



LEHIGHTON BOROUGH

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COMMUNITY AND THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

In my years as Borough Manager, I have witnessed that in Lehigh a word like “community” doesn’t really do us justice. We have a bond through our personal and professional relationships that transcends a community and bonds us as a society of mutual togetherness.



Our strength has been brought to the fore-front as we have all faced a new normal while living through the coronavirus pandemic. For a time, the doors to Borough Hall were closed to the public. Our residents were welcomed back in June and we hear all so often how happy they are to come in and talk to the staff. Borough Council was challenged with following the updates provided from the CDC, the Governor and the PA Department of Health.

Our team was faced with an ever-changing atmosphere of legislation, orders and recommendations. We all were concerned about our families, our friends, our coworkers, and our neighbors. Months later, our everyday lives remain different, however we carry on for the success of Lehigh.

If you recall, the Lehigh Borough Spring/Summer newsletter was distributed right after the Coronavirus struck. All the group events planned for the community were postponed and many plans for the Borough were placed on hold. Most of the information in our last publication was no longer applicable. Our daily objectives changed. Our world had come to a halt and we were all forced to take a step back, slow down and reset. The virus brought us all many challenges and unknowns, and continues to do so.

One thing we notice more than ever is there is NO “business as usual.” Our small businesses, non-profits and local groups were forced to change their business models, close their doors or cancel/postpone community-based events. There are so many of us whose mission is to revitalize our downtown. We have been following guidance from the National Main Street Center since 2013 on how to rebuild our downtown and business community. And now... we are here... in the face of an unprecedented global pandemic with little guidance and no model.

The heart and soul of a community are the people who live and work in them. It is very obvious that resources are drained; people are exhausted; and many local municipalities are struggling. In this strife, there is faith that together we can help each other and help our local businesses. We need to be resilient and strong for the future of our communities. As borough officials, we continue to work together with other municipal and county officials. We reach out to our resources and associations throughout the commonwealth.

The Main Street Steering Committee (MSSC) had hosted a business owner’s roundtable meeting in July. We wanted to open the dialogue between business owners to talk about the struggles, about their creativity to rebrand themselves and about their future. We also provided tools on funding

Continue on page 3

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opportunities for the business owners and tried to provide a one-stop resource. The MSSC will continue to facilitate such meetings while looking for ways to promote the downtown, all of our businesses and our community as a whole. But we need more than discussion, we need the community support.

We encourage you to be a part of our success. Shop Local and Stay Local. Support our restaurants and support our small businesses as they have supported the community for many years. Start your holiday shopping early and purchase gift cards for the local establishments. Keep your dollars local. Ask how you can assist in any of our numerous local non-profits, as they have felt the impact as well.

Proper planning and strong community efforts will help us rebuild. I am optimistic for our future because I know the pride of Lehigh Community. I understand the strength that comes in our community members. We have hit a stumbling block in the road to revitalization but together we can move forward.

I also encourage our community to continue to slow down and reset. All too often, we say we wish there was more time to accomplish tasks, find time for our family and for ourselves. Through this pandemic, we've been given the opportunity to take that time and I am positive it opened many of our eyes to all that is truly important. Wishing you all well.

Nicole Beckett, Borough Manager

LEHIGHTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

As we approach the winter season, the Lehigh Fire Department would like to provide the following safety information to keep you and your family safe.

- Make sure you have properly operating smoke detectors. The batteries should be changed twice a year when the clocks change in spring and fall. Smoke detectors should also be tested monthly. Smoke detectors should be installed inside of every bedroom, outside of all sleeping areas, and on every floor of the home. **SMOKE DETECTORS SAVE LIVES!!**
- Make sure you have properly operating Carbon Monoxide detectors. The batteries should also be changed twice a year when the clocks change in spring and fall. Carbon Monoxide detectors should also be tested monthly. Carbon Monoxide detectors should be installed on every floor of the home. **CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS SAVE LIVES!!**
- Ensure that your furnace, fire places, and chimneys are inspected, cleaned and maintained properly for the heating season. Properly discard of ashes from coal and wood heat sources.

Did you know?

Nearly half of holiday decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to a heat source.

It's fun to decorate for the winter holidays, but holiday decorations can increase your risk for a home fire. As you deck the halls this season, be fire smart.

- Inspect holiday lights and extension cords each year before you put them up. Throw away light strands and extension cords with frayed or pinched wires. Utilize the proper extension cord for your intended use.
- Water your Christmas tree every day. A dry tree is dangerous because it can catch on fire easily. Keep trees and all holiday decorations away from heat sources.
- Consider using battery-operated flameless candles, which can look, smell and feel like real candles.
- If you do use lit candles, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be knocked down easily.

If you are a Borough resident and are in need of smoke detectors, please contact the fire station at 610-377-2449 for eligibility.

By following these simple but crucial tips, you and your family can have a safe winter and holiday season.

LEHIGHTON SHADE TREE COMMISSION

The Lehighton Shade Tree Commission members kicked off 2020 with their monthly meeting in February putting together plans for the year that would have included holding their annual Arbor Day festivities at the Lehighton Area Middle School along with an extensive Earth Day planting, mulching, pruning and clean up day. Shortly after their meeting, the dreaded Covid-19 virus arrived forcing the Shade Tree members to make the decision to curtail the majority of their 2020 plans.

Recognizing that not holding an Arbor Day celebration with the students of the Lehighton Middle School was the right decision for the safety of all involved, it still hurt knowing how much joy and education this day brings to the students and other participants. The good news is that based on information received from DCNR, due to the seriousness of Covid-19, the canceling of Arbor Day 2020 will not impact the status of Lehighton's chances of qualifying as Tree City USA for the 27th year in a row.

Not holding the Earth Day project was another huge disappointment since this year's plans would have included 4H members, girl scouts, boy scouts, and many other groups from Lehighton and surrounding areas helping with the mulching of many of the 247 memorial trees located within the borough parks, streets and recreation areas. Recognizing that a memorial tree becomes a living tribute to the person it honors or memorializes, the Shade Tree Commission would like to encourage anyone who either purchased a memorial tree over the years or perhaps knows the person who the tree is in memory of to feel free to weed around the tree and perhaps place a layer of mulch around the base of the tree. The mulch not only helps the overall health and beauty of the tree but also helps keep mowers and weedwackers from doing damage to the trunks. For anyone willing to help and wanting to be reimbursed for the mulch used around the tree, please indicate who the tree is in memory of along with the location of the tree and submit your receipt to the borough to be paid from the Shade Tree budget.

It needs to be mentioned that over the summer, an anonymous person/persons weeded and mulched 10 memorial trees along Lehigh Drive and near the D&L pavilion. The effort of these wonderful volunteers needs to be acknowledged and applauded. Lehighton is a town that is fortunate to have many such civic minded volunteers and groups. This is the difference that will help Lehighton thrive going forward and a town we can all be proud to call home!

Over the summer, the Shade Tree members held an outdoor meeting using the time to validate an assessment on the overall health of the trees located in the upper and lower parks. The assessment by the Shade tree members was a follow up to a very thorough assessment previously completed in September of 2019 with the help and support of Vinnie Cotrone (Urban Forester with Penn State University) and Steve Ziegler (Forester with DCNR). The assessment took into consideration such things as safety, overall health of tree, defects found within the tree, budget costs to prune vs. remove as well as location of tree based on location of light standards and power lines. When looking at the overall health of the tree identifiers such as decay, split trunks, curled root structure, damage caused to trunk of tree during construction, lack of root flare, codominant trunk structure and amount of dead wood were some but not all inclusive items looked at to determine if the tree should be pruned vs. removed. A total of 16 trees within the upper and lower parks have been identified as potential candidates to be considered to be removed and replaced.

During the fall planting season, there are plans by the Shade Tree Commission to plant a new memorial tree in the upper park that will replace a very old and diseased maple tree that was removed two years ago.

Below are just a few of the many benefits that trees provide to our community.

- Living in a leafy neighborhood adds value to your property as trees improve living conditions by shading out the heat of summer, store carbon and recycle oxygen.
- Trees increase business traffic. Studies show that the more trees and landscaping a business district has, the more time customers are willing to spend in the area. A tree-lined street will also slow traffic – enough to allow the drivers to look at the store fronts instead of speeding by.
- Trees add unity to a community when used as landmarks by bringing a new identity to a neighborhood and encouraging civic pride.



The Shade Tree Commission is made up of the following borough residents: Scot Wingert, Judy Wingert, Sara Wingert, Ryan Saunders, Bobby Strausberger, Diane Hoffman and Mark Hoffman. These members generally meet in borough hall at 6:00 pm on the third Wednesday of each month. Guests and potential new members are always welcome. You can also follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/LehightonShadeTree>



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HALLOWEEN 2020



Trick or Treat will be held Wednesday, October 28, 2020 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. We encourage everyone that decides to hand out treats, that they do so from a porch or yard, stay outdoors.

The Halloween Parade will not be held in 2020

Rocktoberfest will not be held in 2020

TIS THE SEASON FOR HOLIDAY DECORATING

The Borough will continue to host the annual residential holiday decorating contest. Our team of secret elves will be judging decorated homes during the week of December 21st. Winners will be announced on the Lehighton Borough Facebook Page and in the news.

The Main Street Steering Committee together with the Lehighton Borough will be hosting the Second Annual Holiday Storefront Decorating Contest. We invite the community to participate in this business promotional event. We hope to create awareness of our downtown and give you a reason to stop in to see what each business has to offer this holiday season. We encourage you to walk the downtown district and engage with the business owners. There will also be prizes for two businesses outside of our business district so please take the time to visit them also.



More information on the holiday contest to follow! Follow Lehighton Main Street on Facebook or watch the news and for flyers throughout the community on the contest.



Winter Holiday Safety

Winter holidays are a time for families and friends to get together. But that also means a greater risk for fire. Following a few simple tips will ensure a happy and fire-safe holiday season.



HOLIDAY DECORATING

- Be careful with holiday decorations. Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Keep lit candles away from decorations and other things that can burn.
- Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Connect no more than three strands of mini light sets and maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of LED strands to connect.
- Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.
- Keep decorations away from windows and doors.



HOLIDAY ENTERTAINING

- Test your smoke alarms and tell guests about your home fire escape plan.
- Keep children and pets away from lit candles.
- Keep matches and lighters up high in a locked cabinet.
- Stay in the kitchen when cooking on the stove top.
- Ask smokers to smoke outside. Remind smokers to keep their smoking materials with them so young children do not touch them.
- Provide large, deep ashtrays for smokers. Wet cigarette butts with water before discarding.

Before Heading Out or to Bed

Blow out lit candles when you leave or go to bed. **Turn off** all light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to bed.

FACTS

- Two of every five home decoration fires are started by candles.
- Nearly half of holiday decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to a heat source.



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www.nfpa.org/education

TREES IN THE PARK

We won't let COVID cancel our Lehighon Christmas in the Park, however it will alter it a bit.

The Lehighon Borough Parks and Recreation Committee is excited to announce that the 5th Annual Lehighon Christmas Trees in the Park will still light the center of our town and bring sparkle and cheer to everyone.

Since 2016, when the Christmas Trees in the Park began, the event has quickly become a yearly favorite to many. The Upper and Lower Parks located around the Lehighon Municipal Building and Park Fountain will be adorned with 151 Christmas Trees which will be decorated by local businesses, organizations and families in their own holiday themes and flair. At the center will be a spectacular 15 foot tree standing tall in front of the Amphitheater.

The P & R Board along with the hard workers of the Public Works Department and the Light & Power Department, will do their best to bring you a display to be proud of. While we will not hold a Tree Lighting Ceremony this year, to comply with Social Distancing recommendations, we encourage everyone to take some time during the holiday season to stroll through the parks and take in the decorations, lights, and individual themes of each tree. Spend an extra moment reading the Tree Tags. You may find yourself learning of a new local business or organization. Or you may find a memorial tree for a long lost friend or acquaintance that makes you stop and remember them and the bond you shared here in Lehighon. The feeling you will walk away with will last you the entire Christmas season.

Beginning on Friday, December 4, 2020 and continuing over the weekend, the trees will slowly be decorated and lit. When evening comes on Sunday, December 6, 2020, the entire park will be illuminated and ready for visitors. For this year, there will be no public event or grand lighting moment, but rather a gradual illumination of the park. However, please understand that by next year, we hope to return to our normal community event and lighting ceremony with even more to celebrate, as hopefully COVID is behind us and we can all come together and enjoy the company of our neighbors.

If you are unable to physically walk the parks, please look to our Facebook page 'Lehighon Borough Parks and Recreation Board', for a LIVE virtual tour of each tree on the evening of December 6th at 7:00 pm. We may even have a few guests and holiday surprises on the Live Event, so please tune in.

For those who look forward to adopting their tree each year; the invitations will be in the mail the first week of October. The remaining trees will be available on a first-come-first-serve basis beginning the third week in October. Applications will be available at Jenny's Sweets & More, the Olde Tyme Corner Store and the Municipal Building.

The trees will remain in the parks through January 8, 2021, so each and every one of you will have ample time to come out and stroll through Lehighon's beautiful parks and take in the beauty of the holiday season.



FALL AND WINTER STORMWATER TIPS

FALL STORMWATER POLLUTION PREVENTION TIPS

- Raking leaves onto a stormwater inlet creates more pollution of local streams and waterways. Not only do leaves contribute to stream pollution, they can cause localized flooding if they clog storm drains and pipes. Help protect nearby waterways from excess nutrients and never rake leaves into a storm drain.
- The Borough of Lehighton collects leaves during the month of November as part of our yard waste recycling program. Leaves can be placed in the street gutters however if rain is in the forecast, please wait until nicer weather in order to prevent stormwater issues.

WINTER STORMWATER POLLUTION PREVENTION TIPS

Start shoveling early! The more snow you remove, the less salt and sand will be needed.

DO's	DON'Ts
DO pile snow in locations with the most opportunity to infiltrate into the ground	DO NOT pile snow on top of storm drains or near water bodies.
DO pile snow where water does not pond	DO NOT pile snow onto rain gardens or bioretention areas.
DO clear away any snow that may have been thrown onto the storm drains	

TIPS TO AVOID USING SALT AS A DEICER

- More salt does not equal more melting snow. Follow product instructions when spreading deicing material and give it time to work. Sweep up any material remaining after the snow/ice melts.
- When temperatures hit 15° F or below, salt is not effective. Consider using traction materials that contain an acetate, potassium chloride, magnesium chloride, or cracked cornmeal instead of sand or kitty litter.
- Pay close attention to places that may have eroded during the snow melt. Plan to improve these areas in the spring by using native grasses, meadow plants, or native trees and shrubs.

HELPFUL TIPS FOR THE WINTER SEASON

- Do not shovel, plow or blow snow into the roadway. This is illegal and can cause a dangerous situation for vehicles and pedestrians
- For your safety and to assist the Lehighton Fire Department, adopt a hydrant if there is one near your property. Please clear the snow from the hydrant.
- If you have any low hanging trees and/or shrubs on your property, please cut and remove these branches over public sidewalks and over any streets or roadways.
- Wait to shovel snow from the edge of your driveway until the street is plowed the full width.
- Keep in mind that we a community and during extreme situations such as a winter weather event, the whole community needs to work together to address the situation.

SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL REMINDERS

- Borough residents are reminded that snow and ice must be cleared from sidewalks for a path of at least 36 inches wide within 48 hours after the snow has ceased to fall.
- Businesses are reminded that all snow and ice must be removed within four hours after the snow has ceased to fall. If the snow and/or ice cessation happens in the hours of darkness, the time limit of removal begins at daybreak. Business must have entire sidewalk free of any snow and ice.



LEHIGHTON AREA POOL PALS (LAPP)

By the time you are reading this, summer will be in our rear view mirror and what a summer it was. After much careful thought and deliberation, it was decided by council to approve the opening of the pool on June 13th for the 2020 swimming season. We applaud both borough council and Recreation Director Tom Evans for doing their due diligence using data to help them with their decision to make sure the residents of Lehighton and surrounding areas had a place to cool off but at the same time making sure their safety was a high priority. There were quite a few days over the summer when the heat index was close to or even went beyond 100 degrees. What an asset the pool turned out to be for those looking for a safe place to cool off.



In regards to the Pool Pals, due to the Covid virus, we had our last official meeting of the year in February however continued to keep in touch by way of e-mail and phone calls. As heartbreaking as it was to all of us, for the safety of all involved, we were forced to cancel our very popular end of school year annual Pre-Teen Dance as well as our ever popular annual Family Fun Day/Night that is held annually at the pool.

Over the summer we held informal outdoor meetings at the pool. At our June meeting we voted to support the LAHS Senior night that was held at the pool by making a monetary donation to help defray the cost of the event.

At our July meeting, we did some brainstorming to come up with an idea that would give everyone something to look forward to in 2021 when this Covid is hopefully behind us. After much discussion, we voted to look towards the feasibility of forming a working relationship with the borough in an effort to possibly construct another pavilion. The pavilions are very popular for parties and they also provide a great place to escape the sun when they are not being used for parties.

The Lehighton Area Pool Pals normally meet on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm in borough hall. New members and guests are always welcome.

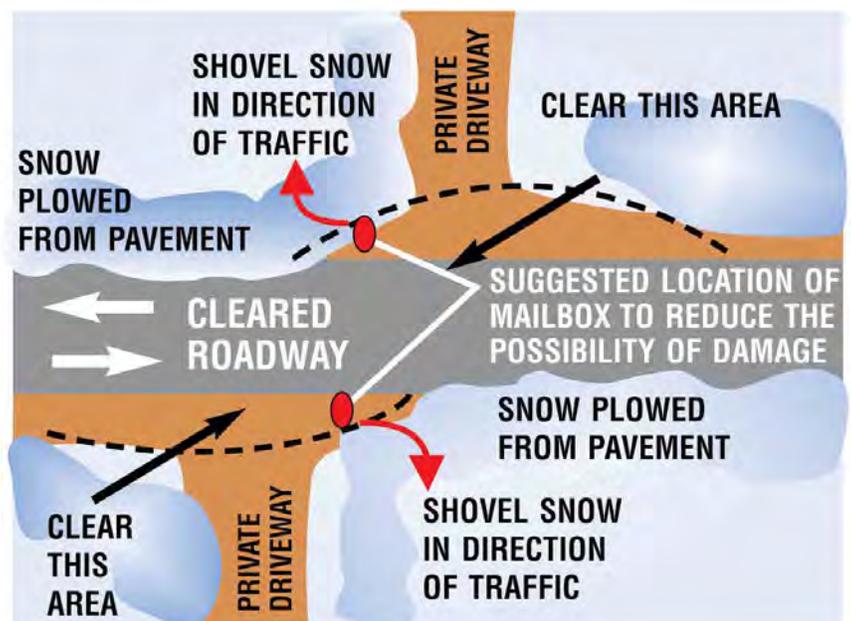
Also, be sure to check us out on Facebook or at our new and improved web site at <https://lehightonareapoolpals.org/>

SNOW SHOVELING TIPS

After a snowstorm, how many times have you shoveled your driveway or sidewalk only to have it plowed in?

Public Works suggests that you wait until the street is cleared before you shovel the last five feet of your driveway or your sidewalk. Always clear an area to the right of your driveway (as seen in the diagram) to give the snow on the blade of the plow a place to empty before it gets to your driveway. This way you won't have to do the same job twice.

Public Works also reminds you that it is illegal to push snow from a parking lot or driveway onto a township roadway.



A NOTE FROM THE LEHIGHTON AREA MEMORIAL LIBRARY'S DIRECTOR



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lehighonlibrary.com



Hello Friends,

I hope that you are well. This year has been challenging for everyone and the health crisis has changed things a bit here at the Library. Although the building wasn't open for a few months earlier this year, we continued working to keep people connected to services online and planned new and innovative ways to safely meet the community's needs going forward. Some of our adaptations include:

- Curbside Pickup of Materials and Services
- Browsing and Computer use by Appointment
- Online Programs for children and adults
- STEAM activities in To Go Bags
- Social distancing policies and extra hygiene practices
- A partnership with the Palmerton and Dimmick Libraries to capture and preserve our local history through the Sheltered Stories project

We continue to provide access to computers, the internet, Wi-Fi, books, audiobooks, DVDs, databases, newspapers, magazines, eBooks, and educational and recreational programs for all age groups. Our staff helps people apply for jobs, find social services, use online resources, learn about new devices and technology, navigate the internet, and meet so many other needs. And we do all of this free of charge. We also provide services such as printing, copying and faxing for a small fee.

Please check our website, lehighonlibrary.com, for details and the latest updates. You can also email liblehtn@ptd.net or call 610-377-2750 for assistance.

Now more than ever we will continue to reach out to the community to help meet needs that may increase, change, or emerge due to current events. We look forward to helping you in any way we can.

Sincerely,

Melissa E. Hawk, Library Director

UTILITY BILLING OFFICE

For your convenience the Utility Billing Department is pleased to announce the recent implementation of Utility E-Billing and/or ACH Payments which are automatically deducted from your bank account. If interested in enrolling in either program, please fill out the enrollment form available in the utility billing office. Please allow up to two (2) billing cycles for the changes to take effect. In addition to ACH, we continue to accept cash, personal checks, money orders and credit card payments for monthly utility bills.

COVID-19 preventative measures are still in effect. Face coverings and social distancing are required upon entry to Borough Hall and all offices. Use of the utility drop box and payments by mail are highly encouraged.





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Thank You To The Businesses

thank you

This publication is made available through generous sponsorships of the businesses listed throughout the newsletter. We wish to encourage your patronage of these establishments; they play a substantial role in the economic vitality of our community.

THE BENEFITS OF PUBLIC POWER



Public power keeps money in the local community, helping to stimulate economic growth.



Public power is owned by the community, which means we exist to serve our customers, not stockholders.



Public power is not-for-profit, meaning our goal is to provide the highest level of service at the lowest possible price.



Public power rates are locally controlled, meaning that customers have a real say.



Public power workers are friends, family and neighbors, which means we care about ensuring reliable, quality service.



Public power is part of the community, which means we are vested in being good environmental stewards.

#WeArePublicPower



NEW AND IMPROVED WEBSITE

New and improved www.lehightonborough.com website design coming in 2021! If there is anything you would like to see on the new site, send your suggestions to nbeckett@lehightonborough.com



LEHIGHTON BOROUGH DIRECTORY

1 Constitution Avenue | Lehighon, PA 18235 | 610-377-4002 | www.lehighonborough.com

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610-377-4003

mayor@lehighonborough.com

Nicole Beckett, *Borough Manager*

610-377-4002 ext. 214

nbeckett@lehighonborough.com

Cathy Smith, *Treasurer*

610-377-4002 ext. 216

treasurer@lehighonborough.com

Brenda Kreitz, *Secretary*

610-377-4002 ext. 211

secretary@lehighonborough.com

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Autumn Abelovsky & Richard Zimmerman

CENTRAL CARBON MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY

Tim Eckhart, *Chairman*

Manny DaCosta

Ronald Solt, *Treasurer*

James Deebel, *Secretary*

Arland Moyer, *Asst. Sec./Treas.*

WATER AUTHORITY

David Harleman, *Chairman*

Lamont Ebbert, *Vice Chairman*

Gordon Ripkey, *Treasurer*

Brian Rubin, *Secretary*

Richard Barclay, *Asst. Treas.*

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE BOARD

Allen Young, *Chairman*

John Kreitz

Brian Schnell

Chris Schnell, Sr.

Alternates: Manny DaCosta, Steve Niehoff

BOROUGH OFFICE HOURS AND HOLIDAY CLOSURES



The Borough Office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m., to 4:30 p.m. **Please Note:** A face covering must be worn and social distancing of at least six (6) feet must occur at all times.

When the office is closed, utility payments can be deposited in the payment box outside of the door on the North side of the building.

The Borough offices will be closed on the following Holidays: Thursday, November 26, 2020, Friday, November 27, 2020, Thursday, December 24, 2020, Friday, December 25, 2020, Thursday, December 31, 2020, Friday, January 1, 2021, and Monday, February 15, 2021.

The Borough Council Meetings are held the first Monday of the month, at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building. All meetings are open to the public.

Please check out our website at www.lehighonborough.com to confirm meeting dates and times, ordinances, events, etc.



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Who Needs Building Codes?

We all do – whether in our homes, offices, schools, stores, factories or places of entertainment. **We rely on the safety of structures that surround us in our everyday life.** The public need for protection from disaster due to fire, structural collapse and general deterioration underscores the need for modern codes and their administration. Most aspects of building construction (electrical wiring, heating, sanitary facilities) can represent a potential hazard to building occupants and users. **Building codes provide safeguards.** Although no code can eliminate all risks, reducing risks to an acceptable level helps.

Who is Lehigh Borough's Codes Enforcer?

Barry Isett and Associates, Inc. is the appointed Building Code Official, Zoning and Code Enforcement Officer for Lehigh Borough, appointed in 2013. As certified Inspectors, our responsibility is the protection of the health, safety and welfare of the public by creating safe buildings and communities. This is accomplished through the enforcement of federal, state and local ordinances adopted by the Borough.

We take pride in providing a professional level of assistance to the community. Enforcement often begins with a written letter (Notice of Violation) to identify items that are out of compliance, the code requirement, a timeframe for completion and a fine if no action is taken to abate the issues. These items are required to be listed in the notice and may seem overwhelming and are often interpreted as demanding and offering no help. In fact, that is not the case. The Borough wants compliance with codes to ensure health and safety for the community. Isett will work with you throughout the process and provide guidance. Cooperation on your part is needed in order to achieve a successful completion of the project.

Property Maintenance and Quality of Life (QQL)

One of the Borough's highest priorities is to work with property owners and tenants to preserve and maintain the neighborhoods and commercial areas. The presence of property nuisances detracts from the enjoyment and quality of life in the community. Isett handles complaints related to private property nuisances, both residential and commercial. You can assist Code Enforcement by reporting any condition you believe to be a nuisance.

Together, we can keep Lehigh Borough a beautiful place in which to live and do business.

For more information, see the Zoning & Building section of Lehigh Borough's website.