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April 26, 2021

Latest News

PSATS Kicks Off Conference Workshop Virtual Sessions This Week!

Today begins the 60 plus workshop sessions over the coming 5 weeks to bring you live and on-demand sessions of classes we would have offered in Hershey at the Annual Conference. It's not too late to sign up for the Conference workshop pass. [Click here](#) for more details. Remember, you can deduct this amount from your conference refund for just 5 more days!

As an example, Join Craig Staudenmaier and Josh Bonn of Nauman Smith tomorrow, April 27, at 11 a.m. for "Right-to-Know Law Update: The Second Decade," which is part of PSATS' Virtual Conference Workshop series. Check out this short video from Craig and Josh:

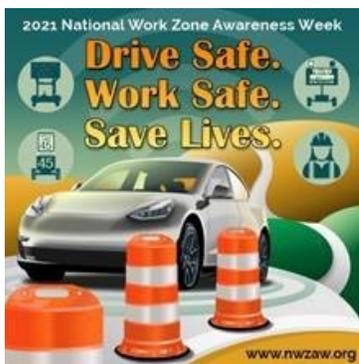


For more information or to register, [click here](#).

And Speaking of the Right-to-Know Law....

OOR to Conduct Study of Agency Websites; PSATS Looking for Township Models to Highlight

The Pennsylvania Office of Open Records will be reviewing how agencies post Right-to-Know Law (RTKL) information on their websites. The OOR will publish a report highlighting best practices for using websites to make it easier for residents and businesses to find information on the RTKL process. If your township's website is a good example for others to model, please email Melissa Morgan, PSATS Policy & Legislative Analyst, at mmorgan@psats.org or call 717-763-0930 ext. 178 so that PSATS can highlight as many townships as possible to the OOR.



National Work Zone Awareness April 26-30

The 2021 National Work Zone Awareness Week takes place this week. The theme is "Drive Safe. Work Safe. Save Lives." To learn more, [click here](#).

Pa. COVID-19 Cases, Hospitalizations Decrease

After six straight weeks of increasing case counts, only 27,398 new cases of COVID-19 were reported this week, a 21% decrease over last week. The statewide COVID-19 total case count now stands at 1,131,014. Across the state, 14 counties saw their weekly cases increase (*compared to 39 last week*), while 51 counties saw decreases (*compared to 28 last week*) and two counties had no change (*compared to 0 last week*.) Despite lower numbers, Pennsylvania remains the fourth highest growth in cases per 100,000, with Michigan, New Jersey, and Delaware making up the top three.

After five straight weeks of increasing case counts the [number of COVID-19 hospitalizations in Pennsylvania](#) has decreased from 2,653 to 2,561, a 3.5% decrease. 544 of these patients are in an ICU, down from 555 the prior week. After increasing for five weeks in a row, the number of COVID-19 patients on a ventilator statewide decreased from 275 to 252.

Unfortunately, total deaths attributed to COVID-19 in Pennsylvania increased for the third week in a row. 277 deaths were reported this week, 7% more than the previous week. Total deaths in Pennsylvania have reached 25,938.

After increasing for five weeks in a row, Pennsylvania's statewide percent-positivity rate has decreased from 9.6% to 8.6%. Six counties now have rates less than 5%

(up from four last week), 42 counties have rates of 5% to less than 10% (up from 38 last week), 19 counties have rates of 10% to less than 20% (down from 24 last week), and no county had a rate of 20% but less than 30% (down from one last week). [Click here](#) for more county-specific information.

Johnson & Johnson Vaccinations Resume

The state Department of Health today notified all vaccine providers to resume administering doses of the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine.

The [Centers for Disease Control's](#) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices determined that incidents of rare blood clots received within two weeks of receiving the Johnson & Johnson vaccine were extremely rare and that the vaccine is safe and effective for all individuals moving forward. [Click here](#) for more.

National Pretzel Day

National Pretzel Day on April 26th recognizes one of America's favorite snacks. A bag of nice crunchy, salty pretzels or a big, warm, soft, cinnamon pretzel is the question of the day. Either one is an excellent choice.

There are a few different accounts of the origin of the pretzel. Most people agree that the origin of pretzels has a Christian background, and they were developed by the monks. According to The History of Science and Technology, in 610 AD, "an Italian monk invents pretzels as a reward to children who learn their prayers.

The Pennsylvania Dutch immigrants introduced pretzels to North America in the 19th century. At this time, many handmade pretzel bakeries populated central Pennsylvania, and their popularity quickly spread. It was in the 20th century that soft pretzels became very popular in areas such as Philadelphia, Chicago, and New York.

Today, Pennsylvania is the center of American pretzel production for both hard and soft pretzels, producing 80% of the nation's pretzels. The annual United States pretzel industry is worth over \$550 million. The average American consumes about 1.5 pounds of pretzels per year.

Looking for the Latest Issue of the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*? [Click here.](#)

Learn

PSATS educational events will be listed as follows: Mondays – All webinars; Tuesdays – Administrative; Wednesdays – Planning/Zoning; Thursdays – Public

Works; Fridays – Public Safety.

[Webinar - Principles of Paving - 4/28/21](#)

This webinar will provide an overview of Principles of Paving, paving techniques, PennDOT specifications, and lessons learned from local officials. [Click here](#) for more information and to register.



[Webinar - Creating Your Personal Financial Foundation - 5/3/21](#)

Managing your personal budget can help you cover expenses with less stress, more easily pay down longer-term debt like a school loan or mortgage and save for future financial goals. [Click here](#) for more information and to register.



[Webinar - Fire and EMS - What Can We Do to Ensure Their Sustainability - 5/5/21](#)

This webinar will educate participants on how fire and emergency medical services (EMS) operate in Pennsylvania. [Click here](#) for more information and to register.



[Webinar - New & Improved FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grant Programs - 5/12/21](#)

In this webinar, Tom Hughes, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency's State Hazard Mitigation Officer, will review all of the improvements made to FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grant programs, cover eligible uses of grant funds, and highlight the ways that your township can benefit from the funding resources provided through those programs. [Click here](#) for more information and to register.



[Webinar - Recent Developments in Cellular Antenna Regulations - 5/12/21](#)

Dan Cohen and Mike Roberts of the Cohen Law Group will discuss recent federal and state developments regarding local regulation of wireless facilities and how municipalities can best prepare for requests to deploy wireless facilities both inside and outside the public rights-of-way. [Click here](#) for more information and to register.



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