



February 2, 2021

Township Video News



TVN's Training Tuesday | HR Class Forecasts 4 Things to Watch in 2021

COVID-19 has raised a lot of personnel issues that will continue into 2021. We've got details about an upcoming class that will help your township prepare. February also features training for new administrators and those grappling with stormwater management. (3:29)

Latest News

National Tator Tot Day

While everyone else is focused on a groundhog seeing lots of snow and predicting 6 more weeks of winter, we wanted to draw attention to a more comforting event. On February 2nd, National Tater Tot Day recognizes a kitchen staple. In the United States, we consume

approximately 3.5 billion of these nuggets of potato goodness per year (that's a lot of comfort food).

These bite-sized bits of golden deliciousness created from the scraps from making French fries once were used to feed cattle. Seasoned with spices or baked into a casserole, tater tots make a meal, side dish, or a snack celebration. We dip them, pop them, or just savor them.

Pennsylvania Hits One Million Vaccinations, Drops to 49th Among States

Pennsylvania has administered 1,008,025 total doses of COVID-19 vaccine, both through hospitals and health systems, and to nursing homes through the Federal Pharmacy Partnership. Of these, 615,085 people have received one dose, while 196,470 individuals have received both required doses and are fully vaccinated.

Vaccinating still below 50%, an additional 1.113 million doses have been received but not given (284,970 first doses have been allocated but not yet administered, as well as an additional 828,105 second doses). Pennsylvania has been receiving about 140,000 new first doses per week, and this number is expected to increase by about 20,000 doses per week soon.

For more information on vaccination availability in Pennsylvania, [click here](#).

Governor's Budget Address Postponed Until Wednesday

Pennsylvanians will have to wait another day to find out if there are any new taxes, spending or policing fees in our future. Due to the winter storm and another emergency declaration, Gov. Tom Wolf's budget address has been delayed until tomorrow, **Wednesday, February 3**, at a yet to be determined time before the General Assembly. Wolf will deliver his address by pre-recorded video, and the House and Senate will watch the address on screens in their respective chambers or remotely. [Click here](#) to watch budget the address tomorrow.

Wolf Issues Emergency Declaration for Winter Storm

Gov. Tom Wolf has signed a disaster emergency proclamation for the severe winter weather that is impacting the commonwealth. Among other language, the proclamation waives any laws or regulations that would restrict the state Department of Transportation from helping local jurisdictions to repair, clear, and remove snow and other obstructions from non-state-owned highways and at the discretion of the Secretary of Transportation. The proclamation also establishes PEMA (Pa Emergency Management Agency) as the statewide command and control center of operations for emergency response, recovery, and mitigation aspects of the commonwealth and that all applicable county, municipal, and other emergency response plans be activated. [Click here](#) to view the proclamation.

Vaccine Webinar for Municipal Employers Rescheduled for February 5

To better allow everyone to dig out from the storm and still get access to important information, the PSATS webinar on “COVID-19 Vaccines: What Municipal Employers Need to Know” that was scheduled for today has been postponed until **Friday, February 5, from 12 to 1 p.m.** If you already registered, your registration will be automatically transferred. If you would like to register or learn more, [click here](#).

Secretary of Commonwealth Boockvar Resigns After Failure to Advertise Constitutional Amendment

Gov. Tom Wolf has announced that effective February 5, Kathy Boockvar, Secretary of the Commonwealth, is leaving the administration due to a 2 year ago failure of the Department of State to advertise a proposed constitutional amendment that would retroactively extend the timeline for victims to file civil actions against their abusers. Because of the error, the process to amend the constitution must now start from the beginning and cannot be on the ballot before 2023.

Wolf also asked the Pennsylvania Office of State Inspector General to review the situation and make additional recommendations to improve the department’s process for handling constitutional amendments. [Click here](#) for more.

Deadline Extended for Local Government Excellence Award Nominations

The deadline for the 2021 Governor’s Awards for Local Government Excellence has been extended until February 14, 2021. Do you have a township official in your community who demonstrates exceptional dedication to improving public services? If so, be sure to nominate them for this award in one of the 10 eligible categories. [Click here](#) to learn more and give a worthy township official the recognition they have earned!

Deadline Approaching for USDA Loan and Grant Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is accepting applications **until the end of February** 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 broadband, 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 given 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 about the program, [click here](#). For contact information for your local office, [click here](#). [Click here](#) to see a township public works project that was funded by this program.

Independent Fiscal Office, Revenue Release January Revenue Numbers

The Independent Fiscal Office and state Department of Revenue have released January revenue reports. For the month of January, state General Fund collections totaled \$2.7 billion and were \$245.8 million lower than the IFO's official estimates. The shortfall was largely the result of a temporary shift in personal income tax collections.

The Motor License Fund received \$197.2 million in January, \$10.5 million below estimate. The Motor License Fund includes liquid fuels taxes and other license, fine, and fee revenues. Motor License collections for the fiscal year-to-date total \$1.6 billion, 1% below estimate.

[Click here](#) for the Independent Fiscal Office report. View the state Department of Revenue press release [here](#).

Legislation & Policy



Due to the winter weather, the House and Senate will not be in session today and will convene for voting session on Wednesday February 3rd

The House added February 4 & 5 as session days.

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.

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

[HR and Labor Relations in 2021 - Four New Things to Watch For - Virtual Class - 2/23/21](#)

In this seminar, Mike Miller and the team from Eckert Seamans (sponsor of the PSATS HR & Labor Management Institute) will detail what to expect in human resources and labor relations for 2021, including:

- **Work from Home:** Post-COVID-19 (is that a thing?), many employees have come to like working from home. How do we evaluate and address those requests? What should an employer consider in deciding whether to allow work from home?
- **Employee Stress and Coping:** We



expect to see continued effects from COVID-19 through 2021 including more mental health claims. What do we do and how do we do it with respect to handling these claims?

- **Compensation and Bargaining:** The advent of Hazard Pay—besides being difficult to discuss—has started a discussion regarding alignment of pay with desired outcomes. How to continue that conversation so that base pay is less dependent on seniority.
- **Management:** COVID-19 has demonstrated how necessary it is to communicate and manage staff fears, received information and, as always, employees gone wrong. What have we learned and what can we do better?

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



Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors
4855 Woodland Drive
Enola, PA 17025

Click [here](#) to unsubscribe or to change your Subscription Preferences.