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## Newsletter of the Township Engineers Association

December 2021

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### Latest News

#### **PSATS 2022 Conference**

All member engineers should have received information about registering to attend PSATS' 2022 Annual Educational Conference & Exhibit Show, which will be held April 24-27, 2022, at the Hershey Lodge in Hershey, Pa.

This annual gathering provides an excellent opportunity for you to network with nearly 4,000 elected and appointed township officials and employees from around the state, as well as get updated on a wide variety of municipal issues at one of the 60-plus conference workshops or browse the nearly 300 exhibits at the largest municipal exhibit show in the state. Engineers have two ways to become involved in this event:

**1) Exhibit at the Conference:** The conference exhibit show, with nearly 300 indoor and outdoor exhibit spaces, is an ideal way of meeting township officials to directly promote your business. Exhibit space and exhibitor hotel room reservations can only be made online beginning at 9 a.m. on January 11 at [conference.psats.org](http://conference.psats.org). If you have questions, please call PSATS Exhibit Show Manager Donna Centofanti at 717-763-0930, ext. 118. But hurry — exhibit show spaces often sell out by the end of January.

**2) Learn at the Conference:** The Township Engineers Spring Seminar will be held the mornings of Monday, April 25, and Tuesday, April 26, at the Hershey Lodge. To register for this separate event, click [HERE](#).

#### **Reminder: Recycling Performance Grant Deadline Approaching**

Applications for the 2020 Section 904 Recycling Performance Grants are due by December 31. These grants through DEP are available to all Pennsylvania local governments with recycling

programs. The grants awards are based on the total tons recycled and the applicant's recycling rate. Applications must be submitted through the [Department of Community and Economic Development's \(DCED\) Electronic Single Application website](#). Paper and faxed copies will not be accepted. If your municipal clients have questions about how to complete the online application, please have them call the DCED Customer Service Center toll-free at 1-800-379-7448. The center is open 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

### **Pilot Program Paves Road with Recycled Plastic**

Officials from the state Departments of Transportation (PennDOT), Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Environmental Protection (DEP), and General Services (DGS) recently highlighted a pilot project to pave part of a Ridley Creek State Park road with an asphalt and recycled plastic mixture.

The project, coordinated through PennDOT's [Strategic Recycling Program](#), which is funded through DEP, includes two quarter-mile roadway stretches surfaced with an asphalt/recycled-plastic mix. The material is intended to strengthen the road surface without leaching plastic material into the surrounding environment. The pilot project location was chosen in coordination with sibling agencies and supports increased emphasis on sustainable practices. The pilot is incorporated into a 1.5-mile reconstruction project in the park. The rest of the stretch is being paved with a standard asphalt mixture to provide a comparison for the new material over the five-year evaluation period.

The material being tested supports interagency goals to increase the commonwealth's sustainability in operations while supporting deployment in the state overall. Potential benefits include:

- Extended useful life of asphalt pavements;
- Diverting waste plastics from landfills and helping to establish a viable market for these plastics; and
- Continued ability to reuse asphalt millings in future recycled-asphalt pavement applications.

### **[DC Fast-Charging and Hydrogen Fueling Grant Program](#)**

If any of your township clients have expressed interest in electric vehicles and charging stations, the state is allocating roughly \$8.5 million over a five-year period to fund a competitive grant program for acquisition, installation, operation, and maintenance of electric vehicle (EV) fast-charging equipment and hydrogen fuel cell vehicle supply equipment. Applications for CY21 will be accepted until 4 pm Monday, January 31, 2022. Click on the link above for program guidelines and application instructions.

### **Prepare Now for DCNR C2P2 Grant Program**

The 2022 grant application period for the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' (DCNR) Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) will open January 18, 2022, and applications will be accepted until **4 p.m. April 6, 2022**. All applications must be submitted through the [DCNR Grants Customer Service Portal](#). Although the application period is a month away, it's never too early to contact your [regional advisor](#) to discuss your project idea and ways to make it more competitive for state grants.

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## **Legislative Report**

The following is an updated summary of relevant legislation affecting townships that is under consideration by the General Assembly. Please note that the status of these bills may have changed.

### **Bonds for development improvements (SB 208/PN 177)**

This bill would amend the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code to clarify that a municipality

may not require a developer to post a bond of more than 110% of the costs of the improvements. Would clarify that a municipality may retain 110% of the estimated cost of the remaining improvements.

**Status:** Before the House.

### **Restrictions on utility services prohibited (SB 275/PN 1163 and HB 1947/PN 2223)**

This bill would prohibit municipalities from restricting access to any energy source and clarify that this bill does not affect municipal land use authority under the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code or a municipality's ability to take steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from municipal facilities and operations.

**Status:** SB 275 has passed the Senate and is before the House Local Government Committee. HB 1947 is before the House.

### **Electronic transmission of land use documents (SB 755/PN 943)**

This bill would amend the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code to give municipalities and counties the option to transmit land use documents electronically that they are currently required to submit to another entity for review and comment, such as proposed zoning ordinance amendments and comprehensive plans.

**Status:** Has passed the Senate and is pending committee assignment in the House.

### **Regulation of fireworks (SB 894/PN 1135)**

This bill would prohibit the use of consumer fireworks between the hours of 11 p.m. and 10 a.m. except for July 2, 3, and 4 and December 31, when consumer fireworks could be used until 1 a.m. the following day. It would also increase fines for fireworks used in violation of state law from \$100 to up to \$1,000 for a first offense, up to \$2,500 for a second offense, and up to \$5,000 for a third or subsequent offense.

**Status:** Before the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee.

### **Boundary changes (HB 1877/PN 2309)**

This bill would establish the Municipal Boundary Change Act to consolidate and standardize municipal code provisions that deal with boundary change but not mergers or consolidations and would allow municipalities to adjust a municipal boundary or settle a dispute over an unclear boundary by agreement.

**Status:** Before the House.

### **Regulation of fertilizer and professional applicators (SB 251/PN 1183)**

This bill would regulate the application of fertilizer and professional fertilizer applicators to reduce excess levels of nitrogen and phosphorus. Additionally, it would include a homeowner education program and require local governments that choose to have employees apply fertilizer to public property, including public parks, to obtain a fertilizer application license and employ at least one certified public applicator to manage the fertilizer applications and keep records of each application. Finally, it would clarify that local governments that use a licensed fertilizer application business would not need to follow these provisions.

**Status:** Has passed the Senate and is before the House.

### **Liability protection for recreation volunteers (HB 1694/PN 2324)**

This bill would amend the Recreational Use of Land and Water Act to provide protection from liability for volunteers and volunteer organizations that care for, preserve, or maintain land for recreational purposes, recreation land, and nonprofits.

**Status:** Before the House.

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**Calling All Subject Matter Experts**

PSATS continues to host numerous in-person and virtual educational events targeted at both township engineers and municipal officials. If you are interested in sharing your expertise for an in-person or virtual presentation on any topic of interest to our audience, please contact Education Director Scott Coburn at [scoburn@psats.org](mailto:scoburn@psats.org).

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## Training Opportunities

### In-person Classes

#### [PSATS SEO Precertification Academy - March 2022](#)

The PSATS SEO Precertification Academy is designed to teach the basic skills a future sewage enforcement officer (SEO) needs to know to work for a local agency. Whether you work for a municipality in need of a good SEO or are someone who is considering the SEO field as a career, consider the benefits of sending someone or attending the academy yourself. Not only is the academy a prerequisite to taking the commonwealth's certification examination for SEOs but you will also leave the course better prepared to enter the multi-faceted world of a local agency SEO.

#### [2022 Engineers Spring Seminar - 4/25 & 4/26, 2022](#)

It is never too early to plan for the 2022 Spring Engineers Spring Seminar, which will be held in-person the mornings of April 25 & 26, 2022, in conjunction with the 2022 PSATS Annual Conference in Hershey. Eligible for three PDHs per day. Click on the link above to register.

### PowerPass-Eligible Webinars

#### [Webinar - Should We Have An Ordinance For That? - 1/12/22](#)

In this webinar, representatives from the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission will review key issues that are important to your township's comprehensive planning and implementation efforts. Using Susquehanna Township as an example, they will discuss such issues as infrastructure, land development, open space, housing/building stock, cultural resources, and transportation.

#### [Webinar - Stormwater Management: An Annoying Requirement, Simplified - 1/26/22](#)

This webinar will provide an overview of the challenges and best practices associated with managing a township's many stormwater-related responsibilities – in a way that is user-friendly and easy to understand.

#### [Webinar - Where We Ride: Bicycle And Pedestrian Networks And Improvements - 2/23/22](#)

Do all streets and roads need to be "complete"? Not all do, but enough to create a network that allows bicyclists and pedestrians to travel to their regular destinations. Selecting township roads for the network and prioritizing locations for improvement are processes that need to build on previous planning efforts and current usage, assess the level of improvement needed to make biking and walking feel comfortable, and consider facility maintenance responsibilities.

#### [Webinar - What Your Public Works Director Wants You To Know - 3/23/22](#)

Your township's public works staff have unique perspective, knowledge, history and information that greatly benefit elected officials and senior employees. Confronted daily with the challenge of solving problems with finite resources, they are your front line for issues that matter to your constituents. This webinar will help you understand townships' public works infrastructure, operations, and management so that you can better respond to residents and lead your community.

### Virtual Classes

#### [2022 PSATS HR & Labor Management Institute - Virtual - 1/12/22](#)

As an employer, engineering firms also have a need for competent professionals handling their HR matters. Toward this end, PSATS developed the Human Resources & Labor Management

Institute. This virtual full-day offering is a must-attend for anyone who has responsibility for HR and personnel management. Click the link above for full details and share this with your HR department staff.

**[The Code Officials Guide To Zoning - Virtual Class - 1/18/22](#)**

This 90-minute online course provides a comprehensive review of current zoning issues and problems as they relate to the Uniform Construction Code. Topics include an overview of the Municipalities Planning Code, zoning requirements and difficulties, responsibilities of building code officials to meet and manage zoning challenges, permit issuance and enforcement conflicts, violation letter requirements and templates, and legal issues in zoning.



This monthly newsletter for members of the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Engineers focuses on news and matters of interest to municipal engineers and provides details on upcoming training opportunities. You can access past newsletters under the "Newsroom" tab when you are signed in at [psats.org](http://psats.org). Email comments and suggestions to James Wheeler at [jwheeler@psats.org](mailto:jwheeler@psats.org).



Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors

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