

Data Center Project Update

Police Dept. Updates

Fire Dept. Updates

Zoning Dept. News

PERRY TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE 3111 Hilton Street NW Massillon, OH 44646

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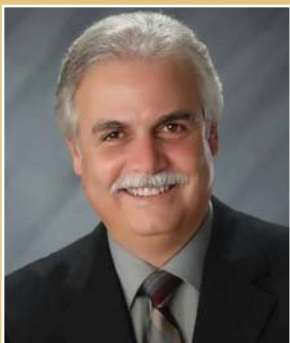
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SPRING 2026



# PERRY Township News

## Your Perry Township Board of Trustees



Ralph DeChiara Jr. President Rdechiara@perrytwp.com



Lisa Nelligan Vice President Lnelligan@perrytwp.com



Matt Miller Trustee Mmiller@perrytwp.com



Craig Chessler Fiscal Officer Cchessler@perrytwp.com

## From Trustee Lisa Nelligan: Investing in Summerdale Park and Staying Informed on the Data Center Project

Perry Township continues to take thoughtful steps to invest in our community's future, both through improvements to our parks and by carefully evaluating major development projects that impact our residents.

### Summerdale Park Capital Grant Submission

I'm pleased to share that the Township recently submitted a capital grant application for \$469,000 to the State of Ohio to support improvements at Summerdale Park. This project reflects feedback we've heard from many residents about the importance of recreation and gathering spaces, especially at this park after last year's county road improvements impacted access for several months.

#### The proposed improvements include:

- A new walking track to promote health and wellness
- Replacement of aging playground equipment with safer, modern features
- Installation of rubber safety surfacing in play areas
- Improvements to the basketball court
- Pavilion upgrades, including roof, seating, and electrical access
- Construction of a new ball field and enhancements to the existing field

These improvements build on recent investments the Township has already made in Summerdale Park. Last year, we added permanent restroom facilities using Township general funds to improve accessibility and convenience for families and park users.

We know how important spaces like Summerdale Park are for families, children, and neighbors to connect, stay active, and spend time together. Our goal is to continue improving these spaces in a way that reflects what our community values while being responsible with taxpayer dollars.

### Data Center Project: Key Reasons to Approve Tax Abatement

We recognize that many residents have questions and concerns about the proposed data center project on Faircrest. This is a significant development, and we want to make sure our community is informed about the decision to approve the tax abatement.

#### A few key reasons to keep in mind:

1) Continued participation in the JEDD (Joint Economic Development District) with the City of Canton and Panattoni Development Company is critical as there was a real risk of annexation, which could have resulted in the project moving forward without Township input, protections, or shared revenue. Also, participation in the JEDD provides the protective language that states the City of Canton and Perry Township must mutually agree on annexation of land/businesses/residential properties to be annexed.

2) Decisions related to tax abatement and participation in the JEDD were made after careful consideration of both the impact on nearby residents and the long-term financial health of the Township. Even with the 75% tax abatement for 30 years (this incentive was negotiated by the Stark County Commissioners and presented to the Perry Trustees for approval in March 2026-Perry Township Trustees had no part of the financial negotiations with Panattoni Development Company) and the \$5,500,000 of upfront payments (split evenly between Perry Township and Stark County), this development will be the largest tax payer in Stark County. This upfront payment is in addition to the 25% of taxes the township will continue to receive for the next 30 years.

3) Since learning the development was going to be a data center (Perry Township Trustees were informed in July 2025), the Township leadership has consistently advocated for protections related to noise, infrastructure, and environmental considerations, as well as ensuring that the Township is not left bearing the cost of services required to support the project.

We understand that residents have strong and varied perspectives on this project. Those concerns matter, and they have been part of every discussion along the way. We have had to balance these concerns and perspectives along with protecting our borders and our financial responsibilities for all of Perry Township.

We remain committed to transparency, sharing information as it becomes available, and continuing to advocate for Perry Township residents and businesses.

**Regular Trustee Meetings!**

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> TUESDAY

EACH MONTH AT 6:00 PM

3111 Hilton Street NW

### ROAD OPENING PERMITS

A road opening permit is required for any excavation or disturbance within the Township right-of-way. The Perry Township Road Department must be notified before any excavation activity.

Permits may be obtained by contacting the Road Department at 330-832-7750 Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

You can also visit [www.perrytwp.com](http://www.perrytwp.com) (click on Departments-Public Works) or simply scan the QR code to the right.



# Data Center Project Update and Community Open House

Perry Township has heard from a number of neighboring residents regarding the proposed data center project, and we understand that this is an important and, for many, complex topic.

To help provide information and answer questions, the Township hosted a community open house on April 15, where residents had the opportunity to speak directly with representatives, review materials, and learn more about the project. We appreciate everyone who attended and shared their questions and perspectives.

## Understanding the Township's Role

One of the most important points to understand is that the Township did not solicit this project or approve the overall site plan. The project was reviewed for compliance with county and township zoning requirements and approved by the Stark County Regional Planning Commission, with conditional approval in October 2025 and final approval in March 2026.

We have also heard from residents who feel this project should have been announced earlier or put to a public vote. We understand the desire to be involved in decisions that impact the community. However, under Ohio law, development does not go through a public vote. Property owners may submit proposals for uses that are already permitted under existing zoning, and this property has been zoned for industrial use since 1981. There is no legal mechanism for a Township-wide vote on a compliant project.

Some residents have also asked about the possibility of a referendum. Under Ohio law, referendums apply to zoning changes. Because this property has been zoned for industrial use since 1981 and no zoning change was required for this project, a referendum is not applicable.

The Township's role has been limited to:

- A zoning variance (parking space reduction)
- Consideration of tax abatement consent within the JEDD area

As outlined in the Township's resolution, the project is located within the Faircrest Joint Economic Development District (JEDD), a binding agreement between Perry Township and the City of Canton.

## JEDD Obligations and Moratorium Considerations

Because of the JEDD agreement, the Township does not have unilateral authority to stop development within the district. Attempting to block a project that complies with existing zoning and JEDD terms could place the Township in breach of contract, potentially exposing the community to annexation risks, loss of JEDD protections, and other legal consequences.

Some residents have asked why the Township did not pursue a temporary moratorium, as has been done in other communities. While we understand that question, the circumstances in Perry Township are different.

In many of those cases:

- There was no active application on file, or
- The project required a rezoning or legislative change before moving forward

In Perry Township:

- A formal application had already been submitted

- The property has been zoned industrial since 1981
- The proposed use is consistent with existing industrial zoning classification

Under these conditions, adopting a moratorium after an application has been filed could expose the Township to significant legal challenge, with a high likelihood of not prevailing.

In addition, actions that interfere with development within the JEDD could jeopardize the agreement itself. The JEDD provides important protections for the Township, including limitations on annexation. Losing those protections could create a situation where development proceeds under the City's authority without the same level of local input, safeguards, or shared revenue for the Township.

These constraints do not limit the importance of resident concerns, but they do shape what actions are legally available to the Township and what actions benefit the Township as a whole.

## Tax Abatement and Financial Considerations

The Board of Trustees recently approved a resolution to preliminarily consent to a tax abatement of up to 75%, consistent with other economic development projects in Perry Township and Stark County, particularly when considering both the scale of the project and negotiated upfront payments.

As part of that agreement:

- The Township will receive \$2.75 million in direct payments from the developer over the first four years. Then, the Township will receive 25% of the tax revenue annually for 30 years until the abatement ends.
- Additional provisions include commitments to route wastewater to the sanitary sewer system, conduct well testing, and provide landscaped buffering, screening, and protections for nearby properties.
- The developer has also participated in public informational meetings and provided written responses to resident questions.

These decisions were made after considering both the potential benefits of the project, the Township's position within the JEDD framework, and the needs of the Township overall.

## Addressing Resident Concerns

We recognize that residents have raised important questions, including:

- When and how residents were informed
- Potential impacts related to noise, water usage, and long-term effects
- Whether the project represents a balanced outcome for the community

These are valid concerns, and they were considered by the Board. Sometimes, the Township is limited in what it can share publicly. During periods of active negotiations or potential legal action, prematurely releasing certain information can compromise the Township's position, impact outcomes, or limit our ability to advocate effectively on behalf of residents. While we understand this can be frustrating, these decisions are made with the goal of protecting the long-term interests of the community.

At the same time, much of the early project review and approval process occurred at the county level. Since becoming more directly engaged, the Township has worked to:

- Share available information publicly
- Post FAQs and developer responses
- Listen to resident concerns at public meetings and incorporate feedback where possible
- Seek additional details and protections related to noise, water, and site impacts

The Township has also taken steps to strengthen protections related to noise. The noise ordinance was recently updated to establish clear, measurable, and enforceable standards. This update replaces a prior version that had been amended multiple times over the years and was often difficult to enforce in practice.

The revised ordinance (scan the QR code to view) sets defined limits, including during evening and nighttime hours, and applies to all properties within the Township. It also includes protections for residential areas, including those neighboring commercial and industrial properties.



## Utilities and Infrastructure Considerations

Residents have also asked about potential impacts on utilities. Electric and water costs are influenced by a range of factors, including inflation, infrastructure investment, and broader market conditions.

It is also important to note that this location was identified by the electric utility provider as an area with existing available capacity. This existing infrastructure was one of the factors that made the site attractive for this type of development. While this does not mean there will be no impacts, it does mean the site was selected in part because the necessary infrastructure was already in place.

While no single project determines future rates, large-scale users contribute to the overall system, helping distribute infrastructure costs across a broader base.

The Township also offers programs such as electric aggregation to provide residents with a fixed-rate option that can help manage cost stability over time.

## Moving Forward

This project has raised important questions about growth, transparency, and how decisions are made across multiple levels of government.

The Township remains committed to:

- Providing clear and accurate information
- Advocating for appropriate protections for residents
- Ensuring the community remains informed and engaged

We encourage residents to continue reviewing materials, asking questions, and staying involved as the project moves forward.

*For additional information and updates, please visit: [www.perrytwp.com](http://www.perrytwp.com)*

## Township Exploring Options for Residential Trash & Recycling Services



Perry Township is currently evaluating options for residential trash and recycling services, including the potential issuance of a Request for Proposals (RFP). This possibility has been mentioned during a few recent Township meetings as part of ongoing discussions about service delivery and long-term planning.

An RFP process would allow the Township to invite qualified waste service providers to submit bids to serve residents township-wide. These services could include weekly trash collection, recycling and bulk item removal.

In other communities, this type of program has helped streamline services, provide consistent collection schedules, and, in some cases, offer more competitive pricing for residents by leveraging the Township's collective buying power. It can also reduce wear and tear on neighborhood roads by limiting the number

of heavy trash trucks operating on the same streets.

A single-provider system can also improve service reliability and accountability, with clearly defined service standards and a more consistent point of contact for residents.

At this stage, no decisions have been made. The Township is in the early phases of reviewing how this type of program could work, what options may be available, and what would best serve Perry Township residents.

If the Township moves forward with an RFP, there will be opportunities for public input and additional information shared with the community before any final decisions are made.

We encourage residents to stay informed as we continue to evaluate this potential initiative.



## Director's Message



**John Wellman,**  
Public Works Director

### Did You Know?

On January 26, 2026, Perry Township experienced a significant snowfall event, with at least 10 inches of accumulation. Road Department crews operated snowplows for 20 hours straight during that event to keep roads clear and maintain safe travel conditions, with additional time spent on continued cleanup and treatment following the storm.

These types of extended operations are part of the Road Department's ongoing efforts to maintain safe and passable roadways for residents throughout the year.

The Perry Township Road Department used approximately 4,000 tons of salt last year to treat roads during winter weather.

To help manage costs, the Township participates in a cooperative purchasing program with 71 other government entities across Ohio. This approach helps secure more competitive pricing.

- The 2026 price for bulk road salt is \$62.89 per ton delivered
- The cost increases to \$74.89 per ton once it is conveyed into storage
- The Township's annual salt budget is \$281,880.60.

### Road Maintenance and Paving Costs

- The Road Department maintains approximately 145 miles of roadway.
- The current cost to resurface one mile of roadway is approximately \$130,000 to \$140,000
- In 1986, when the Township's road levy was approved, the cost to resurface one mile was approximately \$40,000

### Road Department Funding

The Road Department's annual operating budget is \$2,774,856.45, funded through a combination of local and state sources:

- 2-mill road levy (1986): \$727,945.00
  - Inside millage (Road & Bridge): \$1,379,919.00
  - Gasoline tax: \$480,000.00
  - Motor vehicle license tax: \$186,173.00
- Total Revenue: \$2,774,037.00

A separate 1-mill road levy, based on 2014 property values, expired at the end of 2024. This levy previously generated approximately \$540,175 annually for road-related expenses.

These funds were used for roadway maintenance activities such as patching and repairs, rather than full resurfacing projects.

**Yard Waste Program:** The Township's yard waste site was previously supported by a grant through the Stark-Tuscarawas-Wayne Recycling District. That grant, totaling \$20,000 annually, ended last year.

In 2025, the Township paid \$22,600 in disposal costs for 98 bins of yard waste, not including staff time required to operate the site.

The Township is currently exploring options to continue the yard waste program if adequate funding can be identified.

## DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT

### Rob Moore

Rob Moore has been a road maintenance specialist for 39 years. He has seen a lot of changes over the years! Rob loves his job and says his favorite job is using the track to dig...he loves to dig! He is a dedicated employee and is always willing to lend a helping hand to his fellow workers.

Rob is a 1980 graduate of Perry High school. He and his lovely wife Rhonda have been married for 33 years. Rob's hobbies include snowmobiling, four-wheeling, and camping with their nieces and nephews, just to name a few.

*Thank you, Rob, for all you do for the Road Department!*



### Help Prevent Drainage and Flooding Issues

Residents can help reduce drainage problems and localized flooding by keeping stormwater systems clear. Please do not blow, rake, or place leaves, grass clippings, or other debris into storm sewers, roadside ditches, culverts, or streets. Keeping these areas clear helps ensure proper drainage, especially during heavy rainfall.

It is also illegal to discharge oil, antifreeze, herbicides, pesticides, or other hazardous substances into ditches, culverts, or catch basins. These actions are prohibited under Ohio law and may result in enforcement action.

*If you observe illegal dumping or improper discharges, please report it to the Stark County Health Department at 330-493-9904.*

## Roadside Ditches and Drainage: What Residents Should Know

The Perry Township Road Department would like to remind residents that enclosing or piping roadside ditches may negatively impact stormwater flow and drainage capacity if not properly designed and installed. Improperly enclosed ditches can lead to blockages, reduced water flow, and an increased risk of localized flooding.

Open roadside ditches and swales are considered one of the most effective and natural methods for managing stormwater runoff. These open channels allow water to move more freely, promote infiltration into the ground, and help filter pollutants before they reach local waterways.

### Permits Required for Yard Drainpipes

If a property owner believes it is necessary to install a pipe within a roadside ditch, a Road Opening Permit must be obtained prior to installation. Please see the article at the bottom of the front page for information on how to obtain a permit.

Property owners may hire a contractor of their choosing; however, all work must meet Township standards and is subject to inspection.

Before any backfilling occurs, the installed pipe must be inspected and approved by a certified Perry Township Road Department employee.

### Benefits of Open Roadside Ditches or Swales

- Efficiently capture and convey stormwater with greater capacity than enclosed systems
- Support drainage of surrounding properties by allowing subsurface water movement
- Promote infiltration, helping reduce downstream flooding
- Naturally filter pollutants and improve water quality
- Allow for easier identification and correction of improper discharges

### How Residents Can Help

To help prevent flooding and maintain proper drainage, residents are encouraged to keep roadside ditches clear of leaves, grass clippings, debris, and other obstructions.

## Sign Up to Help Shape the Future of Perry Township

Perry Township values transparency, open communication, and community input. As our township grows, we want to hear what matters most to you.

We're inviting residents to volunteer and share feedback on priorities like safety, planning, parks, community services, and overall quality of life.

### Scan the QR Code to Get Involved

Complete a short form to choose how you'd like to participate or email us at [office@perrytwp.com](mailto:office@perrytwp.com). Your information will only be used for engagement efforts.



### Ways to Participate:

- Take part in surveys on township initiatives
- Join small focus groups on key topics
- Recommend your community organization for an engagement session
- Help bring township discussions to your neighborhood, school, or civic group

*Your input helps us make informed decisions, improve services, and ensure changes reflect real community priorities. Thank you for helping us build a safe, welcoming Perry Township!*

# POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATE



**Police Chief Bryan Taylor**  
btaylor@perrypolice.com • 330-478-5121

## Spring Safety

As we move into the spring season, our community comes alive with activity—families enjoying the outdoors, children playing in neighborhoods, and residents taking advantage of the warmer weather. It's one of the best times of year in Perry Township, and it also serves as a reminder of the importance of staying mindful of safety.

With more pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles sharing the roadways, I encourage everyone to slow down and remain alert, especially in residential areas and near parks. Taking a few extra seconds to be cautious can make a significant difference in preventing accidents.

Spring also brings an increase in outdoor activity at home. Whether you are working in your yard, grilling with family, or simply enjoying the weather, please remember to secure your property. Lock your vehicles, close garage doors when not in use, and remove valuables from plain sight. These simple steps can help prevent crimes of opportunity.

As the season can also bring unpredictable weather, I encourage residents to stay weather-aware and prepared. Securing outdoor items and avoiding flooded roadways are small actions that can help keep you and your family safe.

Finally, as more of us are out walking, jogging, or enjoying our parks, I encourage you to remain aware of your surroundings and look out for one another. A connected and attentive community is one of our strongest tools in maintaining safety.

**Fraud Awareness:** In addition to physical safety, we continue to see an increase in fraud and scam-related incidents affecting our community. These crimes can happen to anyone and often involve individuals posing as trusted organizations or creating urgent situations to pressure victims into sending money.

I want to remind our residents that no legitimate business, government agency, or law enforcement organization will ever request payment in the form of gift cards or demand immediate payment over the phone. If you receive a call, message, or email that creates a sense of urgency or asks for personal or financial information, take a moment to pause and verify before taking any action.

We have also seen an increase in online scams, including romance scams and fraudulent financial requests. These situations often involve individuals building trust over time before asking for money. I strongly encourage residents to never send funds or provide personal information to someone they have not met in person.

Fraud prevention starts with awareness. If something does not feel right, trust your instincts. Our department is always here to assist, answer questions, and help guide you before a situation escalates. If you have a group or organization that would benefit from a presentation on the latest fraud trends and prevention tips, please contact Detective Danielle Paciorek at 330-477-4074.

We are proud to serve this community and remain committed to keeping you informed, safe, and supported.

## OFFICER HIGHLIGHT

### Detective Danielle Paciorek Named Community Officer of the Year



The Perry Township Police Department proudly announces that Detective Danielle Paciorek has been recognized as the 2025 Stark County Community Officer of the Year by the Canton Stark County Exchange Club at the 2026 Crime Prevention Breakfast.

This honor recognizes law enforcement officers who demonstrate exceptional commitment to community engagement, crime prevention, and public service. Detective Paciorek was selected for her dedication to building meaningful relationships and creating impactful connections throughout the community.

Serving as a Detective, Public Information Officer, Field Training Officer, and community outreach leader, Detective Paciorek plays a key role in strengthening the department's connection with the public. She leads and organizes numerous initiatives, including Cookout with Cops, Senior Citizen Lunch & Learns, Chief for a Day, the Veterans Wish Tree, and senior outreach programs.

In addition to coordinating events, she is known for her innovative communication and outreach efforts, engaging residents through social media, community presentations, and hands-on involvement. Her work also includes supporting victims and their families, providing resources, and promoting education and prevention across the community.

The Perry Township Police Department congratulates Detective Paciorek on this well-deserved recognition and thanks her for her continued dedication to serving with professionalism, compassion, and commitment.



Caitlyn with Officer Carver

## Supporting Caitlyn's Journey

The Perry Township community is coming together to support one of our own—Caitlyn, a young girl facing a rare medical condition known as Congenital Erosive Vesicular Dermatitis (CEVD).

Born prematurely at just 32 weeks, Caitlyn has faced medical challenges from the very beginning. Diagnosed with an extremely rare skin condition—at one time, only a handful of cases were known worldwide—she has undergone years of specialized care, therapies, and ongoing treatments. Despite these challenges, Caitlyn continues to show incredible strength and resilience.

Her journey has included treatment through leading medical institutions, participation in research efforts to better understand the condition, and now ongoing procedures to help improve her quality of life. Along the way, her family has also connected with others across the country and even internationally who are facing similar challenges, working together to raise awareness and support.

To help with medical-related travel expenses and ongoing care, a t-shirt fundraiser is currently being organized in support of Caitlyn and her family.

Those wishing to follow her story, stay updated, or show support can do so by visiting her Facebook page: "Caitlyn's Journey with CEVD".

The Perry Township Police Department is proud to stand alongside Caitlyn and her family. We encourage our community to continue showing the compassion and support that make Perry Township such a special place.



## Officer Spotlight: Sergeant Donald Berkey

The Perry Township Police Department is proud to recognize Sergeant Donald Berkey, whose long-standing commitment to service and leadership continues to make a lasting impact within both the department and the community.

Sergeant Berkey is a 1993 graduate of Fairless High School. He initially began his college career as a biology major before earning his Associate Degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Akron in 1997.

His career with the Perry Township Police Department began shortly after, when he joined as a Community Service Assistant working in records and data entry. It was there that he built a strong foundation and gained valuable insight into the operations of the department.

In the fall of 1998, Sgt. Berkey was hired as a part-time patrol officer and quickly demonstrated his strong work ethic and dedication to the profession. By 1999, he was brought on full-time, and in 2007, he was promoted to the rank of Sergeant.

Today, Sergeant Berkey serves as the department's day shift supervisor, where he oversees daily operations and supports the officers under his command. Throughout his career, he has also served as a Field Training Officer, mentoring and developing new officers. In addition, he is a certified drone pilot, utilizing modern technology to enhance public safety efforts.



He also represents the department on the Stark County OVI Task Force, contributing to county-wide efforts to keep impaired drivers off the road.

Service runs deep in the Berkey family. Sergeant Berkey and his wife, Rachel, have been married for 23 wonderful years. Rachel served 22 years as a dispatcher at the Stark County Regional Emergency Dispatch Center (RED Center). She has also dedicated over 20 years to the fire service, previously serving as a Captain with the Perry Township Fire Department. Together, they share a strong commitment to public safety and community service.

Outside of work, Sgt. Berkey enjoys spending time outdoors, including camping and four-wheeling, and is currently learning to play disc golf. He volunteers his time at the Wilderness Center in Wilmont, Ohio, and is known around the department as the resident "metal head," who enjoys attending music festivals. Sergeant Berkey and his wife are also passionate about animals and have opened their home to several rescues, including three dogs—one of which was recently rescued from the police

department—and a rescue cat.

Sergeant Berkey's career reflects dedication, leadership, and a genuine commitment to both his fellow officers and the community he serves. We are proud to have him as part of the Perry Township Police Department and grateful for his continued service.

## Stark County Students

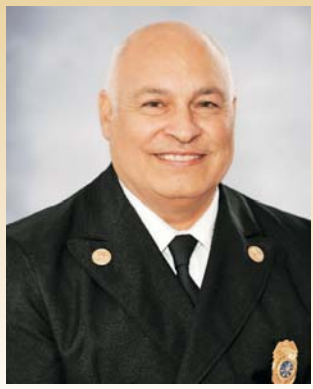
As you're thinking about the cost of college...

**The Canton Student Loan Foundation has been helping Stark County graduates with school expenses for over 100 years!**

- A local non-profit organization.
- Has the LOWEST interest rate. Lower than FAFSA!
- NO fees & NO interest or payments while in school.
- 3-month grace period after graduation.
- Assists with all types of schooling:
  - Undergraduate degrees
  - Graduate degrees
  - 2-year associate degrees
  - Trade school or certificate programs
- Funds are sent directly to the student, not the school.

**Applying is easy at [cantonstudentloan.org](http://cantonstudentloan.org)**

# FIRE DEPARTMENT UPDATE



## Fire Chief Larry Sedlock

[lsedlock@perrytwp.com](mailto:lsedlock@perrytwp.com) • 330-833-3865

As we welcome the arrival of Spring, many of us are enjoying warmer temperatures, longer days, and the opportunity to get outside to freshen up our homes and neighborhoods. This is also a time when our township begins to come alive with various community events, activities, and gatherings that bring neighbors, families, and friends together.

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank each of you for your continued support and

generosity toward our Fire Department. Because of your willingness to support levies, donations, and community initiatives, we have been able to purchase essential equipment that allows our firefighters and paramedics to better serve and protect you during emergencies. Your investment in public safety truly makes a difference every single day.

The equipment we can place in service is not just an expense – it is a commitment to faster response times, improved patient care, enhanced firefighter safety, and ultimately stronger protection for our entire township. We are proud to serve this community and deeply grateful for the trust and confidence you place in us.

As you attend upcoming Spring events and spend more time outdoors, please know that your Fire Department remains ready 24 hours a day to respond whenever you need us. We look forward to seeing many of you out in the community and continuing to build the strong partnerships that make our township such a great place to live.

On behalf of all the members of our department, thank you again for your continued support. Stay safe and enjoy the Spring season.

## What Protects Our Firefighters? Turnout Gear



Firefighters face extreme and unpredictable conditions every time they respond to an emergency. One of the most important pieces of equipment that helps keep them safe is their turnout gear, also known as personal protective equipment (PPE). This specialized clothing is designed to protect firefighters from intense heat, flames, sharp objects, hazardous materials, and other dangers encountered on the fireground.

Turnout gear is made up of several key components, including a helmet, protective hood, coat, pants, gloves, and boots. Each piece plays a critical role in shielding firefighters from injury. The coat and pants are constructed with multiple layers that work together to provide thermal protection while also allowing moisture and heat to escape. This helps reduce the risk of burns and heat-related illnesses. Reflective striping is also built into the gear to improve visibility in low-light and smoke-filled environments.

Modern turnout gear is engineered using advanced materials that are both durable and lightweight. These materials help firefighters move quickly and efficiently while still maintaining a high level of protection. In addition to guarding against heat and flames, turnout gear also protects from falling debris, broken glass, and other physical hazards that may be present at emergency scenes.

While turnout gear offers critical protection, it is not indestructible. Firefighters must routinely inspect, clean, and maintain their gear to ensure it performs as intended. Departments also follow strict guidelines for replacing gear that has been damaged or has reached the end of its service life. Properly fitting gear is equally important, as it allows firefighters to work safely and effectively in high-stress situations.

Turnout gear represents a significant investment in firefighter safety and operational readiness. More importantly, it provides firefighters with the confidence and protection they need to serve their communities during emergencies. By understanding the role and importance of this equipment, residents can better appreciate the preparation and care that goes into every emergency response.

To ensure the best possible protection, all turnout gear must meet the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1971, which is the primary standard governing turnout gear and outlines minimum design, testing, and performance criteria for thermal protection, tear resistance, water penetration, seam strength, and overall durability. This standard also establishes requirements for visibility features, labeling, and certification to ensure gear is properly identified and maintained.

## FIRE DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT

### Nathan Weisel

The Perry Township Fire Department would like to welcome Nathan Weisel to our family.

This from Nathan... I am a 2004 graduate of Marlinton High School and have had a passion for the fire service since I was young. After a friend encouraged me to apply to the Lexington Township Fire Department in 2005, I earned my Fire/EMT certification and began working in EMS in 2006.

In 2012, I stepped away from Fire/EMS to pursue a career in cross-country trucking, where I traveled throughout most of the lower 48 states. However, the desire to return to serving others never left. In 2019, I joined Homeworth Volunteer Fire Company to give back to my community and eventually regained my certifications while staffing weekend shifts with the Sebring Fire Department.

After selling my business in 2022, I fully committed to returning to the fire service. In February 2023, I began working full-time with the Canton Township Fire Department, where I continue to serve part-time. Since returning, I have earned certifications as a Paramedic, Rope Rescue Level I, Peer Support, and Fire Officer I.

I also serve part-time with the City of Louisville Fire Department and the Osaburg Township Fire Department, and I joined the Perry Township Fire Department in December 2025.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my career has been becoming involved in peer support, which has enabled me to help not only the public but also my fellow first responders. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve the citizens of Perry Township and be part of such a strong fire family.

Outside of work, I am the proud father of four boys – Brett, Brock, Blake, and Blaze – who keep me busy with sports and school activities. I enjoy spending time outdoors camping, hiking, biking, swimming, and relaxing around a campfire with family and friends.



### Jason Varner

Owner/Principal Agent

office (330)837-2288

cell (330)904-8641

[JasonV@VarnerInsGroup.com](mailto:JasonV@VarnerInsGroup.com)



“For All Your Insurance Needs”

203 S Prospect Ave  
Hartsville, OH 44632

124 Perry Drive NW  
Canton, OH 44708

## Residents... Get your FREE address sign



Address signs are very important to help us find your residence or business in the event of an emergency. **Order your FREE address sign** today. Our address signs are made from highly reflective materials that illuminate when light hits them. Headlights or our emergency lights make the sign extremely visible.

If you are a Perry resident, call Fire Administration at 330-833-3865 or you can get on our Township website ([www.perrytwp.com](http://www.perrytwp.com)) and click on the Fire Department link which is located under “Departments”. Then click on the “Address Signs” button and complete the form.

You can also scan  
the QR code  
which will take you  
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## SEASONAL BURNING IN OHIO

Springtime is the time of year when many of us are eager to get outside and clean up our yards after the long Fall and Winter months. We begin preparing for the first grass cutting, tending to our flower beds, and adding beautiful, colorful flowers to make our properties look their best.

However, residents should remember that Ohio has specific regulations regarding open burning and seasonal burn bans that must be followed. These rules are in place to protect lives, property, and the safety of our entire community.

Before burning yard waste or other materials, please take a moment to review and comply with all local and state guidelines. By doing so, we can all enjoy a safe, productive, and vibrant Spring season.

## Severe Weather Reminders

As we move into the spring and summer months, our community will face an increased risk of severe weather, including strong thunderstorms, high winds, heavy rainfall, hail, and even tornadoes. Severe weather can develop quickly, often with little warning, making preparedness and awareness essential for the safety of you and your family.

One of the most important steps residents can take is to stay informed. Monitor local weather forecasts regularly and consider having multiple ways to receive emergency alerts, such as weather radios, smartphone notifications, or local media updates. When severe weather warnings are issued, take them seriously and be prepared to take immediate action.



Have a plan in place before severe weather strikes. Identify the safest location in your home, such as a basement or an interior room on the lowest level away from windows. Ensure all family members understand where to go and what to do during different types of weather emergencies. Practicing your plan ahead of time can reduce panic and improve response during real incidents.

Residents should also take time to prepare an emergency kit that includes flashlights, extra batteries, bottled water, non-perishable food, a first aid kit, and necessary medications. Securing outdoor furniture, trimming weak tree branches, and ensuring gutters and drains are clear can also help minimize property damage during strong storms.

Never attempt to drive through flooded roadways. Just a small amount of moving water can cause a vehicle to lose control or become stranded. Remember the phrase: "Turn Around, Don't Drown." Additionally, stay clear of downed power lines and report them immediately to authorities.



Our fire department remains committed to serving and protecting our community during all emergencies. By staying alert, making a plan, and taking simple preparedness steps, each of us can help reduce risks and keep our neighborhoods safer during severe weather season.



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# ZONING DEPARTMENT NEWS



Zoning Inspector Jeff Whytsell • [jwhytsell@perrytwp.com](mailto:jwhytsell@perrytwp.com) • 330-833-2141

As we head into spring, it's a great time to get outside, take on new projects, and freshen up your property. It's also a good opportunity to make sure everything is in compliance and set up to keep our neighborhoods safe, clean, and welcoming. I wanted to share a few reminders and tips to help you get started this season.

### Spring Into Action: Property Maintenance Tips

Keeping up with your property doesn't just improve curb appeal, it helps protect your investment and supports the overall quality of our community.

- **Outdoor Storage:** Please store building materials, unused equipment, and debris neatly or inside approved structures.
- **Inoperable Vehicles:** Unlicensed or non-running vehicles should not be stored outdoors in residential areas. These should be removed, repaired, or kept inside a fully enclosed structure.
- **Lawns, Weeds & Tall Grass:** Regularly maintain vegetation so it does not reach nuisance levels. Overgrowth can attract pests and impact neighboring properties.

*Zoning Tip: Staying on top of routine maintenance helps prevent safety concerns and protects property values.*

### Planning a Garden or Shed? Check Before You Build

Spring is one of the busiest times for outdoor projects. Before you get started, it's important to know what requires zoning approval.

- **Gardens (Planting):** Flowers, vegetables, and general landscaping typically do not require a permit.
- **Structures:** Carports, greenhouses, pergolas, and detached garages are considered accessory structures and do require a zoning permit.
- **Agriculture & Livestock:** Chickens and other livestock are regulated. Many residential lots, especially those under 1-5 acres, do not permit livestock. Be sure to review local regulations and your neighborhood's plat history before making any investments.
- **Setbacks:** Fences, decks, sheds, and patios must meet required setback distances from property lines. These vary depending on zoning district and structure type.

*Zoning Tip: Following setback and permit requirements ensures proper placement, protects privacy, and helps avoid drainage or fire access issues.*

### Spring Upgrades: Know When You Need a Zoning Permit

Before starting construction, take a few minutes to confirm whether your project needs approval. This can save time, money, and frustration later. Common projects that may require a zoning permit include:

- Replacing or enlarging decks
- Replacing a commercial or residential roof
- Adding or replacing fences
- Installing sheds, pools, or other accessory structures
- Expanding driveways or adding parking areas
- Exterior changes that alter a building's footprint or height

*Zoning Tip: A quick check upfront helps ensure compliance with height and setback requirements and avoids costly corrections after the fact.*

### APPLY AND PAY ONLINE

Residents can now apply for zoning permits and submit payments online. Apply for permits: [perrytwshp.portal.iworq.net/portallhome/perrytwshp](http://perrytwshp.portal.iworq.net/portallhome/perrytwshp)  
Make a payment (credit card or ACH): [heartlandpaymentservices.net/webpayments/PerryTWPFireEMS/bills](http://heartlandpaymentservices.net/webpayments/PerryTWPFireEMS/bills)

### Business Highlights in Perry Township

It's always great to see new energy in our local business community.

We recently welcomed two new businesses that are already off to a strong start:

- **Molly Brown's:** 2843 Lincoln Way East (former Variety's). A great spot for breakfast or lunch with a wide range of options. Open daily from 7 AM to 3 PM.
- **7 Brew Coffee:** 4405 Tuscarawas St W (former Fisher Foods), offering a wide selection of hot and cold beverages, including shakes. Open daily from 5:30 AM to 11 PM.

*Please take a moment to stop by, support these businesses, and help us welcome them to the community.*

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**Matthew R. Hull**

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Offices throughout Ohio: Canton | Alliance | Canfield | Hudson | Massillon | New Philadelphia | Sugarcreek



## Why Are There Colored Flags and Paint in Your Yard or Neighborhood?

Have you ever pulled into a grocery store parking lot or gas station and noticed bright spray-painted lines in different colors? Or driven through a neighborhood and seen small colored flags placed throughout a yard? These markings are not random. They are important safety indicators that show the location of underground utilities.

Utility companies follow a nationally recognized color code established by the Utility Location and Coordination Council (ULCC). This system is used across the country to clearly identify underground infrastructure, whether you are in Ohio or anywhere else in the United States. Each color represents a different type of utility, such as electric, gas, water, sewer, or communications lines. These markings help contractors, utility crews, and property owners avoid damaging critical infrastructure during digging or construction. Understanding these markings plays an important role in keeping our community safe and preventing costly or dangerous accidents.

UTILITY COLOR CODES	
UTILITY	COLOR CODE
Gas, Oil, Steam, Petroleum	Yellow
Electric	Red
Telecommunications	Orange
Water	Blue
Sewer or Drain	Green
Pending Work or New Construction	White
Temporary Markouts	Pink
Reclaimed Water, Irrigation & Slurry	Purple

## Did You Know?

- Utility lines can be just a few inches below the surface
- Even small projects like planting a tree or installing a mailbox can hit a utility line
- Hitting a gas or electric line can cause serious injury or outages in your neighborhood
- Utility markings are only approximate, so careful digging is still required
- Calling before you dig is free and takes just a few minutes



Under Ohio law, anyone planning to dig or disturb the ground must contact Ohio 811 before starting work. This includes common projects such as: Installing fences, planting trees, setting mailboxes, building decks and completing drainage or landscaping work.

By contacting Ohio 811 at least 48 hours in advance (excluding weekends and legal holidays), utility companies will mark the approximate location of underground lines at no cost to you.

Taking this simple step helps prevent damage to essential services, reduces the risk of injury and avoids costly repairs and service disruptions.

Failing to contact Ohio 811 before digging can result in property damage, personal injury, service outages, and potential liability.

Call 8-1-1 or visit [www.oups.org](http://www.oups.org) before you dig. It's free. It's the law. And it keeps everyone safe!

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## Electric Aggregation Program Update: What Residents Should Know

Perry Township has renewed its electric aggregation program to continue providing residents with a stable electric supply rate and flexible options. Beginning in May 2026, the Township's program will offer a fixed rate of 9.99 cents per kWh for 19 months, running through December 2027.

**A Program Residents Have Approved and Used for Years:** This program is not new. Perry Township voters approved electric aggregation, and the Township has successfully operated this program for over a decade. This current offering is simply a renewal of the aggregation program with updated terms based on today's energy market.

Residents should have received a letter in the mail explaining the program, including the rate, terms, and how to participate.

This is an "opt-out" program, which means you are automatically enrolled unless you choose to opt out. The letter provides a clear opportunity and instructions to opt out during the enrollment period. If you prefer not to participate, you can follow the instructions in the letter.

**Important: This is NOT a Scam.** We understand that letters related to utilities can raise concerns. This program is approved by voters, managed through a competitive process and offered through a certified supplier (Dynergy). If you ever have questions, you can contact the supplier directly using the information provided in your letter.

**Flexibility and No Fees:** One of the key benefits of the Township's program is flexibility. There are no fee to join, no fee to leave and no monthly recurring charge (like some electric service providers). You can opt out at any time and you can also join later, even if you initially opt out.

**Why Consider the Program?** While some residents may currently have a lower rate through another supplier, this program provides a stable, fixed rate for 19 months, protection from market fluctuations and the option to switch into the program later if your current rate increases.

### What Stays the Same?

- Your utility company (Ohio Edison or AEP Ohio) still delivers your electricity
- You will continue to receive one bill
- You still call your utility for outages or service issues

For additional details and how to participate, please visit [www.perrytwp.com](http://www.perrytwp.com)

## Zoning Resolution Update Under Review

Perry Township will be considering updates to its Zoning Resolution over the next several months as part of an ongoing effort to keep our regulations clear, consistent, and aligned with current laws and community needs. The Township's Zoning Commission completed an initial review of proposed updates at the end of 2025, and those draft revisions are now moving forward for continued discussion and consideration.

The proposed updates include revisions to multiple sections of the Zoning Resolution, including:

- Definitions to improve clarity and consistency
- Residential zoning districts (R-1 through R-5)
- Use regulations and permitted/conditional uses
- General standards and administrative provisions
- Parking, signage, and enforcement sections

While the draft includes a number of technical revisions, a few examples include:

- Updated Definitions: Clarifying terms like *accessory structure*, *family*, and *dwelling types* to reduce confusion and improve consistency across the code.
- Residential District Updates: Refinements to permitted and conditional uses in residential districts, including how certain housing types and residential care facilities are categorized under current state law.
- Accessory Structures & Uses: Clearer guidance on structures like garages, sheds, and other secondary buildings to ensure consistent application across neighborhoods.
- Setback and Lot Standards: Adjustments and clarifications to lot size, frontage, and setback requirements to better reflect existing development patterns and infrastructure.
- Administrative & Enforcement Sections: Updates to improve how permits, violations, and enforcement processes are handled and communicated.

**Why Are These Updates Important?** Zoning regulations guide how land is used and developed in the Township. Periodic updates help ensure regulations are clear and easy to understand, reflect current legal requirements and best practices, support responsible residential and commercial development and reduce confusion for property owners, contractors, and businesses.

At this stage, the proposed amendments are still in draft form and under review. No final decisions have been made. As the process moves forward, there will be opportunities for additional review by Township officials, public discussion & input and formal consideration and adoption by the Board of Trustees.

Residents are encouraged to stay informed and participate as updates are presented. The Township will continue to share updates as the review process moves forward.



**Hello Perry Township,**  
It is my honor to be your Ohio State Representative.

Please feel free to contact me anytime via email at [rep50@ohiohouse.gov](mailto:rep50@ohiohouse.gov) or by phone at 614.466.9078 with any questions or concerns.

*Matt Kishman*



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PERRY TOWNSHIP  
POLICE DEPARTMENT

# COPS AND BOBBERS



**DATE:** May 11, 2026

**TIME:** Registration 4:00-5:30  
Fishing from 5:30-7:30

**WHO:** Anyone 15 and under

**WHERE:** Petro's Lake Park  
3519 Perry Dr. S.W.  
Canton, OH 44706



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## Perry Township Police Department

# SAFETY TOWN



**Dates:** August 3rd-August 7th, 2026 from 9 am to 11:30 am    **Cost:** \$25

**Location:** Edison Middle School, Door 1: 4201 13th St S.W. Massillon, OH 44646

**Who Should Register?** Safety Town is for students entering Kindergarten up to 1st grade.

Registration is first come, first serve and is capped at 40 students. Registration ends July 1, 2026.

**How to Register?** Please contact Keri Robinson, [krobinson@perry.police.com](mailto:krobinson@perry.police.com) or 330-477-4082

**Topics include:** Fire Safety, Stranger Danger, Bicycle Safety, Gun Safety, Bus Safety, Pedestrian Safety & More. *Safety Town is an excellent learning opportunity for the children entering kindergarten to explore their community and learn the importance of safety but it is **not** a mandatory program.*

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