

Community Connection

ISSUE #22

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The Village of Ottawa * 136 North Oak Street * Ottawa
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Special Points of Interest:

- December Council meetings will be held on Monday, Dec. 14th at 8 pm and on Monday, Dec. 21st at 7 pm. **MERRY CHRISTMAS!**
- The meeting to reorganize for 2016 will be held on Monday, Jan. 4th at 4 pm. **HAPPY NEW YEAR! Welcome 2016!**
- All meetings are held at the Municipal Building and are open to the public.
- Village offices will be closed to celebrate Christmas on December 24th, 25th and 28th.
- Park Board will reconvene on Monday, January 25, 2016.
- Be sure to keep the sidewalks clear of snow and ice.



MAYOR'S UPDATE

While the weather has been quite enjoyable this fall, we have to face it...winter is quickly approaching! The holidays are near and we can assume that with them will come some snow and ice. That doesn't sound too wonderful! However, Christmas is just around the corner and we should all be thankful for that! So... I'm dreaming of a white Christmas ... what about you?

On that note, I would like to let you know that the Village received a settlement from overpaying for rock salt used to de-ice Village streets. The Ohio Attorney General's Office filed a lawsuit against two rock salt producers accusing them of working together to drive up prices for the salt for almost a decade. We submitted documentation of salt purchases from a three-year time span (this was the time period the state was permitted to seek recovery) and received \$1,832.83 as our share of a \$11.5 million dollar settlement. This is the amount that we paid over fair market price and we will take it!

Another winter note is about sidewalks. Please keep them clear of snow and ice for the school children, those who are out enjoying a winter stroll or for our hard working mail carriers.

And now a completely different topic. Trash! The trash contract with Allied/Republic Services will be ending December 31st. The contract was for a period of three years and included all residential structures in the Village. We are in the process of seeking quotes for a new contract so hopefully we get some good pricing. Just like in the past, the quotes will include a two and a four bag service as well as curbside recycling and grinding Village brush into mulch.

I hope that by now you are all aware that the mulch at the Municipal Garage is free to Village of Ottawa residents. Just stop by the Municipal Building and fill out an application. There is a charge for the Village to load it if you need help, but otherwise it is free for Village of Ottawa residents with a strong back and some energy to shovel something other than snow!



**I hope all of you had a Happy Thanksgiving
and I wish you a very Merry Christmas!
Go Titans!**

—Dean Meyer, Mayor



Snow Tips

- When you shovel your driveway, throw the snow "downstream" or on the right side of your driveway. This way you won't create quite as much work for yourself when the snowplow goes past.
- Be aware of snow piled at intersections. Once all the streets are cleared, Village employees will come by and clean up these areas.
- Make sure you move all trailers and vehicles off the streets after snowfall so the plows can do their work!

Village of Ottawa Officials

Dean Meyer—Mayor

Council Members

Tim Macke, President

Gene Hovest

Jo Deskins

Troy Yant

John Salsburey

Dave Michel

Planning Commission

Dean Meyer—Chair

Tim Macke

Bill Hanna

Denny Recker

Randy Verhoff

CAN I FLUSH THAT?

If you have to ask that question... probably not! The Director of the Sanitary Sewer Department has requested Village of Ottawa residents be made aware of an issue at the



Wastewater Treatment Plant. Items that are labeled “biodegradable” are being flushed into the sanitary sewer system causing it to fail and the sewer system to backup. Many of these items are “biodegradable” meaning it should reduce the volume of waste in *landfills...* not in a sewer plant.

In order to keep utility costs down and the sewer system operating efficiently for all our Village residents; we are requesting **ONLY human waste and toilet paper be FLUSHED.** Flushing wipes, diapers, feminine products or plastic items of any kind can cause the system to become plugged which may result in the sewer backing up into our homes.

Repairs are costly and everyone must be mindful of our infrastructure that we depend on every day and sometimes take for granted. If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact the Wastewater Treatment Plant Director at 419-523-0020.

Gas & Electric Aggregation

Recently Village Council passed two ordinances paving the way to have aggregation programs for electricity and natural gas within the Village. These programs will go to the ballot on March 15, 2016 for residents to vote on.

Aggregation is a process by which the community can combine the buying power of the residents into a larger buying group which can have a huge economic impact. Consider these numbers: A typical household in the Village uses an average of 12,000 kilowatt hours per year in electricity. The current market rate for electricity in an aggregation program is no more than 6.29 cents/kw fixed, while the utility is averaging 8.30 cents/kw. That works out to an estimated yearly savings of \$241.20. With approximately 1,829 households in Ottawa, the estimated community-wide savings would be a whopping \$441,155.00.

The aggregation program Council will be presenting to the voters is called an opt-out program. This will allow any resident who does not want to participate the chance to decline. In the February *Community Connection*, we will print some common questions and answers to help everyone understand the program better.

- Dave Michel, Council Member

CONTACT INFO

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What is OhioCheckbook.com?

At the October 26th meeting, Ottawa Village Council authorized Clerk-Treasurer, Barb Hermiller, to affirm and agree to the *Ohio Checkbook* Terms of Service.

What is *Ohio Checkbook*? This initiative, established by Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel, sets a new national standard for transparency in state and local government spending by providing a website that shows taxpayers exactly how their tax monies are being spent.

The website, *OhioCheckbook.com*, is a first-of-its kind website which earned Ohio the number one transparency ranking in the country for providing online access to government spending data. This is the first time in Ohio history that state and local expenditures have been posted together online for citizens to search, download, compare and analyze.

The Village of Ottawa has provided the Ohio State Treasurer's office with its financial data and is presently awaiting the posting of this information on the *OhioCheckbook.com* site. Once the Village financial data has been posted by the State, Ottawa residents can enter the *OhioCheckbook.com* site and by clicking on the “Local Gov & Schools” tab in the upper right-hand corner of the page, view the Village's financial information.

- Jo A. Deskins, Council Member

Christmas is not a time nor a season,
but a state of mind.

To cherish peace and goodwill,
to be plenteous in mercy,
is to have the real spirit of Christmas.

- Calvin Coolidge

Merry Christmas!