



January 29, 2021

Latest News

National Puzzle Day

Each year on January 29th, National Puzzle Day recognizes how exercising our brains with puzzles is just one of its many benefits.

Whether it's a crossword, jigsaw, trivia, word searches, brain teasers or Sudoku, puzzles put our minds to work. Studies have found that when we work on a jigsaw puzzle, we use both sides of the brain. And spending time daily working on puzzles improves memory, cognitive function, and problem-solving skills.

Reports Due by February 11 to Receive Liquid Fuels by March 1

Township officials should note that the following forms must be filed by February 11 to receive their liquid fuels payments by March 1. The first report must be filed with the state Department of Transportation, while the other two must be filed with the state Department of Community and Economic Development.

- MS-965 Actual Use Report of State Funds and the Report of Elected and Appointed Officials
- Report of Elected and Appointed Officials
- 2020 Survey of Financial Condition

Townships filing after February 11 will see their funds released on a rolling basis after March 1 as PennDOT processes forms. While the final liquid fuels revenues are currently being calculated, it appears that townships may receive slightly more than the 2021 estimates. Preliminary reports suggest that rather than a 10% reduction, there may only be

a 7% reduction.

Covid Vaccine Distribution

While vaccine demand outstrips supply nationwide due to production start ups, many states are struggling with distributing the limited supply they have and Pennsylvania is no exception. CDC reports that PA has dropped to 42nd among 50 states for distribution of the covid vaccine supply on hand. This is down from the earlier middle of the pack 26th ranking. The state has pledged to improve. The expansion of the priority categories is further creating more challenges. 2 weeks ago, we reported that municipal officials were joining federal and state public employees as essential services in terms of prioritization. The hope dimmed when the Commonwealth added 3 million more people into category 1 ahead of first responders and municipal workers.

PA Unemployment Rate Holds Steady

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has released state unemployment rates for December 2020. Pennsylvania's unemployment rate for December increased slightly, from 6.6% to 6.7%, which is the same as the national unemployment rate. Hawaii and Nevada had the highest unemployment rates in December: 9.3% and 9.2%, respectively. Nebraska and South Dakota had the lowest rates: 3% each. Delaware, Maryland, and Ohio had lower unemployment rates than Pennsylvania, while New Jersey and New York had higher rates. [Click here](#) for more.

Legislation & Policy



Governor Announces 2021 Agenda

Prioritizes Economic Recovery, Building on Bipartisan Measures, Government Reform

As the governor prepares to make his annual Budget Address on Tuesday February 2, he is calling for action on the following issues: [click here](#) for more.

Learn

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. [Click here](#) for more information and to register

CDL - Probable Cause Training for CDL Supervisory Personnel - Virtual Training - 2/12/21

State and federal regulations require every employer who has CDL employees driving vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating or operating weight of more than 26,001 pounds used on public roads to participate in a drug and alcohol testing program. These same regulations also require that such employers train all personnel who supervisor employees with commercial driver's licenses (CDLs) in handling suspected on-the-job drug or alcohol use. This workshop addresses these federal requirements by providing supervisory personnel with a working understanding of the federal CDL regulations, including on-the-job probable cause procedures. In addition to those supervisory personnel required to attend, all township CDL employees should attend this workshop to ensure that everyone is on the same page regarding this important public safety training. Eligible for 3 PMGA Public Works points. [Click here](#) to register.



[CMV/CDL Records Management - Virtual Training - 2/19/21](#)

This virtual training workshop will review CMV/CDL employee and vehicle paperwork, including pre-employment inquiries regarding a CDL applicant's records in the FMCSA Clearinghouse; requests for CMV driver's license information from PennDOT; annually reviewing each CDL drivers records in the Clearinghouse; CMV daily vehicle inspection, maintenance, and repair reports; the employer's required policy on CDL drug and alcohol testing; and a general overview of all the CDL regulations. This class is eligible for 3 PMGA Public Works points. [Click here](#) to register.



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