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April 29, 2020

Welcome to the PSATS Morning News, our new email digest.

Missed yesterday's PSATS Morning News? No problem! A [PSATS Morning News Library](#) is available online for your viewing pleasure!

We're excited about this new concept and want to hear what you think. Email comments and suggestions to [morningnews@psats.org](mailto:morningnews@psats.org).

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## Latest News

### [PSATS Town Hall: Township Budget Impact Tomorrow, April 30, at 4 p.m.](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken over the world, and the news is changing at a rapid rate. Townships, like many other essential industries and governmental entities, are trying to keep up with new information and changes. To help your township prepare, PSATS is hosting its fifth web-based Town Hall, with special guests from the state Department of Community and Economic Development to talk about the budget implications of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As usual, PSATS staff will also be on hand to talk about the latest guidance from the state and how it applies to your township. Don't miss this important Town Hall on Thursday, April 30, at 4 p.m.

Participants will have the opportunity to submit questions before and during the Town Hall, which is limited to the first 500 registrants and is free. [Click here](#) to register.

### **[Commonwealth Reopening by Region? Or Not?](#)**

The commonwealth continues to move toward a partial reopening, and more is expected over the next few days. In addition, the administration has announced that it expects to make an announcement on May 1 detailing the counties that will move to the first phase in reopening, deemed yellow by the administration, on May 8. Governor Wolf said areas to be reopened will not be dictated exclusively by some regional map, but in conjunction with other metrics, including commonsense. [Read full story.](#)

### **[White House Provides Fact Sheet on Federal Support for Pennsylvania](#)**

The White House has prepared a fact sheet detailing the federal assistance provided to date by the federal government to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to combat COVID-19. The fact sheet documents details on the billions of dollars of funds that Pennsylvania has received, including stimulus programs that were funneled through various federal departments to businesses, hospitals, individuals, and much more. The number of resources, including PPE, provided to Pennsylvania in recent weeks is also included. [Click here](#) to access the fact sheet.

### **[Applications Now Accepted for Fire Prevention and Safety Grants](#)**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency is now accepting applications for the \$35 million in Federal Fire Prevention and Safety Grants until May 29 at 5 p.m. This highly competitive program reaches high-risk target groups to reduce deaths and injuries caused by fire and fire-related hazards. Awards are based on an applicant's ability to address the program's priorities and provide the most compelling justification for their need. [Read full story.](#)

### **[Comcast Extends COVID-19 Response Policies to June 30](#)**

Comcast will continue to provide support to its customers and help students finish the school year from home. The telecommunications provider will not disconnect customers' service and will waive late fees. Hotspots for customers continue to be available, and programs to provide complimentary service to low-income households continue. For more information, [click here.](#)

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## **Legislation & Policy**



### **House Passes Legislation to Provide COVID-19 Assistance to Fire and EMS Agencies**

On April 28, the House unanimously passed **HB 2413**. This legislation would amend the Fiscal Code to provide for transfers of \$30 million from special funds under the governor's jurisdiction to a restricted account to assist volunteer fire and EMS organizations to assist with the COVID-19 emergency. *HB 2413 is now before the Senate for their consideration.*

### **House Passes Legislation to Reopen All Real Estate Activities**

On April 28, the House passed **HB 2412**. This legislation would require the secretary of the state Department of Community and Economic Development to immediately issue a waiver to the Governor's COVID-19 Business Closure Order for all real estate related activities that can adhere to social distancing practices and other mitigation measures defined by the Centers for Disease Control to protect workers and mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Additionally, and until the proclamation of disaster emergency issued by the Governor on March 6, 2020 and any renewal of the state of disaster emergency, is terminated or expires the following would apply: (1) municipal use and occupancy or code enforcement actions by a municipality under law would be suspended, or conditionally granted, if the municipality has not made alternate provisions for facilitating the grant of a certificate of occupancy during the proclamation and (2) Taxing authorities and public utilities would be required to provide alternative means for residential home buyers or title insurers to ascertain the current status of tax payments or overdue utility obligations.

***The Association has expressed opposition to HB 2412, specifically with the suspension of municipal code enforcement language as well as the terms of the declaration "and any renewal." We will continue to work with the General Assembly to address these issues.***

### **House Passes COVID-19 Task Force Legislation**

The House adopted **HB 2419** which would amend the Administrative Code to provide for the creation of the COVID-19 Cost and Recovery Task Force.

### **Alternate sewer systems**

The Senate unanimously adopted **SB 1030** which would amend the Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act to require the state Department of Environmental Protection to accept any conventional or alternate sewage system that meets site conditions at a proposed new land development. *Note: SB 1030 would address a PSATS resolution.*

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## Learn

### [Don't Let Your Stormwater BMP Turn Into a Weed Trap - 4/29/20](#)

This webinar will provide participants with information on how to maintain native plants commonly used in bioretention basins, vegetated swales, and riparian buffers. Topics covered include common plant growth characteristics, required maintenance during the first three years after installation, common maintenance challenges, and proposed solutions. [Click here](#) to register

### [PFESI Web Series- Session 8- Building/Maintaining Effective Relationships with Twp/Boro Officials - 4/29/20](#)

This session will identify why unclear expectations between public officials and leaders of VFCs can lead to problems. Solutions to those problems may be easier than expected. As they say, it's all about relationships. [Click here](#) to register.

### [2020 PAAZO Spring Educational Virtual Seminar - May 6 & 8, 2020](#)

The PAAZO Spring Seminar is now a separate 2-day virtual event. Each morning's agenda includes important issues that zoning officers, planning and zoning officials face on a regular basis, and discusses effective strategies to address them. [Click here](#) to view agenda and register.



## **[COVID-19's Impact Upon Township Police Departments - 5/7/20](#)**

This webinar, presented by Christopher Gerber and Andrew M. Rongaus of Siana Law, will offer township officials, police command staff, and township solicitors practical guidance on how to deal with issues that arise from the COVID-19 pandemic – with sample forms for immediate use. [Click here](#) to register.



For full list of webinars and classes please visit <https://learn.psats.org>

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