

Blue Lake Township

10599 Twin Lake Rd NE
Mancelona, MI 49659

231-587-8354 Fax 587-4066

Web Site: bluelaketwpkalkaska.org

Township Telephone Numbers you may need:

Emergency Call 911

Supervisor	Dean McCulloch	587-4836	Recycle Center	258-3369
	blsuper@torchlake.com		American Waste (Trash)	258-9030
Clerk	Tracy Nichol	587-9644	Sheriff Department	258-8686
	blclerk@torchlake.com		Fire Barn	587-5148
Treasurer	Christine Almose	587-9593	Twp Assessor - Dave Grimm	331-6370
	bltreas@torchlake.com		blasser@torchlake.com	
Trustee	Larry Shoemaker	587-0723	Animal Control	258-3309
Trustee	Mary Shaw	587-8468	Zoning Admin-Blair Shearer	587-5698
County Commissioner	Mike Cox	258-2377	blzoning@torchlake.com	

Township Hall Office Hours

Supervisor: Tue. 1:00 – 4:00 & Sat. 10:00 – 12:00
 Clerk: Tue. 9 – 1 & 6:30 – 8:30 Sat 10-1
 Treasurer: Wed. 10:00 – 3:00
 Assessor: 2nd & 4th Tue. 1:00 – 3:00
 Zoning Adm. Fri. & Sat. 10:00am – 12:00
 Fire Dept (Fire Barn) Mon. 7:00 – 9:00
 Board Meetings 1st Wed. of each month 7:00 pm

Board Meetings

The Board meets the first Wednesday of every month at 7:00 PM at the Township Hall. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend. We discuss local issues and have a public input time so that everyone can be involved. Please attend when you can. We would appreciate your help and input.

We also have several committees that you could serve on. If you are interested, please contact any Board member. We are always glad to talk with



Web Site

Blue Lake Township has just started a Web Site which has information that you may need at some time. This site is not yet complete but has useful and general information about the Township. Please visit the site and give a board member any feedback you may have. You can access the web site at bluelaketwpkalkaska.org



Deputy Treasurer Changes

Diane Spalsbury recently found it necessary to resign as the Deputy Treasurer due to ongoing health issues. Diane had served as the Deputy since July of 2002. She was the lady who collected your tax money with a smile all these years. On Nov. 8 we were informed that Diane passed away. Please join us in wishing her family well in this difficult time.

Jo Hughes has agreed to come on board as the new deputy. Jo and her husband, John, reside on Big Twin Lake.

From The Treasurer's Desk

Winter tax bills are due by February 14th. A 3% penalty is levied on February 15th to any unpaid Summer or Winter tax bill. Bills unpaid by February 28 become delinquent. As of March 1st your delinquent taxes are turned over to the County Treasurer, who then adds another 5% penalty to your tax bill. Not paying on time is costly.

When paying your taxes, please make checks payable to **Blue Lake Township**. Office hours for the Treasurer are Wednesdays 10-3.

County Recycling Available

The Island Lake Road County Recycle center is open Monday through Thursdays from 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM and every other Saturday 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM. Call 258-3369 for further information.

Fire Department

If you are interested in joining the Fire and Rescue Department, they meet at 7:00 PM every Monday at the Fire Barn located on Blue Lake Rd. just north of Blue Lake. They will be glad to show you around and give you details about joining the Department. You can also contact our Fire Chief Bob Barr at 587- 8711.

Kalkaska Memorial Health Center News

The Assisted Living Center is filling up faster than we anticipated. There are now 30 residents in the facility with only 6 more rooms available. The Hospital has enjoyed another good year and is now serving almost 30,000 patients each year. If you have any comments or questions, contact your hospital representative Dean McCulloch 587-4836.

Trash Millage Reduction

At the July 2011 meeting the Township Board decided to reduce the millage for Trash Collection from 0.6 to 0.3 mills. This is the second year that this Tax reduction appears on the Tax Bill you received with this newsletter.

The reduction was made possible by the increase in Township Taxable Value that occurred because of the value of the ANR Gas Storage Facility and by using some of the accumulated Trash Fund money. It is also a result of a reduction in the charge from our contractor American Waste. Our new contract for 2011 to 2013 is costing the township less than the rate we paid in the past.

Trash Pickup

Residential trash pickup is on Monday by American Waste with a 5 bag limit per household. If a holiday falls on Monday, pickup will be on Tuesday. Please do not put out trash that is not bagged - our contract with American is for bagged trash only.

Please put your trash in an animal proof receptacle when you put it out for pickup. The dogs, cats, ravens and raccoons just love to spread your trash around. This could lead to a ticket for a nuisance violation. If possible, trash should not be placed out for pick up before Monday morning.

If you have additional trash pickup needs or questions, call American Waste at 258-9030.

*Trash Pickup
is on Monday*

Large Item Pickup

Our contract with American Waste allows each household to have 4 large items per year picked up if they have the required sticker. Stickers can be obtained at the Township Hall during business hours. Any household item including beds, couches, washers, and refrigerators will be picked up. Refrigerators / freezers need to have the coolant removed and certified as such before it can be removed. Also, if you call American Waste ahead of time, it will expedite pickup. If you have additional trash pick-up needs or questions call American Waste at 258-9030.

Campers and Trailers

Our Township Zoning Ordinance limits the use of Campers and Trailers on vacant property for vacation use only. Campers can be used for a period of not more than 15 days in a 12-month period without a permit. Upon application to the Township Zoning Administrator, a permit costing \$5, will be issued for an additional 30 days. A Camper can be kept on any property that has a dwelling.

Township Hall Available

Did you know the Township Hall is available for your personal use? It requires an application to be completed and a \$50 deposit. If the usage rules are followed and the hall is left in a clean state, the deposit will be refunded. Call the hall at 587-8354 during office hours for further information.

Broadband Service

The Township board and Chain of Lakes Internet (COLI) Communications has invested in equipment that can provide Broadband Internet service to most lake areas in the Township. The Board has purchased and installed 3 communication towers and COLI has installed transmitters and receivers. This is a line of sight system using towers at the Township Hall, Fire Barn and on Kenel road. High trees can block the signal but COLI has installed additional repeaters on the lakes so most lake shore residents can receive the signal.

If you are interested in High Speed Internet service contact COLI at 888-299-0071, they may be able to connect you to their system.

Drop Box

Don't forget that the Township has a Secure Drop Box located between the office and Hall doors. For your convenience this can be used to drop off any correspondence (Voter Information, Taxes,...) whenever the office is not open.

Activities At the Township Hall

On Monday's you are invited to join the Blue Lake Quilters, which meet from 1 to 3 PM.

Several township people get together at Lalone's Restaurant on Tuesday's at noon. The Kalkaska Commission on Aging offers a lower cost meal ticket. Please call Carol Dault at 231-258-0149 for details.

A Yoga Class meets at the Township hall on Tuesday mornings from 10:00 to 11:30 AM. New members are always welcome. The cost is \$10 per session. If you need additional information, you may contact our instructor, Daryl Allison-Busch at 587-8954.

Zumba Class of aerobic exercise is occurring every Tuesday & Saturday mornings at 9:00 AM and Monday & Wednesday evenings at 7:00 PM. Zumba is open to men and women and is free just come in and enjoy.

Community Police Officer

Eric Johnson is our Community Officer and has been providing regular road patrol within the Township. If you have a concern or an issue you would like to discuss with Eric you can leave a detailed message for Deputy Johnson at the Sheriff's office at 258-8686. Since he works a variety of shifts, it may take a short period of time before he can get back to you. For any emergency always call 911. In an emergency other Sheriff's Department Officers may respond.

Land Splits & Divisions

All land divisions, new lot lines, and lot combinations must comply with Blue Lake Township Ordinances and the State Land Division Act. There are requirements as to road access, the size and shape of the lots, and the number lots that can be created. Part of the application process includes providing: a copy of proof of ownership, a certified survey drawn to scale, and proof that taxes due have been paid. An application fee of \$50 and a \$20 per split administration fee is required. Your completed application and fees must be submitted to the Blue Lake Township Land Division Agent, David Grimm. The Land Division Committee (Assessor, Supervisor, and Zoning Administrator) will review your application. The Land Division Agent will approve or deny the application within 30 days. If you have questions about the process please feel free to contact Dave at (231) 331-6370.

Greenbelt Law

Its very important for the future of our lakes that the land near the water be maintained in a natural state. A Greenbelt ordinance (which is part of our Zoning Ordinance) limits what can be done on the strip of land measuring 25 feet from the high water line. Trees, shrubs and native vegetation should be located in this area to protect the bank from eroding. Trees and shrubs may be trimmed for a better view of the water but major changes including their removal are not allowed.

Lawns down to the shoreline are not recommended because excess rain water can drain directly into the lake. This can be very hard on the lake and can create soil erosion. Lawn fertilizers can also result in nutrients entering the lake, creating excessive water plant growth. The 25 foot natural greenbelt buffer zone helps remove this material before it enters the lake. If in doubt about what you can or cannot do near the waters edge, please call the Zoning Administrator Blair Shearer 587-5698.

Zoning Permits

If you plan on building or making any alterations, please check with the Zoning Administrator before you begin. Complying with the Blue Lake Township Zoning Ordinances is required. Blair Shearer, our zoning administrator, can issue zoning permits on Friday or Saturday mornings from 10 AM to Noon at the Blue Lake Township Hall. A Blue Lake Township Zoning Permit is required prior to obtaining a Building Permit from Kalkaska County Construction Codes. You can contact Blair Shearer at 587-5698

Purpose of Newsletter

Our goal is to keep you better informed. We distribute the newsletter with the tax mailings in July and December. If your neighbor has not received a newsletter, please let a board member know. We would like to send them a copy of the last newsletter, or they can stop by the hall during regular office hours to obtain an extra copy. If you have any suggestion to improve this letter, please contact any Board Member.

Because of the new web site, the next newsletter will probably be shortened to one page (both sides). By then, we hope that the information contained here will be available on the web site.

Road Paving

In order to accumulate the funds needed to pay for the paving of Twin Lake Rd. between Sunset Trail and Squaw Lake Rd., no major road work was done in the Township this summer. The Twin Lake Rd. project, which the Township is paying for, is expected to cost about \$400,000 and be completed next summer.

Using your tax dollars the following Road have been paved or repaired since 2003:

- 2003 Blue Lake Road– Pave Camron Bridge Rd to Fire Barn
- 2003 Sunset Trail - Wedge North of Sunset Trail
- 2004 Starvation Lake Rd – Pave to Blue Lake Rd.
- 2004 Sunset Trail - Wedge South of Sunset Trail
- 2005 Blue Lake Rd. – Pave Starvation Lk. to Fire Barn
- 2005 Sunset Trail - Tar & Chip
- 2006 N. Twin Lake Rd - Wedge and Cap
- 2007 Squaw Lake Rd. - Wedge and Cap
- 2008 Gedman Road Prep
- 2009 Gedman Rd. - Pave Gravel Portion
- 2010 Birch Dr. – Pave Gravel
- 2011 No Work
- 2012 Twin Lake Rd. - Pave East of Sunset Trail

If you have any road issues to discuss, contact any Board member or give the Kalkaska County Road Commission a call at 258-2242.

Tax Bills and Your Current Address

When you receive your tax bill or the paid receipts, be sure and check it for accuracy. Computer mistakes can happen. Did you receive your Homestead Exemption? Does it match your assessment?

It is also very important that your tax records reflect the correct address. It could have a huge impact on your tax bill! The State of Michigan or the County of Kalkaska checks on the legality of your Homestead Exemption. They send out questionnaires to tax payers who do not have the same mailing address as the property address. If you don't respond, your homestead exemption is removed - not just for the current year, they can go back two years and collect the additional 18 mils.

Save yourself a huge hassle dealing with the Michigan Tax Tribunal in regaining your Homestead Exemption. Notify both the Township and the County of Kalkaska Equalization Department (231 258-3340) of any address changes.

Walking / Mountain Bike Trail

About 9 miles of the North Country walking trail (a trail that goes from New York to North Dakota) goes right through Blue Lake Township. This trail can be accessed at 612 near Sunset trail and continues to Starvation Lake Road near Sand Lake Rd. In its journey across the Township, it crosses Kenel, Papoose Lake and Twin Lake Roads. This is a cleared pathway maintained by the North Country Trail Association. If you have a couple of hours and would like a nice walk through the woods, try it out.

Emergency Trail Locator System

Kalkaska County has over 100 miles of groomed snowmobile trails and riders come from all over North America to use them. While the vast majority of the snowmobilers are 'safe riders', emergencies do occur. Many parts of the snowmobile trails are in remote locations, many sections of the trail look alike and when riders are out on the trail in need of assistance, they have a hard time describing their location to a 911 dispatcher. The establishment of an Emergency Trail Locator System in Kalkaska County has served several needs but chiefly, the system helps save valuable emergency response time.

Several years ago, after researching various trail locator designs, the Blue Lake Township Fire & Rescue Department helped create the current trail marker system. The system consists of signs that designate the county, the snowmobile trail number and a location number. The reflective 6"x 8" signs are placed at all road crossings as well as along the designated snowmobile trails. Each sign location has been mapped with GPS coordinates. This is not a 'mile marker' system. When someone dials 911 and gives the dispatcher the number on the locator sign the proper first responder unit will be dispatched to the scene. Each emergency responding unit throughout the county has a book with maps, locator numbers and GPS coordinates to assist them in locating those in need of assistance.

If you are out on the Trails and need assistance, call 911 and give them your location based on this signage system. It will reduce the time it takes for you to get help.