



Buckingham Township

Published by the Board of Supervisors

October 21, 2024

Special Points of Interest:

- Safe to Sip Initiative
- Fire Prevention Month
- Welcome Off. McHenry
- Buckingham's First School Resource Officer
- Our Volunteer Fire Co.
- Roads
- For more information www.buckinghampa.org

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A Letter from Your Board of Supervisors



Paul Calderaio Maggie Rash Jon Forest

Dear Neighbors,

We hope you and your family had a fantastic summer and are enjoying the beauty of fall.

In this edition of our fall newsletter, we aim to keep you updated on important Buckingham news, dates, and events within our Township.

This fall, we're excited to launch our Safe to Sip initiative and remind you that October is Fire Prevention Month. Learn how you can join one of our three Volunteer Fire Companies. Five years ago, in this very Newsletter, we sounded the alarm that our volunteer fire departments-Midway, Doylestown and Lingohocken- needed personnel. The situation has not improved. Recruiting volunteers for our fire departments can be difficult when the want-ad reads, "WANTED: Reliable individuals, available on a moment's notice any time of the day or night, able to lift heavy loads while climbing ladders and wearing heavy protective clothing, not afraid to enter burning buildings, CPR training a bonus, salary \$0." Our volunteer firefighters aren't municipal employees, although we are proud to say some of our employees also volunteer for our fire companies, our local firefighters are your neighbors who are willing to undergo training and commit their time to keep our community safe.

Speaking of keeping our community safe, look inside to read about our new School Resource Officer at Central Bucks East High School and the addition of Police Officer McHenry who just joined our police department personnel. Additionally, our Public Works Department has a message for you about the roads they maintain, and how and who to report a problem.

In just a few months, we will celebrate Buckingham's 325th birthday, a remarkable milestone for our community chartered in 1700. Founded by Quakers, Buckingham Township with its agricultural roots has grown into a vibrant township with a rich history and notable landmarks around the Township and within the multiple Historic Villages.

To commemorate our 325th anniversary, we are planning a year-long celebration filled with family friendly activities that reflect our heritage and community spirit. We hope you can join us for these exciting events, which will highlight our past and present. A heartfelt thank you to our local businesses for their involvement in making these celebrations possible. Stay tuned and visit our website for updates and fun merchandise!

Respectfully,

Paul Calderaio
Chairman

Maggie Rash
Vice-Chairman

Jon Forest
Supervisor



New EPA Water Standards Bring Changes and “Safe to Sip in Buckingham” Initiative to the Township

Everyone wants the peace of mind of knowing that their drinking water is safe. The residents of Buckingham Township are no exception. That is why the Township has historically and diligently monitored water supplied to citizens and businesses through the Buckingham Township Water and Wastewater Department to ensure that drinking water met the standards established by the PA Department of Environmental Protection.

Now changes are ahead which will impact both Buckingham Township and those who live in or own property within it.

In April of 2024, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued the first-ever national, legally enforceable drinking water standard to protect communities from exposure to harmful PFAS. The Township must follow the new federal requirements.

PFAS, which stands for Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances, are long-lasting, human-made chemicals used in consumer products. These chemicals, the components of which break down over time, are found across the nation (and world) in air, soil, and water.

Studies have shown that exposure to some PFAS chemicals could be linked to health conditions such as cancer, heart and liver complications, compromised immune systems and developmental delays in children.

This stark reality has served as the catalyst for a new EPA rule, enacted June 25, 2024, setting tighter limits on the levels of PFAS chemicals in all public water systems. The ultimate goal set by the EPA is to reduce PFAS exposure for approximately 100 million people.

The PFAS compliance Buckingham Township maintained under state standards are no longer aligned with EPA’s new, legally enforceable standards.

Under the EPA’s new rule, public water systems have three years to complete the initial monitoring requirements, inform the public of PFAS levels, and begin the implementation of solutions focused on reducing those levels so that they are compliant with the new EPA standards.

What does all this mean for Buckingham Township?

In response, we have launched the “Safe to Sip in Buckingham” Initiative, a comprehensive process to ensure that we meet the new standards for safe drinking water on time and on budget. At present we are preparing specifications to identify consultants who will provide testing of our 16 wells and an action plan for reducing exposure to PFAS within Buckingham Township’s water supply. Where necessary, select wells could be slated for closure. Knowing that this recent rule was not part of our township’s long term financial plan for our water and wastewater systems, we have already begun the process of researching potential outside funding sources and grants. We are also beginning a thorough evaluation of our water district rates. The Township is committed to identifying approaches that are fair and fiscally responsible. Our efforts will be ongoing.

Ways to Stay Informed

The Township is committed to keeping rate payers and those living and working here updated on the “Safe to Sip in Buckingham” Initiative through updates on the Township website (www.buckinghampa.org), social media pages and newsletters. Look for the “Safe to Sip” logo for quick access to information on our efforts to ensure high quality drinking water within the communities we serve.

Electronic Water and Sewer Bills

The Township bills our Water and Sewer customers quarterly on the 15th of the month* as follows:

January 15 April 15 July 15 October 15

The Water and Sewer bills are in letter format. Please look for an envelope with your bill not a postcard.

To sign up to receive electronic water and sewer bills please call Lisa Miletto at 215-794-8854 or email her at lmiletto@buckinghampa.org. You will receive a PDF version of your quarterly water and sewer bill, which you can save or print.

Payment is due 30 days from the billing date. If you do not receive your bill, simply go online to retrieve your bill (you will need your account number and pin which is on all prior bills) or call the township for a copy. Once you register for an online account you will no longer need your account number and pin and you can save your banking information for future payments so you don't have to input that information each time you want to pay online. If you pay online using a bank account, we will reimburse the \$1.95 fee on the following bill.

If you have any questions please contact Lisa Miletto at 215-794-8854.

*or the next business day if the 15th is a weekend or holiday

Stay Connected with Buckingham Township

Scan the QR codes or visit @buckinghamtownship on Instagram and Facebook to embark on this exciting adventure with us.



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Follow us on Facebook!

The Article You Might Wish You'd Taken Seriously! Smoke Alarms and Fire Escape Plans

By the time you smell smoke it may be too late. Fire spreads more rapidly than we imagine and the smoke itself can be deadly. So, the time to worry about a house fire is *now*, when you are calm and there is no danger.

That being said, no one really believes that it can happen to them, but obviously it can. So, when our Buckingham Fire Marshall Jim Kettler weighs in on keeping you safe, you better heed what he has to say:



Checking your smoke alarm at Daylight Savings time is a great way to Keep you Safe!
image: Freepik.com

Smoke alarms:

Older homes in Buckingham may have been code compliant when built, but technology has changed and our understanding of how fast fires burn has also changed. Fires today can progress from a small flame to flashover (fully involved room) in three to five minutes.

We currently say, "Hear the beep where you sleep." Smoke alarms should be installed in each bedroom, outside all sleeping areas, and at least one on every level of the home including the basement. Larger homes may need more than one on each level.

Smoke alarms should be interconnected so that when any one of them sounds an alert, they all will sound. For retrofit installations, look to interconnected wireless battery powered smoke alarms. Check the date on existing smoke alarms. Smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years. They should also be tested monthly. A dead smoke alarm is the equivalent of no alarm at all.

There are many brands of smoke alarms on the market, but they fall under 2 basic types: ionization and photoelectric. Ionization and photoelectric smoke alarms detect different types of fires. Since no one can predict what type of fire might start in their home, the U.S. Fire Administration recommends either using both or using Dual-sensor alarms, which contain both types.

There are also alarms for people with hearing loss. These alarms may have strobe lights that flash and/or vibrate to alert those who are unable to hear standard smoke alarms when they sound.

Never take the battery out of your smoke alarm while cooking! If a smoke alarm sounds while you're cooking or taking a shower with lots of steam, do not remove the battery. You should: open a window or door and press the "hush" button, wave a towel at the alarm to clear the air. Or move the entire alarm several feet away from the kitchen or bathroom.

Fire escape plans:

Our kids practice fire drills at school. Health care facilities and businesses practice fire drills. Are we practicing fire drills in the home? The National Fire Protection Association statistics show that 80% of all fire deaths occur in the home.

You have only a couple of minutes to get everyone out the house from the time the alarm sounds. Fire spreads very fast. Make a plan for waking up children and older adults who may not hear the alarm.

Draw a plan of your home. Identify doors and windows that can be used to escape and make sure they are not blocked.

Plan two ways out of your home. Make sure every resident knows the plan and practice it a couple of times a year. That includes staying low and under the smoke when possible.

Plan a meeting place outside the home, far enough away to be safe.

Make sure your street number is clearly visible so emergency personnel can find your home.

Never go back inside a burning structure. Call 911 from outside. The fire department will have the skills and equipment to perform rescues that would put you in danger.

October is Fire Prevention Month

Join the Fight: Volunteer for our Fire Companies and Make a Difference!

As we reflect on Fire Prevention Month, we want to acknowledge the incredible dedication of our local fire companies—Midway, Lingohocken, and Doylestown. Fire safety is a year-round concern, and we encourage residents to consider volunteering with our local fire companies. Imagine being the one who answers the call when someone is in need—your courage can truly change lives. See more about our Volunteer Fire Companies on page 7.

If you're ready to step up and support your community, inquire today about how you can become a volunteer. Together, we can ensure that help is always just a moment away!

Welcome Buckingham Township Police Officer Ashley McHenry

Buckingham is delighted to welcome Ashley McHenry, our newest patrol officer. She previously worked for the Jenkintown PD in Montgomery County and the University of Pennsylvania Police. Chief Scirrotto first met Ashley when he was an instructor for her police academy class.

Later, Officer McHenry became an instructor herself, teaching Defensive/Control Tactics for nearly nine years to help prepare female cadets for the challenges they could face as police officers. Because some control tactics may be more difficult for female as opposed to male officers, Officer McHenry teaches them alternate forms of protecting themselves. She brought considerable experience to that endeavor, having taught martial arts at East West Karate in Jamison and Warminster for 10 years before beginning her career in law enforcement. Plus, she has been training jiu jitsu for over 10 years.

As happy as Buckingham is to have her, she is equally delighted to be here. To quote Ashley, "I am very much enjoying the position at Buckingham! I love being involved with the community where I grew up as well as serving alongside a great group of men and women. Everyone has been very welcoming. The officers and chief care a great deal about the community! I am very excited for my career with Buckingham!"

School Resource Officer Chris Shaffer

Just over a year ago, Officer Chris Shaffer became the first full time School Resource Officer (SRO) in our school district, which includes CB East, Hollicong Middle School and the two elementary schools. He has embraced this role with amazing enthusiasm. Picture someone who wants to be a Big Brother to every student he meets and you will have some idea of who “Officer Chris” is and what he means to our young people.

Officer Shaffer (pronounced Schaeffer) had ample role models in his youth. His dad was a teacher for 35 years and both of his grandfathers were police officers. Growing up in Philadelphia, young Chris played with the Police Athletic League and saw how officers gave their time to teaching and coaching. In college he became a high school basketball coach himself and established a rapport with the team members.

As a Buckingham Police Officer, Officer Shaffer started out patrolling our township and then took special training (beginning and advanced) to be a School Resource Officer. The position is multi-faceted. He needs to ensure school security; coordinate with the faculty, the school counsellors and the school social worker; and be a mentor/sounding board/advisor and general source of information to the students depending on their needs and ages. The common denominator of all these roles is establishing trust.

Some examples are useful here. Suppose a student confides that another student is using marijuana. Most likely, “Officer Chris” would report this information to the principal and the school social workers because school officials need a lower standard of proof to (for instance) search a locker. The idea isn’t to be punitive because the SRO isn’t in the school to make arrests, but to ensure that the children are on the proper path by catching problems early.

However, if a student tells him that another student has made a threat, then “Police Officer Shaffer” would immediately reach out to his own chain of command and the full resources of the department would prioritize school safety.

By now, “Officer Chris” has said goodbye to a class of graduating seniors and welcomed Hollicong Middle Schoolers to CB East. Of course, the in-coming tenth graders already know him. They seem quite pleased to introduce the students from Tohickon Middle School (which feeds into CB East and West) to their police officer buddy.

Harking back to his childhood, Chris has hopes of establishing a PAL basketball league in the Doylestown area. Meanwhile, he attends many of the district’s sporting events to watch our students play.



Our Volunteer Fire Companies

This article is a shout out to Buckingham's three volunteer fire companies. The question is, "How loud do we have to shout before people get the message and volunteer to help?"

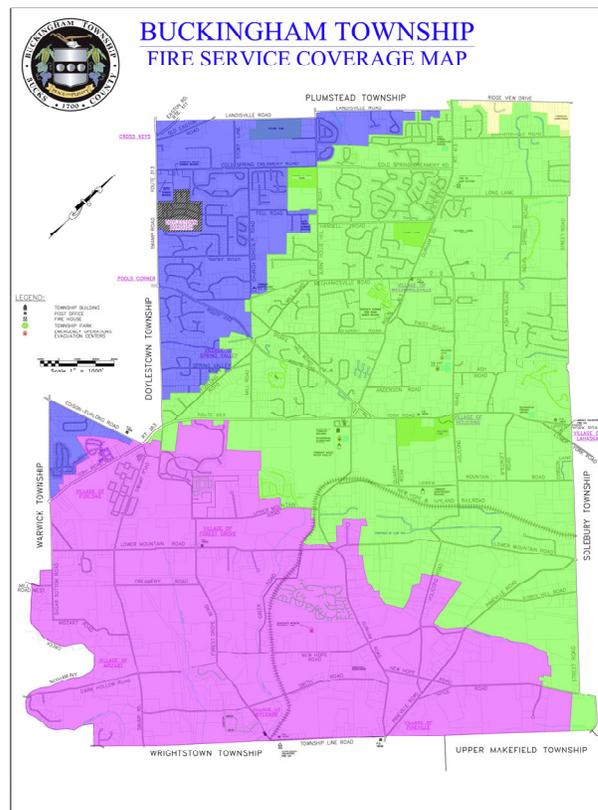
Buckingham has three coverage areas served by three different volunteer fire companies: **Midway**, **Doylestown**, and **Lingohocken**. We are also thankful to the Point Pleasant Fire Company that responds to calls from properties on Ridge View Drive. Reach out to any one of those departments and they will tell you the same thing: they need more volunteers. They face a chronic shortage of firefighters, in part because young adults who would otherwise be interested are priced out of our housing market and tend to move away after graduation.

Midway is shorthanded, particularly during daylight hours on weekdays when many of their volunteers are at work. The company would welcome new volunteer firefighters, including high school students starting at age 16 who want to be junior members. Just go to the department website (www.midwayvfc.com) for more information and an application form. If you cannot make that kind of commitment, Midway could also use volunteer electricians, plumbers, carpenters and clerical workers.

Doylestown constantly seeks an influx of new volunteer firefighters at all levels, starting at age 16. Training is available on weeknights and weekends and summer classes are held for the juniors. The best time to find someone at the company is on Wednesday evenings when they hold drill night. Their website will give you lots of information and includes an application form. (www.doylestownfireco.org).

Lingohocken maintains a substation in Buckingham and definitely needs additional personnel to serve there. Unlike the other two companies, they will take juniors at age 14 and allow them to attend drills and learn about the firefighting apparatus. These youngsters are allowed at fire scenes after the fire is controlled, and only with their parents present. At age 16, the juniors are able to attend fire school and go to scenes, but are restricted to exterior work. Lingohocken has no auxiliary, relying instead on Associate Members who do fundraising by holding a pancake breakfast in April, assisting with Grange Fair parking in August, and stuffing donation appeal envelopes in December and the end of February. For more information, go to the Lingohocken website at www.lfco.org.

Money? Yes, the companies need funds. In fact, Buckingham Township will be increasing its local fire tax milage from the current .75 mils to 1.5 mils to help them. But money doesn't fight fires. Volunteers do. Some folks, particularly those who have moved to Buckingham from out of state, may not realize that our firefighters aren't municipal employees. They are your fellow residents who are willing to undergo training and commit their time to keep their neighbors safe.





News from the Buckingham Police Department

Chief David Scirrotto

When Chief David Scirrotto was sworn in to head the Buckingham Police Department last May, a remarkable number of Lower Moreland Township officers came to wish him well. Now that he has been on the job in Buckingham for a few months, it is easy to see why they appreciated his leadership.

Our new chief spent his first couple of months making sure he was well-acquainted with every officer in the department. He rode along with them on patrol, shared meals, and learned about the department and their roles in it. He assessed the strengths of the department and considered how he could make improvements. Then the chief swung into action, with a decided emphasis on community outreach.

One of the most visible projects Chief Scirrotto undertook was at Back to School Night at CB East. Using a grant from the Bucks County Drug and Alcohol Commission, the Chief arranged to have a trailer containing a mock bedroom of a teenager brought to the school. Two specially trained Bensalem officers accompanied the trailer to educate parents on what to look for to make sure their children aren't at risk for substance abuse. The presentation was very well received.

Currently in the works is a Bus Stop Buddy program in which police officers will ride on randomly chosen school buses to meet the students and assure them that they are there to help them. Thanks to a donation of trading cards from the Doylestown Mercedes dealership and bracelets (etc.) purchased by the police department, the officers will be able to give out little gifts. This project will also serve to reassure parents that the police are looking out for the welfare of their children. The department's School Resource Officer Chris Shaffer will be helping to coordinate this project.

This past summer the Chief and several of his officers attended many of the Buckingham outdoor concerts at Hansel Park, greeting the attendees and playing catch with the children.

!\$%^*!# Potholes

In the whole history of driving, it's fair to say that no one EVER had a good thing to say about potholes. Potholes conceal themselves under autumn leaves or puddles of water. They wreak havoc on tires and suspensions. At best, they give you a jolt. At worst, they disable your car and you end up by the side of the road needing a tow. And they are no favorite of road crews that go out in all kinds of weather to repair them, sometimes holding up traffic. Truly they are the mosquitoes of the motoring world. And even mosquitoes have their uses—just ask a hungry frog. Potholes, have none at all.

Do you care what causes them? Probably not as much as you care about getting them filled. But, here's the thing. When you live in a part of the world that experiences freeze/thaw cycles, that's the main culprit. Water has this bad habit of seeping into any crack it finds and then expands and contracts when it freezes and thaws. Cars and trucks pound over these vulnerable spots repeatedly until the surface gives way and forms a pothole. See page 9 for where to report.

Who maintains our roads in Buckingham (snow-plowing, pot-hole repairs, paving, sign placement, etc)?

Turns out that in Buckingham Township there are five possible "caretakers":

1. Roads maintained by the State (PennDOT)
2. Roads maintained by Buckingham Township
3. Roads maintained by the Developer (if the development has not been dedicated to the Township)
4. Roads privately maintained by their residents
5. Bordering roads maintained by neighboring Townships.

If you have a request pertaining to a road other than those listed above, and the Township maintains the road or you are unsure who maintains the road, feel free to contact the Township Office at 215-794-8834 or e-mail us through contact@buckinghampa.org

Penndot Roads in Buckingham Township

*The following is a list of the roads maintained by PennDOT:

Route 202 (York Road)
 Route 263 (Old York Road)
 Route 313 (Swamp Road)
 Route 413 (Durham Road)
 Burnt House Hill Road (between Route 202 and Cold Spring Creamery Road)
 Carversville Road
 Cold Spring Creamery Road
 Dark Hollow Road (between Swamp Road and Neshaminy Creek)
 Edison Furlong Road
 Forest Grove Road
 Furlong Road
 Mechanicsville Road
 New Hope Road (between Route 413 and Forest Grove Road)
 North Easton Road
 Pineville Road (between the Village of Pineville and Stony Hill Road)
 Ridge Road
 Stony Hill Road
 Swamp Road (from Route 202/York Road to Wrightstown Township border)
 Township Line Road
 Sugar Bottom Road (between Rt 263 & Pebble Hill Road)
 Pebble Hill Road (between Edison Furlong Road & Sugar Bottom Road)

Road issues including potholes on PennDOT roadways can be reported by calling I-800-FIX-ROAD or through their Customer Care website at <https://customer-care.penndot.pa.gov/>



The Wetlands Project—A Follow Up

Odds are that when you drive past the Township Building your first thought isn't the wetlands behind the building. Fortunately, there are folks who worry about such things—and I am grateful to all of them because, well, I hang out there a lot. This is my story.

You see, I am a bee. Unfortunately, my habitat was overrun by non-native invasive species choking the life out of the flowering plants I like to pollinate. Then something good happened. Realize I have a lot of this information secondhand, but a group of Buckingham seventh graders from Hollicong Middle School entered the UNLESS contest, which challenged them "to create real solutions to environmental issues in their lives." (You can read more about that contest on something called a website, which apparently has nothing to do with spiders. But, I digress.)



The students designed a project to restore a local wetlands and raised money to make it so. Those funds were matched by Bucks Beautiful. (Nice name.) And the project ended up targeting my hangout thanks to Buckingham Township and its Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC).

Every gardening project needs judgment and muscle. The judgment came in the form of Master Watershed Stewards including Jim Walter (of the EAC) who removed the invaders and decided what should end up in their place. The muscle came in the form of the CB East Keyclub—high school students with the youth and enthusiasm to dig.

And did they dig! And did they plant! Last June the wetlands were *abuzz* with activity. The results made me so happy that I invited more and more of my kin—and butterflies too, which always seem to get better press than I do. More birds appeared. Astonishingly, a ton of baby snapping turtles moved in as well. They are odd looking little creatures the size of cookies that resemble tiny brown leaves.

What is making me so enthusiastic? The garden blooms sequentially in the spring, summer and fall, which is lovely to look at and great for pollinators like me. The native goldenrod stayed and is looking very pretty right now. So are the orange jewelweed and the beard's tongue with its little purple flowers that look like Lily of the Valley and attract hummingbirds.

In springtime, the swamp milkweed has flowers (yum!) and is great at spreading—using spores that will remind you of dandelions. In the summer, the wetlands will nurture a plant named after me—bee balm! All kinds of bees love bee balm and hummingbirds are a great fan of their nectar. Plus, their seed pods provide food for birds in the fall and winter when the pickings are slim. The students

also planted asters (butterflies love them); summersweet shrubs for butterflies, bees and songbirds; magnolias and red bud trees (great for bees in the early spring).

Meanwhile, non-native cleomes have taken up residence on their own. I love to pollinate their huge flowers, which proliferate all summer and into the fall. Still, as home gardeners know, they have lots of seed pods and will multiply, so they'll require monitoring to make sure they behave themselves amongst the native plantings. From a selfish point of view, I hope they stay.

Gardens are always in need of care, particularly to cut down vines and yank out invasive plants that try to crowd out the native species. Happily, most of that work comes in the first couple of years until the native plants I love to visit can take over.

The Township planted a sign to thank everyone who worked on the project. That's for you to read. I am too busy making honey.



Happy (Almost) 325th Anniversary Buckingham 1700-2025

There's a name for a 325th anniversary. It's Quasquitercentennial. (Who knew?) Although Buckingham's anniversary is next year, planning is already underway by the 325 Year Anniversary Committee.

Coming soon, we are excited to announce the launch of our dedicated 325th-anniversary page on our Buckingham Website, where you can explore historical timelines, photos, and fascinating stories from our past. Get ready to dive deep into the history of Buckingham Township like never before!

Be sure to visit our Parks and Recreation webpage on our website, township calendar, and social media sites for updates on upcoming events, contest details and many more happenings for 325 & don't forget to use #Buckingham325 for a chance to be featured on our township website.

We invite you to join us as we honor the legacy of Buckingham Township, celebrate our present achievements, and unite in commemorating 325 years of community resilience and progress!

**Buckingham
Township will be
hosting many
325 Events
throughout 2025**

Buckingham Township Memorial and Commemorative Bench Program

We are pleased to announce a new program whereby Township residents may purchase a bench to commemorate a loved one. The benches can be located in any of the Township Parks.

The donation for the bench is \$600.00 to cover the costs of the bench and installation by the Public Works Department. You will be responsible for purchasing the 3 x 6 inch plaque to be installed once the wording is approved by the Township. Benches are made in the USA and are 5 feet long.

To initiate a purchase, please call Mary Jane Atkinson at (215) 794-8834.

Red Cross Blood Drive at the Township Building



The next Buckingham Township Red Cross Blood Drive will be held
December 10, 2024 from 2pm to 7pm.

If you have any questions, comments, or information related to the Buckingham Township Newsletter, write Buckingham Township, P.O. Box 413, Buckingham, PA 18912, call (215) 794-8834 or email at contact@buckinghampa.org. A special thanks to our Author Susan Sciacca.

**Buckingham Township
P.O. Box 413
Buckingham, PA 18912**

**We're on the Web!
www.buckinghampa.org**



Buckingham Township

Board of Supervisors

Paul Calderaio, Maggie Rash, Jon Forest

Board of Supervisors' Meetings are 4th Wednesdays and as needed 2nd Wednesdays, 7:30pm with a work session at 6:00pm. Meetings are open to all.

Township Departments - Offices open Monday-Friday, 7:30am to 4:00pm.

Township offices are on Hughesian Drive, just south of the intersection of Rte 413 & Rte 263

Administration 215-794-8834

Township Manager: Dana S. Cozza, Esquire

Finance Director: Jill Pistory, CPA

Director of Roads and Facilities: Eric Hinz

Building and Codes Department..... 215-794-8836

Bldg Dept Director, Fire Marshal and Emergency Mgt.: Jim Kettler

Police Department (non-emergency).....215-794-8813

Chief of Police: David Scirrotto

Water and Wastewater Department..... 215-794-8854

Water and Sewer Dept. Director: Steve Clark

Township email address:
contact@buckinghampa.org