



January 26, 2021

Township Video News



TVN's PSATS Roulette | We Need You!

PSATS Power of One Program is looking for volunteers. Members explain what they give and what they get in return.

Latest News

Deadline Approaching for Changing Tax Collector Compensation

Township boards of supervisors have until **February 15** to increase or decrease the compensation rate for the elected tax collector for collecting the real estate tax. Any change to the current rate will take effect for 2022 and must be done by ordinance or resolution. [Read full story.](#)

Independent Fiscal Office Projects PA Deficits For Years To Come

In its first five-year economic forecast since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the state's Independent Fiscal Office predicted that Pennsylvania's General Fund will run structural deficits over the next five years. With this fiscal year being the sole exception due to federal aid and other cash infusions, the state will experience structural deficits upwards of \$2 billion through 2026, with the deficit projected to grow to \$2.6 billion by 2023 before settling at \$1.9 billion at the end of the 2025-26 fiscal year. [Read full story.](#)

Pennsylvania Vaccine Update

Still ranking 25th in state performance, Pennsylvania has administered 680,219 total doses of COVID-19 vaccine, both through hospitals and health systems, and to nursing homes through the Federal Pharmacy Partnership. Of these, 451,467 people have received one dose, while 114,376 individuals have received both required doses and are fully vaccinated. For more information on vaccination availability in Pennsylvania, [click here.](#)

National Peanut Brittle Day

National Peanut Brittle Day is observed on January 26th. A hard, flat candy confection, peanut brittle is enjoyed throughout the United States.

Peanut Brittle includes caramelized sugar or corn syrup. Nuts are added to the molten sugar and then poured onto a flat surface such as granite or marble and smoothed into a thin sheet.

To celebrate, make up a batch of peanut brittle to share with that person you just know loves it. Since the candy keeps well, you can give it as a gift. You might also teach someone to make your favorite recipe, passing on the tradition.

New Survey Looks at Municipal Officials' Views on COVID-19 Vaccine

The Center for Rural Pennsylvania surveyed 5,409 elected municipal officials in December 2020 to gather basic information on their opinions about the COVID-19 vaccines and Pennsylvania state government's response to the pandemic. The survey was conducted via email. [Read full story.](#)

New Open Records Director Outlines Priorities

Liz Wagenseller, new executive director of the Office of Open Records, recently did an interview with Spotlight PA to outline her priorities for the office, including legislative changes she supports. [Click here](#) to learn more.



The House and Senate will be in session today, January 26. Watch session live [here](#).

Dunbar Elected Caucus Chair

Yesterday, the House Republican Caucus held a leadership election to fill the role of caucus chairman, left vacant by the recent death of Representative Mike Reese. The caucus elected Representative George Dunbar (R-Westmoreland) to serve as caucus chairman for the 2021-22 legislative session.

Special Election for 48th Senatorial District Seat Announced

A special election to fill the 48th state senatorial district seat left vacant by the recent death of Senator Dave Arnold will be held on May 18, to coincide with the May primary.

Senate Transportation Committee Hearing

The Senate Transportation Committee held a hearing on the state Department of Transportation's public-private transportation partnerships (P3s) bridge tolling initiative.

PennDOT Secretary Yassmin Gramian testified that the increases in the economy will also increase the use and deterioration of many roadways, and at the same time the increases in inflation will mean that PennDOT will have less funding to fix those roads. To counteract this, PennDOT plans to use five to 10 toll bridges to pay for new bridges and repair old ones. She estimated that the new bridge tolls would bring \$1.8 billion in new revenue to PennDOT.

The initiative, which was approved by the Public Private Transportation Partnership board in November, does not require legislative approval.

However, Senator Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango) commented that he plans to introduce a resolution to halt the concept citing its negative impacts on local economies.

Additionally, testifiers from the trucking industry indicated that the tolls would hurt their industry as well.

PSATS recently submitted comments, which can be found [here](#), to PennDOT.

Learn

[Webinar - Stormwater Management - What to Expect in 2021 - 1/27/21](#)

Stormwater will continue to be the most pressing environmental issue facing most municipalities in 2021. Compliance with MS4 permits, minimum control measures, water quality requirements and, in many cases, TMDLs and Chesapeake Bay requirements will be among those challenges facing municipalities. This webinar, presented by attorney Steve Hann, will update municipalities on their latest compliance obligations (including urban runoff), the impact of new federal and state initiatives, and the critical economic issues and financial challenges facing municipalities in addressing their stormwater obligations. This webinar will also cover the creation of stormwater authorities, stormwater fee litigation, and the recent developments on the availability of grants for municipal infrastructure needs. Eligible for 1 PMGA Public Works point. Eligible for 1 CLE credit. [Click here](#) to register.

[Webinar - COVID-19 Vaccines: What Municipal Employers Need to Know - 2/2/21](#)

In this webinar, Ryan J. Cassidy, Michael McAuliffe Miller and Scott E. Blissman of Eckert Seamans' Labor and Employment Group will present a focused discussion of the relevant factors municipal employers should consider when implementing vaccination policies, maintaining employee morale, handling enforcement issues and managing accommodations requests. Topics to be addressed include:

- ADA and religious accommodation requirements
- Current legal standards implicated by mandatory vaccine policies in the public sector
- Whether public employers can (or should) require employees to be vaccinated and how to handle employee



refusals

- Collective bargaining issues

Eligible for 1 PMGA Administration Points.
Eligible for 1 Continuing Legal Education (CLE)
Credit (additional fee). [Click here](#) to register.

[Performing MS4 Outfall Inspections - Virtual Class - 2/16/21](#)

In this virtual class, attendees will learn a workable, effective framework for establishing a hierarchy for outfall inspections, a protocol for performing inspections in the field, and method for inspecting documenting and addressing potential illicit discharges. This class, which will be led by Mark Harman of ARRO Consulting, will benefit everyone involved in your township's stormwater management program, including supervisors, managers/secretaries, and public works management and staff.



Presenter: Mark D. Harman, P.G., senior project manager at ARRO, is a licensed professional geologist in the Commonwealth of PA. He has 18 years of experience in hydrogeologic studies, erosion and sedimentation control planning, NPDES permitting, MS4 compliance and reporting, stormwater management system design, wetlands delineation, and PA Natural Diversity Inventory studies as well as municipal administration and enforcement. This course is eligible for 2 PMGA Public Works points. [Click here](#) to register.

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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