



November 25, 2020

Township Video News



TVN's Question of the Week | Are We a COSTARS Member? (Nov. 25, 2020; 1:09)

Joining COSTARS, the commonwealth's cooperative purchasing program, is a great way to save money on products and services. Learn how to find out if your township is already a member. Also, [click here](#) to catch up on previous Questions of the Week. (1:09)

Latest News

Pennsylvania Contact Tracers Forced to Prioritize Due to Volume

Due to increasing numbers of new COVID cases and a finite number of contact tracing staff, the state Department of Health has adopted new federal guidelines that will prioritize positive COVID-19 cases diagnosed in the prior six days. Priorities will also involve cases with a potential for extensive transmission, focus on household contacts, and those at risk

for serious illness. If more than 14 days have passed since the test was taken, case investigation will not be completed. Of the 34,719 positive COVID-19 cases statewide last week, 24 percent were successfully contacted by a contact tracer. [Click here](#) for more.

Governor Seeks Local Partners in Mitigation Enforcement

As a follow-up to the recent orders from PA Health Secretary Levine and Governor Wolf regarding new pandemic restrictions, PSATS has been asked to share the following letter from Governor Wolf. Local governments are encouraged to discuss options to balance resource requests with associated costs. [Click here](#) for a copy of the letter.

PennDOT Says It Must Borrow Funds or Stop Projects

The state Department of Transportation has said it will run out of funds and have to stop or delay many current projects unless it receives emergency approval to borrow \$600 million by December 1. The department claims that this is primarily due to less revenue from gasoline taxes and lack of federal stimulus funds. However, the General Assembly, and the Governor's Office, were only notified of this issue in the last few days, at the very end of the two-year session, which ends November 30. [Click here](#) for more from the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.

Townships Eligible for USDA Grant Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is now accepting applications for its Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program. Townships with populations of 20,000 or less are eligible for the program. Funds may be used to purchase essential community facilities, equipment, and related project expenses. Examples of eligible projects include town halls, street improvements, community centers, public safety services such as police, fire, and public works, libraries, and food banks.

The current interest rate for loans is 2.125%. Loans, grants, or a combination are available. Priority for funding is for communities with a population of 5,500 or less and low-income communities with a median household income below 80% of the state non-metropolitan median household income. To learn more, [click here](#).

IFO Releases Natural Gas Production Report

The state Independent Fiscal Office (IFO) has released a natural gas production report for the third quarter of 2020 that includes natural gas production volume and the number of new wells drilled in the prior quarters. The counties with the highest number of new wells in 2020 are Susquehanna, Washington, Greene, Bradford, and Lycoming. Pennsylvania has the second highest natural gas production volume after Texas. [Click here](#) for more.

Learn

[Webinar - Claims Of Racism At Your Doorstep: What Is A Township To Do? - 12/2/20](#)

What happens when a claim of racism is made against your police department and the newspaper and TV reporters appear at your meeting? What should you do before such a claim is made; what should you do when a claim is made; and what should you do going forward? This webinar will leave you better prepared for what might appear at your township. [Click here](#) to register.

[Flagger Training - 12/3/20 - Erie County](#)

This instructor-led Flagger Training will be conducted for individuals who have flagging responsibilities on ANY ROAD OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. Others who would benefit from this course include: utility companies working on low volume roads, law enforcement personnel, municipal managers and elected officials (to understand the importance, and for budgeting purposes). [Click here](#) to register.

[Webinar - Exploring Adaptive Reuse Challenges And Benefits - 12/9/20](#)

Repurposing existing buildings for new uses can be an important aspect of redevelopment. These projects come with benefits for the greater community: encouraging sustainable building practices, retaining historical features, and local economic impact. Adaptive reuse does pose challenges including: site limitations, potential remediation from previous usage contamination, and meeting modern building code/zoning requirements. These challenges and benefits will be explored along with incentives (State and Federal) for adaptive reuse of existing buildings. [Click here](#) to register.



[Webinar - Employment Law Update: Things You May Have Missed During Quarantine - 12/10/20](#)

This program will provide an overview of recent and upcoming developments in employment law. Whether your township has one employee or one hundred, the program will address lessons learned from 2020, proactive strategies to plan for changes in the law, and recommendations for new policies and practices in 2021. Eligible for 1 PMGA Administrative Point. Eligible for 1 Continuing Legal Education (CLE) Credit. [Click here](#) to register.



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

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.



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