

CHAPTER 5

Community Services, Facilities and Transportation

Water and Sewage Disposal Systems

Blue Lake Township does not have a public drinking water system or a public sewer disposal system. Consequently, the Township residents have on-site private wells for domestic drinking water and individual septic systems. Septic systems and wells are regulated by the Kalkaska County Health Department.

Two important determinants for siting a septic system are soil suitability and depth to bedrock. Chapter Three – Natural Resources discusses the geology and soils of the Township.

Solid Waste

Blue Lake Township contracts to provide weekly curbside solid waste pick-up for Township residential households, and additionally annually provides four tags for large items (such as appliances) to be used for curbside pick-up on any regularly scheduled pick up day.

Recycling is available at the county level, and Blue Lake Township residents have access to a drop-off site located in Kalkaska.

Other Public Utilities

Blue Lake Township residents receive electric service from Great Lakes Energy. Natural gas service is available from DTE Energy in the western portions of the Township, including the Twin Lake area and near Starvation Lake. Residents choose from several providers of local and long distance phone service. Cable service, where available, is provided by Charter Communication. High speed internet service is currently available via satellite from several providers. Internet service is also provided by radio antenna from Chain Of Lakes Internet (COLI) and cell phone providers to residents in the Township. The property for a Verizon Wireless cell phone tower located behind the Fire barn is leased from the township. Three smaller towers owned by the Township are operated by COLI for providing internet service.

Police, Fire, Ambulance

Kalkaska County Central Dispatch agency provides emergency call receipt and dispatch service for Kalkaska County. Enhanced-911 telephone service, computer-aided dispatch and a multi-channel radio system are in place. Central Dispatch Authority is a system which identifies the location from which a cellular phone call is made. SMART 911 service is available through the Kalkaska County Sheriff's department via registration and will provide additional information to emergency responders.

The Kalkaska County Sheriff and Michigan State Police provide law enforcement services to Blue Lake Township, both from bases in Kalkaska. The Township is served by a community officer from the Sheriff's department, who is contracted to provide a specified number of hours for the Township per month. Law enforcement needs at other times are handled by the

geographically closest officer at the time, either from the Sheriff's department or the State Police.

Fire protection is provided by the Blue Lake Township Fire Department, which is a 12-person volunteer fire department with a paid Chief and Assistant Chief positions. Several of the department personnel are cross-trained as medical first responders (MFR), as well as several as emergency medical technicians at the basic level (EMT-B) and one emergency medical technicians at the specialist level (EMT-S). The department equipment consists of a Class A Pumper, a 2000-gallon Pumper Tanker, a Brush rig and a non-transport ambulance as a rescue vehicle. The Blue Lake Township Fire Department equipment is housed in the "fire barn" located on Blue Lake Road. The Blue Lake Township Fire Department participates in mutual aid agreements with other fire departments in area. The Fire Department has a dry hydrant on North Blue and a 6 inch well at the township hall.

Fredric Ambulance Service located at the Coldspring's fire hall on county road 612 primarily provides advanced life support (ALS) and ambulance transport service. Township residents have access to Kalkaska Memorial Hospital, Munson Healthcare Grayling Hospital in Grayling and Munson Community Health Center in Traverse City.

Recreation

The recreation opportunities in the Township consist primarily of water-related activities (boating, fishing, swimming, etc) and trails for hiking, skiing, biking, as well as some trails for snowmobiling. There are numerous public access sites on the lakes within the Township that are well utilized both in the summer and winter seasons. The extensive networks of trails in the Township are located on both public and semi-public lands, including snowmobile and ORV trails, as well as a portion of the North Country Trail. See Chapter 6- Recreation Plan for more details.

Municipal Facilities

The Blue Lake Township Hall, located on Twin Lake Road, was built in approximately 1969 and remodeled in 2008, including making the facility handicap accessible. This facility accommodates the Township public meetings and Township office space, with the addition of a kitchen. The facility is located on a parcel approximately 2.7 acres in size.

The Blue Lake Township Fire Barn is located on Blue Lake Rd on 45 acres and consists of the main fire barn containing 4 bays and office-meeting space built in 2001 and a smaller storage barn built in 1985.

Schools and Libraries

Blue Lake Township is part of the Kalkaska Public School District, however due to "schools of choice" many residents utilize other school systems. Post high school education and personal enhancement courses are available in Traverse City at Northwestern Michigan College/University Center and the M-TEC.

The Great Lakes Campus of the Au Sable Institute of Environmental Studies is located in Blue Lake Township. The institute provides university-level courses and services for sustainable community-building, environmental education and restoration for school children and adults,

facilities for community and environmental organizations, community and regional conferences and retreats, and outreach services.

Blue Lake Township does not have a library located within the Township, however, residents have access to the Kankaska County Library in Kankaska. The Kankaska County Library also has an electronic lending system available to its patrons.

Transportation and Road Maintenance

There are a total of 63.7 miles of county roads passing through Blue Lake Township, including 23.3 miles of county primary hardtop roads, 40.4 miles of local roads including hardtop, gravel and seasonal roads. Additional there are private roads in the Township which are not maintained by the County. The Kankaska County Road Commission provides road maintenance and snow removal services on all public non-seasonal roads within the Township.

Blue Lake Township residents also have access to the Kankaska Public Transit Authority, which provides a scheduled route bus service three times a day, five days a week. With 24 hour notice, the service will pick-up a resident at his or her home, if located on a public road, and provide transportation within the County.