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January 27, 2021

Latest News

Today is National Chocolate Cake Day

National Chocolate Cake Day celebrates the cake more people favor. More often than not, we celebrate our special occasions like anniversaries, birthdays and weddings with cake. According to the Dover Post, the chocolate cake was born in 1765 when a doctor and a chocolate maker teamed up in an old mill. The first boxed cake mix was created by a company called O. Duff and Sons in the late 1920s. Betty Crocker released their first dry cake mixes in 1947.

How to celebrate: Have some cake. Share it with someone else. Visit your favorite bakery and give them some credit, too. Or, if you have some mean baking skills, show them off!

Biden Announces Steps to Boost Vaccine Supply and Transparency

President Joe Biden has announced the following steps to boost vaccine access:

- Increase the total weekly vaccine supply to states from 8.6 million doses to at least 10 million doses and maintain this minimum supply level for the next three weeks.
- Increased transparency to the states by providing a three-week supply allocation estimate, instead of the current one-week look-ahead.
- Purchase 200 million additional doses to be delivered this summer, 100 million of each of the currently authorized vaccines.
- The plan was silent on approving additional new vaccines.

[Click here](#) for more.

ATV and Snowmobile Grants Awarded

The state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has awarded grant funds to six recipients in Pennsylvania for all-terrain vehicle and snowmobile facilities and trails. These grants will be used to develop facilities and trails in townships in 10 counties across the state. [Click here](#) for the details.

Commonwealth Adding New COVID Testing Sites

Tomorrow, January 28, the state Department of Health is adding COVID-19 regional testing sites in Armstrong, Cumberland, Jefferson, Monroe, and Wayne counties. The sites in Jefferson will have both drive-thru and indoor walk-in testing available, while Armstrong, Cumberland, Monroe, and Wayne are drive-thru only. Testing will be available 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at these sites until Monday, February 1. Tests are free and do not require preregistration. [Click here](#) for exact locations. If your township needs to find a testing site in another county, [click here](#) to find the closest one.

EPA Diesel Reduction Grants Available

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is currently accepting grant applications for projects aimed at reducing emissions from existing fleets of older diesel engines, such as school buses, class 5 to class 8 heavy-duty highway vehicles, and nonroad engines, equipment, or vehicles. Local governments are eligible to apply for these grants. To learn more, [click here](#).

Reminder: Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program Accepting Applications

The FY 2020 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program application window is currently open and will close on Friday, February 12, 2021. Townships should make sure their volunteer fire companies are aware of the application guidance materials that they can access by [clicking here](#).

Legislation & Policy



The House and Senate will be in session today, January 27. Watch session live [here](#).

Senate Approves Emergency Declaration Legislation

Yesterday, the Senate approved SB 2 which proposes amendments to the Pennsylvania Constitution relating to emergency disaster declarations, limiting declarations to 21 days

(currently 30) and requiring renewals be approved by the General Assembly; and nondiscrimination protections.

Note: All amendments to the Pennsylvania Constitution must be approved by the General Assembly during two consecutive legislative sessions and then approved by the voters statewide. Versions of the proposed constitutional amendments above were approved during the 2019-2020 legislative session.

Learn

[Webinar - What's All the Noise About Noise Ordinances? - 2/3/21](#)

In this webinar, township supervisors, staff, and solicitors will receive sound information about the need for noise ordinances, hear about the startling current research on noise and its adverse effects on health, learn important distinctions between nuisance law and noise ordinances and ways to avoid the decibel level trap. Attendees will also learn tips on drafting a true, simple and effective noise ordinance. Eligible for 1 PMGA Public Safety point. Eligible for 1 CLE credit. [Click here](#) to register.

[Webinar - Home-Based Businesses - Is Your Township Ready for More? - 2/10/21](#)

Whether it is to comply with mandates, help care for family members, convenience or because they just prefer working in their pajamas, more people are now working from homes than pre-COVID-19. Fortunately, modern technology enables business operators and employees to safely and efficiently continue working from their homes. Home business activities and functions are considered a form of home-based businesses or occupations (HBBs)



as defined, permitted and regulated by most municipal zoning ordinances. In this webinar, representatives of McNees Wallace and Nurick, LLC will explore opportunities and options for municipalities to proactively plan and zone for HBBs. This course is eligible for 1 PMGA Planning/Zoning point. [Click here](#) to register.

[Webinar - Setting Up Stormwater Management Fees - 2/24/21](#)

The pressure on municipal leaders across Pennsylvania just keeps growing to do more to manage stormwater. No longer does stormwater management mean just piping flows to the closest stream. Now, communities are experiencing more frequent flooding, MS4 permit mandates, and eroding streambanks. This is over and above the routine operation of an aging storm sewer. The uncertainties of 2020 have many municipalities thinking again about a fairly-collected and reliable source of revenue to support even their basic stormwater activities. In this session, Steve Hann of Hamburg, Rubin, Mullin, Maxwell & Lupin, PC and Nathan Walker of Gannett Fleming, Inc. will discuss how a stormwater user fee, when properly established, can be a transparent, flexible, and equitable way for municipalities to set and achieve a long-term vision for water quality and flood control goals that meet the needs of their residents and businesses. Eligible for 1 PMGA Public Works point. Eligible for 1 CLE credit. [Click here](#) to register.



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