 5

Hours are from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Please note: **NO TIRES!**

NO PROPANE TANKS!

Drop-Off Hours for Yard Waste!!

Brush, limbs, grass clippings, and leaves may be brought to the Amherst Township property located on the **EAST** side of Oberlin Road (directly across from the Township Garage which is located at 7530 Oberlin Road) at the following times:

- 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Mon – Fri
- 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Saturday
- 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. 2nd & 4th Tuesdays
- Amherst Township Residents only
- I.D. may be checked
- No Commercial
- **No Plastic Bags** – place bags in 55 gal drum
- ➔ **Yard Waste Pile** is located at the far back of the property on the east side of Oberlin Road.

Compost & Wood Chips

Free compost and wood chips **may be** available from the Township. If you are interested, contact John Szeftcyk, Road Superintendent, at 988-5894 – Ext. 111.

Have a problem? Complaint forms are available at the Township Hall, inside the white bulletin board, or they may be downloaded from the Township's website.

Township Hall & Garage 988-5894

Fax 988-5877

Fiscal Officer **Ext. 104**

Email: amhersttwpfo@oh.rr.com

Road Superintendent (garage) **Ext. 111**

Email: amhersttwproads@oh.rr.com

Office (Zoning Inspector) **Ext. 103**

Office Hours for Zoning Insp.:

Mon., Wed., & Sat. – 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Voice Mail is checked daily

Email: amhersttwpzoning@oh.rr.com

Remi Cerrone, Zoning Inspector

Trustees

Dennis Abraham (cell) 213-6775

(Ambulance, Cemetery, Park, Water, Buildings, Land, Enterprise Zones, County Health Rep.)

Neil Lynch 988-7681

(Zoning, Sewer, Fire, Equipment, Personnel, LORCO, Phase II Storm Water/ Environmental Strategy, Senior Services, Facility Security, NIMS Primary Contact, Lorain County Community Alliance Rep, Lorain County Joint Police District Rep.)

David C. Urig..... 385-0333

(Lighting, Solid Waste, Roads, Ditches)

Fiscal Officer

Howard Akin 233-7624

Road Superintendent

John Szeftcyk 320-7157

Amherst Twp Senior Services Office

Carol Schmitkons..... **Ext. 102**

Email: amhersttwpseniors@oh.rr.com

Office Hours – Mon thru Fri – 8am to 12 Noon

Fire Prevention Officer

Wayne Eppley..... 324-3921

LifeCare Ambulance, Inc.

Pete or Herb de la Porte 323-6111

Sheriff's Department..... 329-3710

Ohio Edison

Automated Outage Reporting Line 1-888-544-4877

TRUSTEE MEETINGS:

2nd & 4th Tuesdays of each month at **7:00 p.m.**

Amherst Township Trustee Meetings may be viewed on Amherst Cable Channel 12. They will air for 7 days, running Mon – Mon, following the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month. Air times are at 9 am, 4 pm, & 11 pm. All airings are subject to change.

CRIME PREVENTION!

Amherst Township residents as well as many neighboring communities have seen a rise in the number of break-ins that are occurring in their neighborhoods. The Lorain County Sheriff's Department along with the Drug Task Force has shared many tips on what can be done to help prevent these break-ins, what can be done to help catch these thieves, and what can be done to improve the safety to residents, their families, and their neighborhoods.

While the majority of crime has been in the higher density areas of the township, crime can (and does) happen in any neighborhood. The majority of burglaries tend to happen during the daytime when most people are away at work or school, but there is no set time or day when these crimes occur. Many of the motor vehicle thefts tend to be at night.

Protecting your home and family from criminal intrusion should be high on your list of priorities. Becoming a burglary victim can leave a family feeling vulnerable and violated. To avoid becoming a burglary victim, consider some of the following tips.

Keep Your Home Secured

- Keep your doors locked, even when you are at home. If you are in the back yard, keep your overhead garage door closed and your front doors and windows locked. If you are mowing and your house is unoccupied, keep all your doors locked and carry a house key with you.
- Keep your overhead garage door closed, especially during the night.
- Keep your ground-floor windows locked.
- Use a secondary blocking device on all sliding glass doors.
- Do not leave a spare house key in obvious places, such as in a planter box, under a door mat, or above a ledge.
- Do not let strangers into your house. Ask for ID.
- Use a timer to turn lights on/off in your home on a daily basis, and especially when you are away.
- Leave on outside lights when it is dark out.
- Install a security system.
- Install motion-sensing outdoor lights.
- Consider getting a dog.

Keep Your Car Secured

- Keep car doors locked, even when they are stored in your garage.
- Do not keep your purse or valuables in your car.
- Do not leave anything in plain sight that would entice someone to want to break into your car. This would include items such as change, cell phones, electronics, CD's, etc.

Be A Good Neighbor

- Get to know your neighbors. Share names and phone numbers with each other.
- Have a trusted neighbor keep an eye on your home when you are away.
- Look for things that are out of place in your neighborhood. Note any suspicious vehicles, people, or activities. Be a good witness and record as much information as possible, noting who, what, where, and when (time, date, and duration) as well as recording license plate numbers if applicable.

Safety Tips

- Keep a spare car remote next to your bed. Use the Panic Button if your home is broken into.
- Photograph and record the serial numbers of all valuables. Photocopy the contents of your wallet and other documents. Store the copies in a safe deposit box or with a relative.

Contact Numbers

Residents can store the Sheriff Department phone numbers in their cell phones and post the numbers by their home phone for quick use. These are non-emergency phone numbers:

329-3710

To contact the Sheriff's dispatch from your cell phone without being charged, call:

323-1212

To contact the Drug Task Force call:

284-0615

Enter these numbers into your cell phone right now! For all emergency calls, dial "911".

Being A Good Witness

At a previously held neighborhood meeting, the Lorain County Sheriff's Department shared information on being a good witness and handed out a "Suspect & Vehicle Description Sheet" to use when gathering information to report to the Sheriff. Below are some of the highlights of that information:

General Appearance

- Note the Race, Sex, and approximate age, height, and weight of a person
- **Eyes:** Color, shape, eye glasses, or sun glasses
- **Hair:** Color, length, style, hat, baseball cap, mask
- **Face:** Nose, mouth, teeth, lips, ears, mustache, beard, goatee, sideburns, moles, complexion
- **Shirt:** Sleeve length, coat, tie, vest, sweater, or hood – Note any logos, brands, colors, or designs
- **Pants:** Material, length, brands, colors, or designs
- **Shoes:** Type, logos, colors, or barefoot
- **Accessories:** Backpack, book bag, or jewelry
- **Scars/Tattoos:** Shape size, style, color, or names

Vehicle Description

- Color, Make, Model, Body Style, # of Doors
- License Plate Number
- Window Tint
- Dents or Damages to Vehicle
- Bumper Stickers
- Number of Occupants

Note the Direction of Travel of the person or vehicle.

Residents should not place themselves in harms way. They should report any and all suspicious activity to the Sheriff's office. If the crime is in progress, dial "911". If safely possible, use a camera or cell phone to record information.



We would like to give our praise and thanks to the Lorain County Sheriff's Department for their cooperation and involvement in Amherst Township. They have given their time to educate and inform our residents on how to protect themselves and make our community a safer place to live. They provided information and guidance on how to start a Neighborhood Watch program. In addition, several arrests have already been made for crimes that were committed in our township.

Hidden Valley Area

Neighborhood Watch Program

A Neighborhood Watch Program is one of the most effective and least costly answers to crime. It is an association of neighbors who look out for each other's families and property, alert the Sheriff to any suspicious activities or crime in progress, and work together to make their community a safer and better place to live. With guidance from the Lorain County Sheriff's Office, members can learn home security techniques, observation skills, and crime reporting. Residents also learn about the types of crime that affect their area.

A "Neighborhood Watch Program" is currently being formed in the Hidden Valley Area. **Heidi Laakso** has volunteered to be the Focal Liaison. Five others have volunteered to be Block Captains, but more are needed. Captains will coordinate with their close neighbors to watch, witness, and report.

Any resident can be a part of the program, either as a "Watcher" or as a "Block Captain". Many residents are already participating by joining the Facebook Group:

Hidden Valley, Amherst Township, Ohio

This is a "closed" Group. Anyone can see the Group and who is in it, but to view posts you must request to be added to the group. There are three administrators to this Facebook Group. They are Bill Latrany, Chip Rathwell, and Carol Gallagher.

If you are not on Facebook, you can contact Heidi Laakso by email at: igrmk9s@yahoo.com. If you are not connected to the internet, Bill and Carol are listed in the white pages of your phone book.

Special thanks to Deputies Vansant and Bungard for their work in the township. If residents would like to contact either one of them concerning the crime in the township, an email can be sent to them at:

rvansant@loraincountysheriff.com
mbungard@loraincountysheriff.com

New Waste Hauler – Lower Residential Cost in 2014

Amherst Township and 13 other Lorain County communities formed the Lorain County Solid Waste Consortium in order to obtain a joint competitive bid for solid waste and recyclable materials collection service. The Consortium opened bids on 09/06/13, and shortly thereafter, individual Consortium members selected Rumpke of Ohio, Inc. as the “lowest & best” bidder in accordance with Ohio law.

Rumpke will become the new residential waste and recycling service provider in Amherst Township beginning in January 2014. The term of the agreement will be for five years. The Rumpke bid prices for various waste/recyclable container combinations are listed in the following table. An additional quarterly fee for legal and consulting cost will be added to the bid prices. The legal and consulting fee will be determined based upon the number of Consortium members that select Rumpke as their residential waste and recycling service provider. At this point in time, the consulting and legal fees are not expected to exceed \$1.50 per quarter year.

“Solid Waste” Container Size (Gallons)	“Recyclable Materials” Container Size (Gallons)	Bid Price per Residential Unit per Quarter
96	64	\$53.25
64	64	\$47.79
32	64	\$42.90

It is estimated that each residential home in Amherst Township will save at least \$120 per year. Residents can save even more if they select one of the smaller size waste containers.

Rumpke will also provide the Amherst Township facility on Oberlin Road with dumpsters for township “Dumpster Days” and other waste accumulated by the township. This would save Amherst Township up to \$15,000 per year, money that can be used for other township services

The Board of Trustees is working with Rumpke to ensure a smooth transition from your current solid waste and recyclable materials collection service provider to Rumpke. The Trustees recognize that this change may cause some inconveniences and frustration over the short term, but we hope our residents agree that the minor inconveniences that may be experienced will be more than offset by the benefit of the cost savings. After we get through the initial “rough patch”, service quality should return to the levels that you have experienced in the past.

Residents will be receiving additional correspondence from Rumpke and in a future newsletter explaining the transition. At this point in time, residents should select the solid waste container size that fits their need and budget from the table above. Most Amherst Township residents currently use a 96-Gallon waste container, with smaller families using a 64-Gallon waste container. Rumpke also offers a 32-gallon waste container that may fit your needs.

To facilitate the transition call Rumpke at 800-828-8171 to select your preferred size of waste container.

Rumpke will be at the 7:00 pm Tuesday, November 12th Trustee meeting to answer residents questions.



REMEMBER TO VOTE!

This year’s general election will be on Tuesday, **November 5th**. Polls will be open from 6:30 am to 7:30 pm. Remember to bring your identification with you to the polls. Please exercise your right to vote. The Lorain County Board of Elections is located at 1985 North Ridge Road East, in Lorain. For more information about voting you can call them at 326-5900 or visit their website at: <http://loraincountyelections.com>

PERMITS REQUIRED

Residents are reminded that permits are needed for pools, decks, porches, patios, gazebos, fences, ponds, signs, garages, new construction, building additions, accessory buildings, and driveways. When a permit is obtained before the start of construction, the fee will be reduced by 50%. Be sure you or your contractor has obtained a permit. **Payments must be made by check only. Cash is not accepted.**

Please contact Remi Cerrone, Amherst Township Zoning Inspector for these permits. Office hours for the Zoning Inspector are from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. He can be reached at 988-5894. Voice Mail is checked daily.



**TRICK
OR
TREAT**



**Burning
Prohibited**



“Trick-or-Treat” in Amherst Township will be held on **Sunday, October 27th, from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.** this year. Residents that wish to pass out candy should turn on their outside lights. This newsletter will be the only notification given by Amherst Twp.

Also on Sunday, October 27th, the City of Amherst Fire Department will be sponsoring a “Costume Contest” with registration starting at 3:00 p.m. at the Sans Springs Building, located at 480 Park Ave. in Amherst. Judging for the contest will start promptly at 4:00 p.m.

The annual “Halloween Parade” will follow, from 4:30 – 5:00 p.m. In case of inclement weather, the parade will be cancelled and the “Costume Contest” will be held at the Amherst Fire Department located at 414 Church St. in Amherst.



The burning of leaves, grass clippings, brush, and limbs is prohibited in the township. Unnecessary tax dollars are spent when the fire department responds to a fire call that is not a true emergency.

If you have any questions, please call Fire Inspector, Wayne Eppley, at 324-3921, or contact one of your township trustees. Yard waste may be brought to the Amherst Township Garage for disposal. For drop-off times, days, and location, see “Your Yard Waste” and the front page of this newsletter.

Yard Waste Recycling Center
Extended Fall Hours

The Amherst Township Yard Waste Recycling Center will be open for extended hours in the Fall to accommodate the recycling of leaves and other yard waste. Beginning **October 15th**, and continuing through **December 1st**, the Yard Waste Recycling Center will open at 8:00 am and close at sunset. The Yard Waste Recycling Center is a self-service operation. Please place your empty plastic bags in the 55-gal drum at the center or take bags with you.

Printed on Recycled Paper

Amherst Township
7530 Oberlin Road
Elyria, OH 44035
www.amhersttownship.us

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Monthly Meeting	Trustees: 2 nd & 4 th Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.
Dates & Times:	Zoning Commission: 1 st Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.

Senior GAZETTE

Fall 2013

by Carol Schmitkons, Director, Amherst Township Senior Service Office (ATSSO)

Home-Delivered Meal Program

ATSSO provides home-delivered meals for those over 60 and disabled adults over 18, with a cost that is adjusted to your income. This nutritious, hot lunch program includes your choice of an entrée, soup & sandwich, or soup & salad. A “soup only” option is also available as a choice. If you would like to receive a home-delivered meal, please contact the Senior Service Office at **988-5894, ext. 102**.

Medicare Corner

Open enrollment begins on **October 15th** and runs through **December 7th**.

During this time you can do comparison shopping for Part D plans and/or join or switch Medicare Advantage (MA) plans.

The annual disenrollment period for Advantage plans is **January 1st** through **February 14th**. During this time you may leave an MA and return to Original Medicare and also select a Part D plan if you wish. Coverage will begin the first of the month after you switch.

Each year Ohio Senior Health Insurance Information Program (OSHIIP) schedules “**Check-Up Days**” in every county to update Medicare recipients of changes coming for the next year.

This year’s Lorain County event will be held on:

Thursday, November 14th at 10:30 AM

This event will be held at the Lorain County Office on Aging, which is located at 320 N. Gateway Boulevard in Elyria.

ATSSO OFFICE HOURS:

8:00 A.M. – NOON (M-F)

Phone: 988-5894 – Ext. 102

Email: amhersttwpseniors@oh.rr.com

Change to Homestead Exemption Law

Beginning in 2014, new applicants for the Homestead Exemption (those turning 65) will only be eligible if their total household income is less than \$30,000 (Ohio Adjusted Gross Income). For seniors currently eligible for the program there will be no change. The means test will apply to those turning 64 in 2013 and to those 64+ who were not receiving the exemption in 2013 (2014 for those living in manufactured/mobile homes).

To learn more about this change, go to www.tax.ohio.gov. At the bottom of the home page click on the “FAQ’s” icon, then from the <Select Category> drop down menu select “Real Property Tax – Homestead Means Testing”.

Choose Your Attitude

The single most important decision I make each day is my choice of attitude. Attitude keeps me going or cripples my progress. It fuels my fire or assaults my hope. When my attitude is right there’s no barrier too high, no valley too deep, no dream too extreme, no challenge too great for me.

--Charles Swindoll Strengthening Your Grip

Social Security Corner

Social Security (S.S.) pays *disability benefits* to people who cannot work because they have a medical condition that is expected to last at least one year or result in death. To get disability benefits, you must meet 2 different earnings tests:

1. Recent work test based on age at time you became disabled, and
2. Duration test to show you worked long enough under SS.

You should apply for disability benefits as soon as you become disabled as it can take 3-5 months for application processing. The application can be completed online or at the local Social Security office.

Once your application is reviewed to see that you meet the basic requirements, it is sent to Ohio's Disability Determination Services office. This office's doctors and disability specialists ask your doctors for information about your condition and for information about your ability to do work-related activities. A five step process is used to decide disability:

1. Are you working? If you aren't working or your monthly earnings average is the current amount set by S.S. or less you go to step 2.
2. Is your medical condition "severe"? If the state agency determines your medical condition significantly limits your ability to do basic work activities, you go to step 3.
3. Is your medical condition on the List of Impairments? This list describes medical conditions so severe that they automatically mean you're disabled as defined by law. If your condition(s) are not on the list, the agency looks to see if your condition is as severe as a condition on the list. Conditions

meeting or equaling those on the list bring a decision of disability but if not the agency goes to step 4.

4. Can you do the work you did before? If the agency decides you are unable to do the work you did before you go to step 5.
5. Can you do any other type of work? The agency evaluates your medical condition, age, education, past work experience and skills you may have that could be used to do other work to make the final determination on your qualification for disability status.

Social Security pays only for total disability. They do not pay benefits for partial or short-term disability. For more information, read the publication titled "Disability Benefits", by visiting their website at:

www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs

Benefit Verification Letter

You may need a Social Security benefit verification letter for a number of reasons. Perhaps you need proof of income for a loan or to verify your monthly income for housing, or state or local benefits. You may need proof of your current Medicare health insurance status. In some cases, a person may need proof of retirement status, disability status, or age. For any of these situations, a benefit verification letter will provide the proof you need. The fastest, easiest, most convenient way to get this letter is to go online at:

www.socialsecurity.gov

You must first create an account under "My Social Security". If you need assistance in obtaining this letter or creating an online account you can call ATSSO at **988-5894**.

Tips for Beating Stress**

- Take control of your schedule by prioritizing what needs to be done each day & ask others for help.
- Avoid negative “self-talk” and “what ifs.”
- Praise yourself for a job well done.
- Take a five-minute relaxation break to practice deep breathing, yoga or focused imagery.
- Accept that you may not be able to change certain situations.

Two-Minute Relaxation**

We all find ourselves in tense situations periodically. Here’s an easy way to calm yourself and return to realistic thinking.

Concentrate your thoughts on yourself and your breathing. Take a few deep breathes, exhaling slowly. Mentally scan your body. Notice areas that feel tense or cramped. Quickly loosen up these areas. Let go of as much tension as you can. Rotate your head in a smooth, circular motion once or twice. (Stop any movements that cause pain.) Roll your shoulders forward and backward several times. Let all your muscles completely relax. Recall a pleasant thought for a few seconds. Then take another deep breath and exhale slowly.

***These 3 articles were Adapted from the Cleveland Clinic Family Checkup.*

Keeping an Older Adult Safe**

Target the concerns of the older adult. Before a crisis occurs, talk about seniors’ hopes and fears, the benefits of various levels of care and plan visits to facilities providing them so you will know their preferences.

Get outside help if needed. If additional assistance is needed to keep an individual in their home, together or as a family help them develop an action plan by exploring with them available community options and the cost of services provided by various agencies.

Put the paperwork in place. Before memory and serious health issues arise, put advance directives in place, have a will made or updated, consider whether a trust might avoid future legal hassles for the family and have a durable power of attorney created.

Rule out other possibilities. Make sure an underlying physical condition or a mental or emotional issue isn’t causing the older person’s difficulties by consulting their primary care physician, a geriatric specialist, a social worker or an agency specializing in working with the elderly.

See for yourself. Do some detective work to determine how the person is living. Persons with memory or judgment problems may not be aware they’re having problems.

Be aware of who is helping. Make sure a kindly neighbor, a caregiver, a handyman or even a relative is not exploiting them in an effort to gain control of their money or other assets. If predators are actually being viewed as protectors, it may be necessary to contact Adult Protective Services.

Do what’s right. When an older person’s judgment is impaired, you may need to intervene with or without their blessing to ensure safety.



2013 Lorain County Flu Shot Locator



The Lorain County General Health District’s Seasonal Flu Shot Clinics for 2013 are scheduled for October 14th and 19th, and November 7th. For Amherst Township residents, the closest clinic will be held on **Saturday, October 14th, at Marion L. Steele High School from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm.** For a complete list of details and other locations and times, please visit the Lorain County General Health District’s website at:

www.loraincountyhealth.com

For your convenience, the Lorain County General Health District and Loraincounty.com have partnered to offer an interactive, easy-to-use Flu Shot Clinic Locator! Flu shots are available at many locations throughout the county. To find Flu Shot Clinics close to where you live, learn and play, visit the following website:

www.LorainCountyFlu.com