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May 20, 2020

Welcome to the PSATS Morning News.

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.

Latest News

Pennsylvania Air National Guard Flyover Honors Health Care Workers

Yesterday, the Pennsylvania Air National Guard conducted flyovers in honor of health care workers in Harrisburg, Johnstown, and Pittsburgh. Airmen with the 171st Air Refueling Wing and the 193rd Special Operations Wing flew a KC-135 Stratotanker and an EC-130j Commando Solo aircraft in formation over area hospitals. The flyover was part of Operation American Resolve, a nationwide salute to all those supporting COVID-19 response efforts.

[Real Estate Industry Opens Statewide](#)

Yesterday, Gov. Tom Wolf and state Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine adopted revised orders authorizing businesses and employees in the real estate industry to conduct limited business-related activities statewide effective immediately. The commonwealth provided guidance for the industry to operate in red and yellow phase counties, including limited in-person activities with masking and social distancing. For more information, [click](#)

[here](#).

[CDC Teams Assist with Pennsylvania COVID-19 Response](#)

The Centers for Disease Control sent three teams to Pennsylvania to assist with the COVID-19 response. The teams will be onsite for two weeks, teaching infection control practices and providing training on personal protective equipment and outbreak response at the facilities they visit. Two teams are currently assisting long-term care facilities, and one team is assisting with food facility breakouts. [Click here](#) for more information.

[Department of Health Releases Nursing Home Data](#)

The state Department of Health has released data on the number of COVID-19 cases and deaths that have occurred at individual long-term care facilities in the commonwealth. This report will be updated daily. Previously, this information was provided by county. Note that any results of less than five are redacted. [Click here](#) and scroll to the bottom for this report.

[DCNR to Reopen More State Park, Forest Facilities in Yellow Counties](#)

On Friday, the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources will reopen park and forest offices and tent and RV camping in counties that moved to yellow on May 15 or earlier. Rentals for camping facilities, such as cabins or yurts, will reopen June 12. [Click here](#) for more information.

[Property Tax/Rent Rebates Arrive Early to Help Seniors](#)

The state will issue early rebates for the commonwealth's Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program. Rebates are typically issued starting July 1, but Gov. Tom Wolf and state Treasurer Joe Torsella are issuing the rebates starting tomorrow to approved applicants in accordance with Act 20 of 2020, which Wolf signed today. In addition, the deadline to submit applications has been extended to December 31. [Click here](#) for more information.

[PSATS Executive Director Named to National Advisory Team for Small Town America Civic Volunteer Award Program](#)

David Sanko, executive director of the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS), has been appointed to serve on a five-member national advisory team for the Small Town America Civic Volunteer Award program. [Read full story](#).



Governor Vetoes Three Bills

On May 19th, Governor Wolf vetoed the following three pieces of legislation: [Click here](#) to view the Governor's veto messages.

House Bill 2412: 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 and legal services.

PSATS supports the reopening of real estate activities. However, HB 2412 included provisions that waived municipal-issued use and occupancy permits as well as any safety inspections required by a municipality as a condition of a property transfer. As such, PSATS requested a veto (view letter [here](#)) of this legislation and asked the Governor to direct DCED to quickly issue guidelines to open real estate activities which he did (see above guidance).

House Bill 2388: would require the state Department of Community and Economic Development to issue a waiver to the business closure order for the following businesses: vehicle dealerships, lawn and garden centers, cosmetology, salon, and barber shops, messenger services, animal grooming services, and manufacturing operations. HB 2388 would require these businesses to comply with CDC and state Department of Health safety and health guidelines.

Senate Bill 327: would provide county governments the option to develop and implement individual plans to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and safely reopen. CDC and state Department of Health employee safety guidelines would remain in effect. This legislation would also require any regulation not finally approved or disapproved to be suspended in place until 90 days after the emergency order is lifted. Finally, SB 327 would create a COVID-19 cost and recovery task force.

House Passes Temporary Outdoor Restaurant Seating Legislation

On May 19th, the House passed House Bill 2506 which would allow food establishments to create temporary outdoor seating areas in parking lots or areas adjacent to the establishment.

This legislation does NOT remove municipal zoning authority, but PSATS would like to see clarifying language that allows them to temporarily suspend local at their discretion.

House Passes Indoor Restaurant Seating Legislation

On May 19th, the House passed House Bill 2513 which would allow restaurants, bars, private clubs, brewpubs, breweries, wineries, and distilleries within a designated county that already has indoor seating, to be eligible to immediately reopen for in-person, indoor business operations. Would not apply to night clubs and music or entertainment venues.

Federal News:

House and Senate Members Unveil \$500B "SMART Fund" For State and Local Aid

A bipartisan group of U.S. Senators and Members of the U.S. House of Representatives unveiled the ***State and Municipal Assistance for Recovery and Transition (SMART) Act***, which would establish a "SMART Fund" that would provide emergency aid to each and every state, county, and municipality in the country and would also prioritize funding based on need.

The SMART Fund would provide \$500 billion to state, local, and tribal governments to help "avoid mass layoffs, steep tax hikes, and a breakdown of essential services." \$16 billion would be set-aside for Native American tribal governments, and the remaining funds would be allocated based on population size, infection rates, and revenue loss.

Learn

CANCELED - Public Private Partnerships & Township Identity - May 20, 2020

Today's webinar has been canceled and will not be rescheduled.



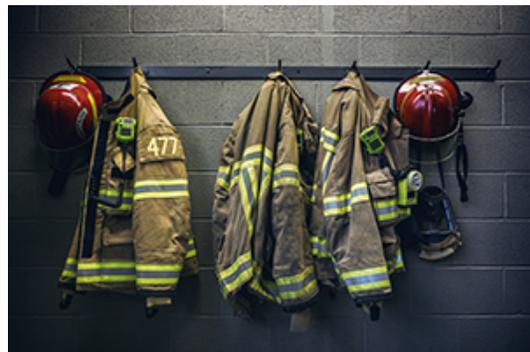
[Municipal Responsibilities on State Roads - May 27, 2020](#)

PennDOT and municipalities share the responsibilities for maintaining and operating roadways for the traveling public. While some responsibilities are obvious, there are many intricacies to who is responsible for particular traffic control devices, permits, sight distances, drainage, and others. This webinar will review the state laws and regulations that define these responsibilities, and discuss example scenarios to clarify the responsibilities. Ultimately, this webinar will help you and PennDOT seamlessly maintain the roadway system for the public road user. Qualifies for 1 PMGA Public Works Point. [Click here](#) to register.



[Strategic Planning for Fire Service Operations in Townships - May 27, 2020](#)

This virtual classroom course will provide necessary information for effective decision making at the local level. Townships and fire service organizations serve diverse communities across Pennsylvania and have struggled with decreasing volunteers and increased costs. This training seminar will use lecture, small group discussions and facilitated brainstorming to identify solutions to sustain or improve fire service in your community. Qualifies for 4 PMGA Public Safety points. [Click here](#) to register.



[The Pros and Cons of Selling Water/Sewer Assets - June 3, 2020](#)

This webinar is designed to provide attendees with information regarding the current market for selling and acquiring municipal water/sewer assets, including a summary of recent public and private transactions, updates on the environmental and PUC developments related to sales/acquisitions and the potential benefits and challenges associated with sales and acquisitions. Join Steve Hann and Tom Wyatt as they cover all sides of this important issue. Qualifies for 1 PMGA Public Works Point.



Qualifies for 1 CLE Credit. [Click here](#) to register.

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



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