

AMHERST TOWNSHIP NEWSLETTER

www.amhersttownship.us

Winter 2015

Vol. XX No. 4

Recycling Report

Amherst Township recycled the following quantities in the 3rd quarter of 2015.

Newspaper	35.63	#1 PET	5.64
Cardboard	17.82	#2 HDPE	6.24
Mixed Paper	14.25	#2 - #7 Plastic Mixed	2.38
Steel Cans	2.97	Aseptic Containers	0.59
Alum. Cans	1.19	Residuals	11.88
Mixed Glass	20.19	Total	118.77

* Above quantities are all listed in tons.

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

2.85 tons of scrap metal through the dumpster program
505.00 tons of yard waste ground-up and hauled away

For questions concerning the "Curbside Recycling Program", contact **RUMPKE** at **1-800-828-8171**.

"2016" Dumpster Days

Amherst Township has set the following dates for "Dumpster Days" in 2016:

April 21, 22, 23

October 13, 14, 15

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.

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, Zoning, Neighborhood Watch, Enterprise Zones, County Health Rep.)

Neil Lynch 988-7681

(Sewer, Fire, Equipment, Personnel, Senior Services, Phase II Storm Water/ Environmental Strategy, LORCO, 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 Szefcyk 320-7157

Amherst Twp Senior Services Office

Lynda Ashley **Ext. 101**

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, & 10 pm. All airings are subject to change.

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.

A Message from Community Policing Officer Bungard

For the protection of your personal property, I would like to stress the importance of recording the serial numbers and model numbers of your valuable property. If you can provide the serial number to law enforcement they can add your stolen item into the Law Enforcement Data System (LEADS). A record of serial numbers and photos helps law enforcement reunite recovered property with rightful owners, and provides important evidence during criminal prosecution.

I have recently used my smart phone and tablet to download a free “Home Inventory” application from the Google Play Store. This application lets you take pictures of the property in your home and also record the model/serial number. This takes some time but is worth it in the long run. It is equally important to take

pictures of jewelry in the home. There are also several insurance companies that have home inventory apps, as well as third party applications. It is best to do an on-line search and find an inventory app that best suits your needs. Some of the applications are free, and some you may have to pay for. I chose the free one, and it works fine for me.

And as always, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Sheriff by calling the “Community Policing Officer” Office at **329-3749**. Please leave a message stating your name and a return number where you can be reached. This number is not monitored 24 hours a day. You may also contact Deputy Bungard or Deputy Vansant by email at:

mbungard@loraincountysheriff.com

rvansant@loraincountysheriff.com

“LOW SALT DIET FOR MOTHER NATURE”

Consider Mother Nature the next time you salt or deice your sidewalk and driveway. While rock salt (or sodium chloride) is useful for stabilizing slippery surfaces, salt use comes at a cost to the “diet” of our environment.

Widespread use of salting the roads began in the 1950’s. An article in “USA Today” stated that approximately 15 million tons of sodium chloride and other materials are used each year in the U.S. to de-ice roads, parking lots and sidewalks.

The problem is that when the rock salt dissolves, it can leach into lawns and beds along where it was applied. Studies have shown that rock salt can damage, or even kill, vegetation and trees. Moderate levels of salt in wetlands can increase unwanted invasive species, and accumulating salt in lakes and ponds can alter spring mixing. Dense salty water sinks, posing a threat to fish that live in deep, cold water.

Sodium chloride has been known to cause corrosion of bridge decks, motor vehicles, and unprotected steel structures used in road construction. Think what it does to your sidewalk and driveway!

Rock salt affects our pets too. Dogs and cats suffer when exposed to rock salt because of damage to their paws that leads them to lick the salt off and cause health problems. Consuming rock salt can cause dehydration, liver failure and pancreatitis.

Other animals are affected as well. Animals including amphibians (due to their permeable skin) and migratory birds (they are seed-eating species that think rock salt is their food based on its looks).

Additionally, adding too much salt to an icy surface is a waste of money and can only increase damage to concrete, metal, drinking water, and vegetation. Sodium chloride has been found in runoff and has even been detected in drinking wells in some Northeastern and Midwestern states.

Deciding on how much deicer to use depends on the deicer. A successful rate for rock salt is about a handful per square yard. If using calcium chloride, the amount needed is less – about a handful for every 3 square yards. Try these other precautionary steps that you can take to decrease the amount of deicer.

- Shovel the snow early and often. If the temperature drops after a snowstorm, the snow can turn icy and be harder to remove.
- The more scraping and removal of ice that you can do, the less deicer you will need to use. Deicers work best on a thin layer of ice.
- As the sun comes out or the temperature rises, the deicer will make a slushy mixture of water and ice. Remove this before the temperature drops again and you should have an ice-free surface until the next storm.

Do your part to reduce the long-term effects of salt on our natural areas and our drinking water supplies. Plan to “sprinkle sparingly” to protect your environment, pets and your wallet this winter!

Adapted from WKYC web page, WKYC Staff, January 29, 2015



Parking is prohibited on all township streets and highways in Amherst Township during a snow emergency, which may be declared when snowfall exceeds 2 inches or severe snow or ice condition exists.

A fine for violation of this resolution will be **\$50** if paid within seven days of the violation and **\$100** if paid more than seven days of the violation.

To avoid having your vehicle towed or ticketed, residents are asked not to park on the street when the snow exceeds 2 inches.



1-mil
5-year



Road Levy Renewal

A 1-mil 5-year Road and Bridge Levy renewal will appear on the March 15, 2016 Primary ballot. This levy was first approved by the residents of Amherst Township in November of 2011. Upon approval of the levy in 2011, the Amherst Township Board of Trustees reduced the collection of an existing Fire and EMS levy to ensure no tax increase would be experienced by property owners in Amherst Township.

The last time a voted levy for township services increased taxes for Amherst Township property owners was in 2001. Tax levy increases experienced by Amherst Township property owners since 2001 have generally resulted from levies approved for educational or countywide services.

Approval of this levy renewal will not increase property taxes, but will provide \$113,653 for the reconstruction, resurfacing and repair of roads and bridges in Amherst Township pursuant to Ohio Revised Cod 5705.19(G).



Tent/Canopy



Usage in

Amherst Township

The Board of Trustees has received several complaints of residents using tents as storage facilities. The township Zoning Inspector has ruled that tents are not acceptable accessory buildings for storage. Tents and canopies are acceptable for temporary use (e.g. graduations, sleep-outs, picnics, weddings, etc.), but should not be utilized as a permanent accessory building, as the weathering of typical tent and canopy materials has a negative impact upon property values.

No permit is required for use of a tent or canopy, but a tent structure may be installed for a temporary use only. The Zoning Inspector is working with several property owners that have been using tents for storage, and most of these property owners have willingly complied with removing the storage tents, or will shortly. If you have any questions about the use of a tent or canopy, contact the Amherst Township Zoning Inspector.



REMEMBER
TO VOTE!



The **2016** Primary Election will be on Tuesday, **March 15th**. 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>

Middle Ridge Rd & Oberlin Rd/Hidden Valley Dr Safety Study

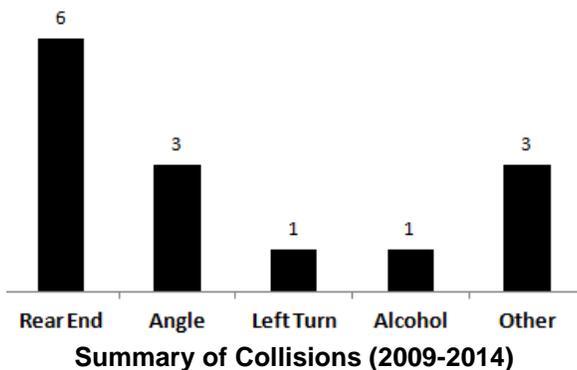
The following is a partial report of the Safety Study done for Amherst Township.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The Middle Ridge Road and Oberlin Road/Hidden Valley Drive Intersection has been the subject of concerns from the public and local officials. In a letter dated May 26, 2014, the Amherst Township Trustees requested that the Lorain County Engineer look into improvements to the Intersection. According to the letter, several near-collisions have resulted when through traffic on Middle Ridge Road attempts to maneuver around vehicles stopped to make a left turn. This poses a concern when there are left turning vehicles on both the eastbound and westbound approaches, as the turning vehicles think that opposing traffic is blocked by left turns. However, a through vehicle often maneuvers around the stopped traffic and results in a conflict with the opposing left turns. Due to the reports of this potential safety issue and the concern from Amherst Township, a safety study has been performed for this location.

CRASH DATA

Crash data was analyzed for the three most recent years (2012-2014) and there were seven crashes in the intersection area. There was not a discernible crash pattern in that data set, so the timeframe was extended to include all crashes from 2009-2014. This resulted in 14 total crashes. The summary is as follows:



Using the crash data, the ODOT Economic Crash Analysis Tool (ECAT) analysis was run to determine the potential for safety improvement at this location. The ECAT tool uses statistical modeling and crash history to compare a site's crash frequency to the

crash frequency of intersections with the same characteristics (such as traffic volumes, skew angle, number of lanes, signalization, etc.). The ECAT analysis for this intersection shows that there are less crashes than would be predicted at an intersection with these characteristics. Therefore, ECAT indicates that improvements are unlikely to result in a discernible reduction in crash frequency.

The ECAT tool is also used to develop cost-benefit ratios for prospective safety countermeasures. Because the crash frequency at this location is less than what would be predicted for this type of intersection, the cost-benefit ratio for any potential countermeasure will be negative. This does not necessarily mean that improvements should not be pursued. However, the analysis suggests that low-cost solutions are likely to be the only countermeasures practical at this location.

PROPOSED COUNTERMEASURE EVALUATION

The "crash data" analysis and the "capacity" analysis did not indicate any safety or capacity issues at the intersection that would necessitate improvements. Therefore, the development of countermeasures focused on solutions that would address the near-collisions observed by the Amherst Township Trustees – discouraging through vehicles from passing stopped left turning vehicles. The four countermeasures evaluated include:

- Decreasing the curb radii of the northeast and southeast corners
- Adding a raised, concrete island to the northeast and southeast corners
- Adding a painted island to the northeast and southeast corners
- Adding an island via traffic separators to the northeast and southeast corners

Decreasing the curb radii would help to eliminate the ability of through traffic to maneuver around stopped left turning vehicles. However, this measure would make it more difficult for vehicles making right turns from Middle Ridge Road. Larger vehicles would encroach into opposing traffic lanes, and all right-turning vehicles would be slower, increasing the chances of rear-end collisions.

Middle Ridge Rd & Oberlin Rd/Hidden Valley Dr Safety Study

Adding a raised island would allow for the through vehicles to be blocked from passing the waiting left turn vehicles. A raised, concrete island would prevent vehicles from passing and would be a permanent fix for the intersection. This option is expected to cost approx. \$15,000 to construct.



A painted island was also considered, as it would be the cheapest option to implement. But its effectiveness would be limited since it would not provide a physical deterrent to keep through vehicles from passing stopped traffic. Therefore, a painted island is not recommended.

Adding eastbound and westbound left turn lanes would provide a safe place for turning vehicles to wait for a gap without blocking through traffic. Turn lanes would help to reduce rear-end crashes by reducing queue lengths. However, left turn lanes are not needed to obtain an acceptable “level-of-service” at the intersection and would have a **much higher cost** compared with other options. Right-of-way and utility impacts would also be likely. Because of the high cost and relatively limited benefits, turn lane additions are not recommended at this time. However, if congestion or crash frequency increases, eastbound and westbound left turn lanes may be future recommendation for this location.

CONCLUSIONS

The Middle Ridge Road/Oberlin Road/Hidden Valley Drive intersection has been the subject of several complaints from local community members. Due to the skewed intersection, eastbound and westbound through vehicles are able to pass on the right waiting eastbound and westbound left turning vehicles. This poses a safety problem when there are left turning vehicles both eastbound and westbound that assume through traffic is being stopped by the opposite turning vehicle. However, analysis of the crash reports at the intersection are not showing a pattern of these types of crashes occurring. Therefore, it is recommended that raised, concrete island be constructed in the northeast and southwest corner of the intersection to prevent through vehicles from passing the left turning vehicles. The raised, concrete medians would cost approximately \$15,000 to construct.

RECOMMENDATIONS & PRIORITIZATION

Based on the analysis, below are the proposed improvements for the Middle Ridge Road and Oberlin Road/Hidden Valley Drive intersection, separated into Short-Term (0-12 months) and Long-Term (more than 5 years).

Short-Term

- Replace the green right turn arrow lenses on the northbound and southbound approaches with circular green indications
- Adjust the detector settings on the northbound and southbound approaches
 - Provide 3 seconds of delay on the right turn lane detectors
 - Provide 10 seconds of delay on the through/left turn detectors
- Construct raised concrete islands in the northeast and southwest corners of the intersection

Long-Term

- Continue to monitor crash patterns and congestion at the intersection to evaluate if eastbound/westbound left turn lanes are needed in the future

The signal and detector setting improvements have been completed. The installation of the raised islands will happen during the Oberlin Road (Turnpike south to 113) repaving project planned for in 2016.

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.

Building Inspections are not required. It is recommended that residents hire their own inspectors.

Residents are also reminded that when a road project requires modification of a drive apron, as a general rule, the drive apron modification will be completed with the same material as the road project. In all cases, maintenance of a drive apron is the responsibility of the property owner.



Christmas Tree Disposal



Amherst Township residents may bring their live Christmas Trees 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) Monday thru Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and on Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Residents may also leave live trees on their lawn near the road. The township road crew will be picking up these trees Mon., Dec 28th thru Fri., Jan 8th.

Scholarships Available

The Ohio Township Association will award three \$1,500 scholarships. Student must be a U.S. citizen; reside in an Ohio township; and plan to attend a two or four year Ohio college or university in the fall of 2016. Completed applications must be received by Friday, Jan. 29, 2016. Winners will be announced by May 1.

Information regarding the scholarships can be found at:

<http://www.ohiotownships.org/scholarships>

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

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**Monthly Meeting
Dates & Times:**

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

Senior GAZETTE

Winter 2015

by Lynda Ashley, 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. 101**.

2016 MEDICARE UPDATES

There will be no “cost of living” adjustments in 2016 for Social Security. Due to this, Medicare Part B premiums will not increase for most participants*, although the deductibles will be increasing. See the figures below for the 2016 deductibles:

Part A

- \$1288.00 Hospital deductible
- \$322.00 daily copay for days 61-90
- \$644.00 daily copay (lifetime reserve)
- \$161.00 skilled nursing copay for days 21-100

Part B

- \$166.00 annual deductible
- \$104.90 monthly premium for those enrolled before 2016*
- \$121.80 monthly premium for those who enroll in 2016*

***Premiums may vary due to income and/or other factors.**

ATSSO OFFICE HOURS:

8:00 A.M. – NOON (M-F)

Phone: 988-5894 – Ext. 101

Email: amhersttwpseniors@oh.rr.com



WINTER SAFETY TIPS



The following are a few useful tips to avoid accidents this winter:

- Don't venture out if the temperatures are approaching zero or negative numbers.
- If you must go out, bundle up covering all exposed skin, including your face.
- Consider asking a neighbor or teen to bring your mail and paper to your door.
- Purchase “ice grabbers” for your shoes to aid in traction should you need to be out.
- Have someone keep your walks clear from ice and snow, especially if you walk to the mailbox.
- If you drive, carry extra blankets, a cell phone, gloves, snacks, flashlight, and water with you in case your car becomes disabled.
- Consider having meals brought to your home through a “Meal Program” so you won't have to go out for groceries.
- Stock up your pantry with canned goods and easily-prepared food in case you can't get out for a few days or meals can't be delivered.
- Sign up with a service like “Life Alert”; you will have an emergency contact at all times.

HEATING BILL ASSISTANCE

It's that time of year again! Cold weather means higher heating costs which can be burdensome and a worry to those on a fixed income. There are some federal programs available to those that are disabled or over 60. Eligibility is based on household income.

- **Home Energy Assistance Program**

Lorain County Office of Aging offers assistance in applying for the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) to eligible adults that live in Lorain County. HEAP assistance is offered from September through April. To learn more, or to see if you qualify, please phone "LCOOA" at **326-4800**.

- **Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP)**

Through Lorain County Community Action Agency you may qualify for PIPP, which is an extended payment arrangement for income-qualified consumers of regulated electric and natural gas utilities.

- **Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP)**

Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP) is an energy efficiency program that helps consumers insulate attics, walls, and basements as well as performing other projects.

For more information on assistance programs call the "Lorain County Community Action Agency" at:

440-245-2009

or call the "Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel" at:

1-877-742-5622

CAUTION: PHONE SCAMS

Please be very cautious when answering your phone. Residents have been receiving calls from various people promising or asking for money.

THESE ARE SCAMS!!!

One such call is: "You have won a large sum of money, but it is unclaimed and you have to make arrangements to get this check by paying for delivery or by giving them your banking information so they can deposit a check."

If you receive this call, please hang up! **DO NOT** give out any personal data including your banking information, credit card numbers, date of birth, address, etc. These calls appear to be coming from an "876" area code, which is located in Jamaica. **DO NOT** call the phone number back as you will incur international calling charges!

Another phone scam that has been occurring for a while now is someone stating that they are from the IRS and you owe money. They will threaten you with jail time or a lawsuit. The IRS will **ONLY** notify you via regular mail should there be a problem. The IRS will NOT call nor email you.

Please remember **NEVER** to give out personal information over the phone to any caller. For your protection please make your family aware of any calls that you receive.

You may also report it to the Lorain County Sherriff Office at **329-3710**.

