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January 3, 2023

Township Video News



TVN's Training Tuesday | New year, new resolutions, and new PSATS classes!

PSATS has a full calendar of in-person and online courses aimed at getting your township's near year started off right!

Latest News

Happy Organization Meeting Day!

Sanko Urges Legislature to Give Townships a Choice for Providing Legal Notices

PSATS Executive Director David M. Sanko penned an op-ed last week urging the Pennsylvania General Assembly to enact legal advertising reform and give municipalities the flexibility to determine which options will best provide information to their residents, businesses, and potential vendors while promoting competition and transparency. Options should include advertising on township websites and in less expensive, widely disseminated community newspapers to ensure that residents and taxpayers continue to have ready access to information about their local governments. [Click here](#) to read the op-ed.

Anxious to Flip Through the January Township News?

Due to labor and postal issues, your January copy of the *Township News* will be late, so be sure to check out the New Year's Digital Issue, which is available now to all subscribers. Login to psats.org, click on "Digital Publications" under "My PSATS." If you need help, reach out to memberservices@psats.org or call (717) 763-0930 ext 195.

PA Gas Tax Increases, Could Lead to Higher LF Distribution in 2024

Due to record high fuel prices in 2022, the Pennsylvania gas tax increased on January 1 from 57.6 cents to 61.1 cents per gallon for gasoline and will increase from 74.1 cents to 78.5 cents per gallon for undyed diesel fuel. This tax, called the oil franchise tax, is levied on the wholesale price of fuel. These revenues must be used to maintain Pennsylvania's roads and bridges and are the source of township's liquid fuels funds. The increase could lead to a higher liquid fuels distribution for local governments to maintain roads and bridges in 2024, but this will depend on the number of gallons of fuel sold in 2023.

When the legislature approved Act 89 of 2013, which modernized Pennsylvania's gas tax and increased transportation funding to local governments, it acknowledged that higher oil prices directly increase the costs of maintaining Pennsylvania's transportation infrastructure. At the time, townships were facing significant decreases in liquid fuels funds due to the ceiling on the gas tax levy. Act 89 eliminated the ceiling for the tax and replaced it with a "floor" of \$2.99/gallon. This is the first time since the passage of Act 89 of 2013 that the tax base is higher than the "floor."

While some will suggest this increase will lead to higher prices at the pump, that has not happened historically in Pennsylvania and will depend on market forces. When gas tax increases from Act 89 were gradually implemented, the average price of fuel decreased due to lower oil prices. In fact, when you compare [fuel prices by state](#) and [gas taxes by state](#), it is clear that the differences in gas taxes do not explain the differences in fuel prices. This is true even when comparing Pennsylvania gas prices, and gas taxes, to those of neighboring states. Maryland saw its gas tax automatically increase in July 2022, from 36 to 43 cents per gallon

(now the fourth highest gas tax nationwide), but the gas price differential between Pennsylvania and Maryland continues to significantly exceed the now 18 cents difference in fuel taxes. Fuel costs far more in other states with significantly lower gas taxes, including Alaska, which has the lowest gas tax.

IRS Announces 2023 Business Mileage Rate

The U.S. Internal Revenue Service has released the [2023 standard mileage rate](#) for the business use of a vehicle. As of January 1, 2023, the rate will be 65.5 cents per mile driven for business use, up 3 cents from the rate for the second half of 2022.

A township board of supervisors may establish a mileage rate for use of personal vehicles for township business provided that it is no higher than the IRS rate.

Legislation & Policy



The Pennsylvania House of Representatives and Senate return to Harrisburg at noon today to begin the 2023-2024 legislative session, swear in members, and elect leadership. Expect fireworks in the House as representatives elect the Speaker of the House and margins are razor thin. While Democrats won more seats in the election, Republicans currently hold a 101-99 majority in actual members due to vacancies. [Click here](#) to watch the swearing-in ceremonies and leadership elections.

Holiday Surprise

Stay tuned tomorrow for more news on the holiday release of a return to the Obama-era EPA rules for “Waters of the U.S.” (WOTUS) that could mean roadside ditches and culverts are protected by the EPA and require time-consuming permitting to maintain local road drainage.

Learn

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

The ABCs for Elected Auditors - Virtual Class - 1/19/23

In this virtual class, you will learn about the responsibilities of elected auditors under the Second Class Township Code, the nuts and bolts of conducting a thorough audit of the township's finances, how to best navigate DCED's online financial reporting requirements, and ways to ensure a healthy working relationship between the elected auditors and the township.



Basic Training For Municipal Secretaries And Administrators - 2/23/23 - York County

This is your opportunity to learn from acknowledged experts about all the most important issues township secretaries and managers need to know. Topics covered will range from budgeting, purchasing, advertising and meeting management all the way to human resource issues and public engagement.



How To Fix Your Productivity To Amp Up Your Results - Virtual Class - 2/9/23

Join master trainer, Chad Barger, for a fast-paced session filled with tips (hacks) for busy professionals to get more done, by working smarter, not harder. This presentation focuses not on what we do, but how we do it. Tips are provided to help professionals better manage email, meetings, their energy level, distractions, self care, to do lists and work life balance (but we prefer the term work life harmony). Attendees leave the session with practical tips that they can immediately implement to make their days more productive and therefore amp up their results.



Steering Through Difficult Township Situations - Virtual Class - 1/24/23

Elected and appointed officials are often asked to solve problems that are either not within their authority to solve or where the proposed "solution" might create negative unintended consequences for the municipality. Navigating these difficult issues requires skill, diplomacy and, often patience.



2023 Update - Retirement Plans, Employee Hot Topics, Using Solicitors And More - 2/28/23 - Erie Co.

In this event, which features a pre-program networking lunch, the team from Knox Law will cover a variety of issues important to municipalities. Those include:

- *10 Retirement Plan Administration Mistakes & How to Fix Them:* [Nadia Havard](#)
- *Hot Topics in Municipal Labor & Employment Law for 2023:* [Matt Lasher](#)
- *The Role of the Solicitor: How Solicitors can be Effective Members of the Township Team:* [Tim Wachter](#)
- Q&A



2023 Solicitors Spring Seminar - 4/24/23

This seminar will cover a wide variety of emerging and important trends and issues vital to the practice of every municipal solicitor. Don't miss this opportunity to hear from experts and network with your peers from around the state.



Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors
David M. Sanko, Executive Director
4855 Woodland Drive
Enola, PA 17025