



# The Borough of East McKeesport

## Allegheny County, Pennsylvania

DECEMBER 2018

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### CHRISTMAS PARTY

Our annual Christmas party is coming up. It will be on Saturday, December 15th from 12-2 p.m. for kids 12 and under. Have the kids dress in their Christmas best and come hang out and take a picture with Santa. We will also be having a holiday puppet show from the Pittsburgh Puppet Works and lunch for the KIDS. You will need to call and register with Connie @412-824-2531.

### UNITED VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

This year's craft show will be held on Saturday, December 8th at the East McKeesport Senior Center. If you haven't checked it out the last 2 years you should really come by and see what they have. There is always a variety from jewelry to crafts (Christmas or everyday items), and there is also a light lunch and beverages to purchase if you need a little more fuel to keep going with all that shopping you'll be doing. AND don't forget the Chinese Auction! Come support your local Fire Department while you do a little shopping!

### SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN

On Sunday, December 23, 2018, beginning at 6 p.m., Santa Claus will be appearing in town with the help of the United Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department. He will be cruising around town to visit the children and adults of our community.

### GARBAGE/REFUSE FEES

The Borough's Refuse Contract expires at the end of 2018 and was put out to bid as required by law. The lowest bidder was our current hauler County Hauling. Unfortunately, the Borough will have to raise rates beginning with the January 2019 billing. Refuse rates have not been increased in 10 years and the increase is small. The new rate will be \$82.50 every six months which is an increase of only .50 cents a month.

### TAXES

I know with the ever-increasing cost of everything these days it's good to hear a bit of good news. Taxes will not be going up this year. The cost of maintaining a Borough and keeping the town safe and up to date is a year-round job. That is why we were grateful that we received the grant to replace the light poles. The current light poles that we have were put in sometime in the 1990's and technology wasn't what it is today. With that grant we will be able to replace all the poles and fix the curbs and the sidewalks (which were becoming a tripping hazard). We have so far been able to keep the millage where it has been since 2014 but the cost of living and doing business is steadily rising. The reduction in real estate value has really eaten into our budget. We should really consider ourselves lucky though because we still have our own Volunteer Fire Department and our own police force. A lot of other small boroughs and towns are having trouble holding onto theirs. I'm glad to know that all the hard work and endless meetings with everyone involved with trying to keep our town up-to-date, have paid off!

### SEWAGE

The sewage rates will be going up effective January 1, 2019. The Allegheny County Sanitary Authority's board of directors approved a four-year plan for rate increases that were lower than expected.

Alcosan approved a rate increase of 7.5 percent for 2018 and 7 percent for 2019 through 2021. A previous estimate had pegged a rate increase of 11 percent for 2018 and then 10 percent for the next three years. East McKeesport Borough absorbed the 2018 increase. It was not passed on to the consumer.

In January, Alcosan set aside nearly \$1 million to help low-income families pay their increasing sewer bills. A family of four making \$36,900 or less qualifies for the Clean Water Assistance Fund. Since January, about 800 customers have signed up for the fund.

For more information about how to apply, visit [ALCOSAN.Com](http://ALCOSAN.Com).

## WINTER IS COMING.....!!

Gone are the days of warm summer nights. As the days continue to grow shorter and the winter months fast approaching, we will inevitably be faced with snow and ice accumulation at one point or another this winter. As a friendly reminder, it is each resident's duty to maintain a clean and orderly walkway or sidewalk. This is not only a policy which is enforced in the winter months, but rather throughout the year. The importance of maintaining a safe ingress and egress pathway stems from the fact that on any given day a variety of entities may need to safely access your location. Whether it is your daily visit from the local mailman/mailwoman, an emergent situation requiring emergency services, or even a loved one coming to visit for the holidays, those who need to traverse your sidewalk/pathway will be put in danger if they are not properly cleared of snow and ice. Furthermore, if snow and ice are in the forecast, please take the time to move your vehicle off the borough streets and into a garage or on a private sidewalk. Having fewer vehicles on the road during snow and ice accumulation allows the borough public works to more efficiently treat the roads by giving them more room to plow and throw salt. As an added benefit to moving your vehicle off the road, you reduce the risk of damage from salt, you allow the plow drivers to clear your on-street parking of snow, and you may also very well end up with a clean driveway due to your vehicle covering most of it. Please do your part in helping keep our town safe for our residents, our service workers, and their families. Keep your sidewalks and pathways clear. Thank you and have a safe Holiday Season!

## CALL BOX AT POLICE STATION

There is a new way to contact a police officer if you stop at the station after hours and there is not an officer at the station. To the right of the door there is a blue box marked, **"Police, Push for Help"**. When you push this button it will connect you directly to the Allegheny County 911 Center and let the operator know that you are at the police station. Simply tell them who you are and that you need to see an officer and why and they will send one to the station to help you. This can be used for any reason, emergency or not, so do not hesitate to use it if you are at the station and there is no one at the building or the building is closed.

## VACATION/SECURITY CHECKS

With people going away for the holidays and during the winter months, remember that the police department will do vacation and security checks while you are away. You can get the form to fill out at the police station or you can get it on the Borough web site at, [www.eastmckeesportborough.com](http://www.eastmckeesportborough.com).

## HALLOWEEN PARTY

Back in October, we had our annual Halloween Party. The children were all so cute and scary at the same time. We had a balloon vendor there who made every imaginable toy, animal, magic wand etc. that you could possibly imagine. She was a big hit with all the kids and most of the



adults too.

We also had a gentleman there who did spray tattoos for the kids. Did I mention that the tattoos all had a fruity flavored smell to them?



Three lucky kids won a gift card for Wal-Mart when their ticket was pulled from our magic Halloween bucket. A great time was had by all. Hope the kiddos had a great Halloween this year with lots and lots of candy!

## ECS&R

I don't know if you have seen it or not but a new recycling center moved into North Versailles. It's called ECS&R Recycling Center. It is located at 1600 Greensburg Pike. ECS&R provides homeowners with several options for the safe and economical disposal of household hazardous waste. Leftover products such as paint, cleaners, oils, batteries, paint thinners, gasoline, pool chemicals, lighter fluid, computers, monitors, televisions and pesticides that contain hazardous ingredients should be removed with special care. The improper disposal of these wastes can pollute the environment and pose a threat to human health. Household hazardous waste is any item consumed by households that contain hazardous chemicals or materials. They can be identified with the warning labels that include: DANGER, CAUTION, POISON, FLAMMABLE, and RE-ACTIVE OR CORROSIVE. For more information or to schedule an appointment please call 1-866-815-0016 or visit [www.ecsr.net](http://www.ecsr.net).

## **NAMI (COURTESY OF CURVES)**

Most of us in our lifetime know a loved one who has suffered from mental health issues or have experienced issues ourselves. About 4 % of the population is suffering and unfortunately, funds are not available for our police officers to get the training needed to handle situations like this. There is a wonderful educational program offered to our first responders but unfortunately, our police and EMT's are understaffed, overworked and the funds aren't available for the 40 hours needed for the CIT Program. The other night, November 15th, we were honored to hear from an awesome speaker and unsung hero, Sergeant David Pack. He completed the 40 hours needed for the CIT Program and said the information gained from that class helped him in every aspect of his career. He feels very fortunate that his boss allocated the funds needed to make sure every police and public safety officer is well trained. Sergeant Pack described how his training helps de-escalate situations with not only people with mental health issues in crisis but all situations. We were so blessed to hear from a man whose career has always been for service, from the time he spent in the military to near his retirement, at the Penn State Greater Allegheny Campus. Since he was 5 years old, he wanted to be a police officer and said he has lived his dream helping people and making life safer for us all. A big shout out for our NAMI hero. NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness, an association of hundreds of local affiliates, state organizations and volunteers who work in communities nationwide as part of the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization. NAMI offers help and hope, improves lives, takes a stand and educates families and those living with mental illness. Our local family support group meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of every month at 7:00, Penn State Greater Allegheny, 4000 University Drive, McKeesport, PA 15132, Frable BLDG, Room 122.

In December, we will be meeting off location at a designated restaurant. For more information, please call 412-527-6600.

## **RED CROSS SHELTER TEAM**

It's still not too late to become a shelter team member for our area. We are still in the process of setting up our team, training and getting everything organized so we are ready to go when ever and where ever we are needed. If you are looking for something fulfilling to do with your time there is nothing better than making sure your community is set up and ready if a disaster should ever occur. The times we live in now make us want to be more pro-active about future events. The little bit of time you would donate could make a big impact on the people who need you. We have our meetings at St. John Lutheran Church.

## **NORTH VERSAILLES PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Have you checked out the library lately? They have a lot of fun and cool programs for adults and kids. There is Story Time, Lego Club, Family Movie Night, Kids-only Baking Night and many more things to do this winter. Did I mention there is even an ice cream tasting night????? Who wouldn't want to go to that? For the adults they have Novels at Night, Movie Matinee, Writers Group and Adult Coloring Club. Need a break from the boring old humdrum of life, go up and check it out. To find out more you can call 412-823-2222 or visit [www.northversailleslibrary.org](http://www.northversailleslibrary.org).

## **KNOW WHEN (AND WHAT) TO BURN (ALLEGHENY COUNTY AIR QUALITY PROGRAM)**

Whether you know it or not, the smoke from your outdoor fire is spreading.

Wood smoke contains air toxins and contributes to high levels of fine particulate pollution in Allegheny County. It can aggravate symptoms of asthma and other health concerns. Because they impact our health, outdoor fires are regulated by the Allegheny County Health Department. This applies to burning of any kind, even recreational fires in a fireplace or fire pit. ACHD encourages everyone to utilize best burning practices to minimize smoke production from fires, but also asks you to remember that while you can decrease the impact an outdoor fire has on your health and the health of your neighbors, the safest fire for everyone is no fire at all.

Open burning is prohibited except by permit or when it is done in a manner which contributes a negligible amount of air contaminants meaning:

- No material other than clean wood, propane, or natural gas may be burned EXCEPT for commercially available fire logs, paraffin logs, or wood pellets
  - Paper or commercial smokeless fire starters for the purposes of starting a fire
  - Charcoal for the preparation of food only
  - Fires may be no larger than 3' wide by 3' long by 2' high.
  - Fires must be at least 15' from the nearest neighbor's dwelling or inhabited area including the property line, roadway, sidewalk, or other public access area
- All wood burning activities are prohibited on Air Quality Action days, with the exception of burning for the commercial preparation of food.

Remember, your local municipal ordinances may be equal to or more stringent than ACHD's regulations.

Smokey fire? Nuisance burning? Call ACHD's 24-Hour Complaint Line at 412-687-2243.