



OHIO TOWNSHIP ASSOCIATION

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TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2020

Questions?

Contact Marisa Myers at myers@ohiotownships.org

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COVID-19 Updates & Other Relevant Information for Township Officials

COVID-19 Updates:

Utility Disconnections

Ohio Primary Election Postponed

ODJFS Mass Lay-off Guidance

Many Businesses Forced to Close - Working with Your Community

Public Meetings Procedure Follow-Up

FREE Webinar: Employer/Rights Obligations Regarding the Coronavirus

Staying Connected Via Internet/Broadband

Other Information:

Proposed Changes to Solid Waste Rules

UTILITY DISCONNECTIONS

Last week the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) took action to ask utilities to suspend disconnection and waive any requirements for reconnections for all types of customers (residential and business). All of the utilities are doing so, however, the PUCO has informed the OTA that there are some utilities that have not been able to edit their automated billing systems to stop sending disconnection notices; however, those utilities are not following through with the disconnections.

To read the PUCO's utility reconnect order, please [click here](#). Additionally, the PUCO directed utility companies to review disconnection and social contact policies and you can read that order [here](#). Please share this information with your residents and encourage utility customers to contact the PUCO [online](#) with any questions or concerns.



OHIO PRIMARY ELECTION POSTPONED
ANSWERS BEING SOUGHT FOR TWP LEVY SITUATIONS

Last evening (Monday, March 16), the Ohio Health Department Director signed an order closing polling locations today, halting and postponing in-person voting for the March 17 primary election. The OTA will strive to provide more information as it is made official.

The OTA knows that there are approximately 100 township levy issues on the ballot, and is trying to obtain additional information as to how this postponement will impact the process, including costs that may be incurred.

Furthermore, for those townships that have a limited number of times left to pass a renewal or replacement levy, the OTA is actively seeking answers as to how the August special election timelines will be handled. Please stay tuned for additional information as it becomes available.

**OHIO DEPARTMENT OF
JOB AND FAMILY
SERVICES MASS LAY-
OFF GUIDANCE**

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) is instructing Ohio employers planning layoffs or shutdowns as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic to share the following mass lay-off number with their employees to speed the processing of unemployment benefits: 2000180.

The agency also is providing instructions for employers to share with their employees about how to apply for benefits. Employers with questions should email UCTech@jfs.ohio.gov.

MANY BUSINESSES FORCED TO CLOSE
WORKING WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

Over the past few days, Governor DeWine ordered all bars, restaurants (with the exception of carryout and deliveries), movie theaters, gyms, bowling alleys, water parks and recreational centers closed until further notice. Additionally, the Governor stated that mass gatherings of 50 or more (previously mass gatherings of 100 or more) are also prohibited. Yesterday (Monday, March 16), the White House advised citizens to avoid environments with 10 or more people.

The OTA encourages townships, via their websites, to provide a list of businesses that are still open (grocery stores and such) or restaurants that provide carryout/delivery (include a link to their menus) to assist your community.

Also critical in this situation is exploring ways – via township website - to connect the elderly or those with compromised immune systems with groups or personnel for assistance.

Promoting positivity in these challenging times is important for community morale - panic and pandemonium are often the first responses when faced with an unfamiliar and substantial threat such as COVID-19. The OTA encourages you to focus on educating your township's residents and its staff and emergency services personnel.



PUBLIC MEETINGS PROCEDURE FOLLOW-UP

We provided information last Friday that was distributed by Attorney General Yost on the Open Meetings Act and the impact of the pandemic on public meetings. [Here it is again, for reference.](#)

The OTA has received several questions as to the proper procedure for changing location of a regularly scheduled township meeting as a result of COVID-19. R.C. §5502.24(B) allows political subdivisions to designate alternate locations for use in the event of an emergency, and then when they need to use those alternate locations, they can do so on the call of the presiding officer or two members of that body.

In addition to the guidance given by Attorney General Yost last Friday, legislation was introduced in the Ohio House yesterday that would permit public bodies to convene electronically. HB 557, introduced by Rep. Lisa Sobecki, would authorize public bodies to meet via teleconference and video conference during a public health state of emergency as declared by the Governor.

WEBINAR: EMPLOYER RIGHTS/OBLIGATIONS REGARDING THE CORONAVIRUS

Many employers, both public and private, will have specific questions regarding their Coronavirus response. The Coronavirus pandemic is creating new challenges for employers, but employers can successfully navigate these challenges while complying with the law and regulatory guidelines.

Fishel, Downey, Albrecht & Riepenhoff, a law firm in central Ohio, will be conducting a **webinar on Wednesday, March 18, 2020, at 11:00 a.m.** to address these and other issues more comprehensively and to answer questions. **To register for the Webinar, please [click here.](#)**

STAYING CONNECTED VIA INTERNET/BROADBAND

Federally, on March 13, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) announced proactive steps to ensure that Americans do not lose broadband or telephone connectivity during the coronavirus pandemic. More than 70 telecommunications providers and their national trade associations have agreed to a three-point pledge for the next 60 days.

In addition, many providers have announced free broadband service for that duration to any new customers within their service area. The federal government is also exploring additional resources for telehealth and community services impacted by COVID-19, as well as funding for small businesses that will be hurt financially due to mandated closures.



OTHER INFORMATION:

PROPOSED CHANGES TO SOLID WASTE RULES

The Ohio EPA (OEPA) is looking for feedback on a draft version of Ohio Administrative Code Rule 3745-27-90. This rule contains requirements for solid waste management districts for achieving recycling and reduction goals established in Ohio's 2020 State Solid Waste Management Plan. The OEPA is seeking comments from interested stakeholders (public, local officials, industry sectors, other state agencies, consultants and environmental organizations) who may be impacted by these rule revisions. General comments and specific factual information are welcome.

In addition to the draft rule amendments, Ohio EPA is also seeking comments and feedback on the draft Common Sense Initiative (CSI) Business Impact Analysis (BIA) form, which is being released with these draft rules during interested party review. [Click here for a link to the draft rules and other information.](#) Additionally, [click here for the official OEPA document.](#)

Please submit comments in one of the following ways:

- By email to michelle.mountjoy@epa.ohio.gov

- By postal mail to the address below:

*Michelle Mountjoy - Rules Coordinator
Ohio EPA, Division of Materials and Waste Management
P.O. Box 1049 Columbus, OH 43216-1049*

Comments on the draft rules must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 13, 2020.