

Bethlehem Authority Police Report

Oct 2021

1. The Racetrack held the lantern festival on 9/11 and 9/12. The Long Pond area was checked for lantern debris the morning after each event. Numerous lanterns were along Stony Hollow Rd. The drone was used to locate the debris and photos were taken. The Lantern people were out cleaning up on Sunday morning. However, on Monday 9/13 no one was observed cleaning up lanterns on Authority property. I walked the entire area over several days looking for any evidence of a fire having started on the property and nothing was found. Festival organizers were informed where they would find lanterns on our property that needed disposal which did not appear to get any attention. After a few days I was able to meet with personnel on Stony Hollow Rd. who admitted they had not been to this area the past few days, but it was on the schedule. At this time the area looks better but there are a small number of lanterns still present. Crews plan on returning in spring to check for any more lanterns.

2. ATV traffic is still low although one Saturday night we did have an increase in traffic. UTV's were caught on camera in the Hell Hollow area. It was later found that the UTVs were in Weiser State Forest and then entered Authority property by circumventing the Weiser gate.

3. The Star Property had become an issue for the UGI contractor as locks have been removed by city personnel. I was not informed about the issue until it had caused the damage of 3 locks. I spoke with City personnel and it was believed that maybe the contractors stone delivery driver was not locking the chain properly. A few days later the contractor called that the city lock was now securing the chain to the post not allowing the contractor access. This showed that a city employee had opened the lock and secured the chain improperly. I was able to contact a city supervisor to unlock the chain. I have not heard any issues since.

4. We received our first 1033 property and equipment program items. Everything works great and will be a benefit for officers when patrolling.

5. PAGC personnel informed me about Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) in deer. It is transmitted by the bite of a midge, commonly known as “no see-ums”. It is transmitted by the biting an infected animal and then biting another. EHD will kill a deer within a few days of infection. Evidence of the infection has been found in Berks and Chester counties. Symptoms include fever, hemorrhage in muscles, swelling of the head, neck, tongue and lips. Infected deer appear lame or dehydrated and frequently seek out water sources. Many succumb near a source of water. I had observed a Doe with an enlarged tongue in the Penn Forest area several weeks prior and spoke to a PAGC official who believed it was a different issue at the time. At the time of the sighting EHD had not been reported in the state but the official says it could have been EHD but there isn’t any way to tell now. EHD cannot be transmitted from a dead animal and does not infect humans. The midges will die off after the first hard frost so EHD is not known to have long lasting effects on deer populations.

6. PAGC personnel have also stated that the commission is planning on making game wardens Management Unit specific rather than county specific. This will cause game wardens to move throughout areas that consist of 3 or 4 counties in size. This may affect the assistance we receive from the organization.

7. Beavers are expanding Grass Lake. They have created another dam along a short dead end fire lane west of the lake. The lower end of the lake is now approximately 75 yards longer than it had been. City maintenance personnel are aware.

8. I toured the Tunkhannock area with Authority foresters, Rankin and Robin. Robin was giving Rankin a history on the area as well as an update on areas that are to be scheduled for harvest/ thinning.

9. Ron Madison conducted a tour of the watershed and Filtration Plant for much needed security upgrades. I was able to participate at each site and found the information exchange very informative.