



Solebury Messenger

A Quarterly Publication of Solebury Township

Vol. 30, No. 2

Spring Issue

April 2024

Sustainable Solebury

Determined to Help Protect Our Environment, Residents Turn Out for Annual Forum

Solebury Township has a long-standing commitment to preserving its natural lands and protecting the environment that thrives there. A warming climate, increasingly severe weather, and the prevalence of plastic packaging and "forever" chemicals pose great challenges to the community's efforts to be good stewards of the land. To help meet those challenges, Solebury's newly-formed Sustainability Subcommittee sponsored a Sustainability Forum on April 4 to bring the community together with experts, elected officials, and non-profit organizations to better understand the environmental issues facing Solebury.

The Sustainability Forum is a "sequel" of sorts to the 2022 Climate and Energy Forum, and the Sustainability

Subcommittee intends to make the forum an annual event. Like its predecessor, a goal of the forum is to ensure that the Township is transparent and inclusive as it addresses issues related to sustainability, that it focuses squarely on actions that can be taken at the local level, and that there are clear and measurable objectives so residents can be sure we are making progress.

This year's event was very well attended, with about 80 residents on hand for the presentations and workshops, about double the crowd for the inaugural event two years ago.

The forum kicked-off with an overview of the Township's recent environmental efforts, from ongoing projects like the Deer Management Program partnership with the US Department of Agriculture, the recent energy audit of the Township Building, and conversion to hybrid and electric motors wherever possible, from Police

vehicles to Public Works hand tools.

Attendees heard from representatives of Solebury's Environmental Advisory



Forum attendees heard a number of expert presentations and joined in several discussion groups. Here, residents were able to engage one-on-one with exhibitors from area non-profit groups.

Council, the Bucks County Planning Commission, the NHS Environmental Club, and PSU's Local Climate Action Program, with many other organizations exhibiting.

Presentation slides, photos, resource links, insights and suggestions from the forum are being posted to the "2024 Sustainability Forum" page on the Township website, at www.soleburytwp.org/2024-forum.



Supervisor John Francis, liaison to the Environmental Advisory Council, welcomes attendees to the forum.

What's in Your Inbox?

Meeting agendas, police alerts, weather bulletins and more are available by email. Visit SoleburyTwp.org and click "Email Sign-Ups."



More than 80 Solebury residents turned out for the forum, doubling the attendance at the inaugural event three years ago.

Electronic Recycling Event Shines Through Stormy Weather

Heavy rain could not stop Solebury residents from dropping off their broken or unused electronics at Solebury's eRecycling event on Saturday, March 23. The "Anything With a Plug" recycling day was planned and carried out by the Township's Environmental Advisory Council, which partnered with eForce Recycling, Philadelphia's first Certified Responsible Recycler, to stage the event at the New Hope-Solebury High School east parking lot.

"Despite the miserable weather, a total of 6,353



pounds of ewaste was collected," said Board of Supervisors Chair Mark Baum Baicker. "Most impressively,

92 of the 93 vehicles that had pre-registered for the event actually showed up in a downpour."

Solebury Human Relations Commission Founded on International Human Rights

In October 2023, the Solebury Board of Supervisors proposed that the Township establish a Human Relations Commission. The HRC's current members include: Dr. Tom Lyon (Chair), Paul Barnes (Co-Chair), Dr. Cindy Baum-Baicker, Donald Bentvoglio, and Susan Whitman.

In structure, the Solebury Human Relations Commission echoes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, established in 1948 by the United Nations, which created the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, first chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt. The UDHR was necessary at a time when the world was reeling from the devastation brought

on by WWII. In hopes of a better future, the UDHR established guidelines "whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world." Thirty articles followed, and established that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status."

At a time when too many communities are polarized, we

in Solebury continue to value a sense of unity, community, and protection of our neighbors. The Human Relations Commission was established to protect this standard. If you feel your rights have been threatened, please refer to the Solebury HRC Complaint Submission Form which can be found on the Township website, www.soleburytwp.org, under Documents and Forms.

You can learn more about the Solebury Township Human Relations Commission on the Township website. Click on "Government" and find the HRC listed under "Boards & Committees."

Comprehensive Plan Committee

In early 2024, the Township began the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan. On the third Wednesday of each month, the Committee meets. Meetings are held via zoom and in-person. In the upcoming months, there will be workshops that residents are encouraged to attend and be involved with.

Solebury Sign Ordinance

If you wish to place signage within the Township, you must comply with the Township Sign Ordinance. A permit is required for both permanent signage and temporary signage. For more information, please see Part 24 of the Zoning Ordinance or contact the Township at 215-297-5656.

The Invisible Threat:

Why You Should Consider Testing Your Well Water for PFAS

Most Solebury residents, with the exception of many people living along the Route 202 corridor, have private wells. While most wells provide water that is safe, conditions can change, and wells should be tested regularly. The Pennsylvania DEP recommends that well owners annually test their water for total coliform bacteria, nitrates, total dissolved solids, and pH levels. One additional test you might consider adding is for PFAS-type chemicals. Here is some background information on this emerging issue.

PFAS and PFOS

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of chemicals used in various industries around the globe since the 1940s. Two of the more common chemicals, abbreviated as 'PFAS' and 'PFOS', are the most studied, and are known for their ability to persist in the human body and the environment. They are often called 'forever chemicals' because of their ability to persist in the human body and the environment.

Why Test for PFAS?

Higher exposure to PFAS-type chemicals has been linked to a range of health issues, including higher cholesterol, changes in liver enzymes, thyroid issues, vaccine responses in children, higher blood pressure and increases in some cancers.

Why Test in Solebury?

Since PFAS are so persistent over long periods of time, they can accumulate in water sources far away from their origin. Over the past decade in Bucks County, there has been a focus on parts of Warminster, Horsham and Doylestown as areas of possible exposure to excessive levels of PFAS. In particular, fire-retardant chemicals from the former Naval Air Station in lower Bucks, and some other industrial sites, were found to be contaminating local groundwater. But PFAS are not just found where it was used or produced. Researchers are finding PFAS traces as far away as Antarctica and in the Himalayas.

Regulatory Actions

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is issuing new regulations for PFAS in drinking water, and we will cover that in a future Messenger article. The Pennsylvania DEP has set Maximum Contaminant Levels of 18 parts per trillion for PFOS and 14 ppt for PFOA, for both private well owners and public well operators.

How to Test for PFAS

The EPA has established methods for testing PFAS in drinking water. One lab in Bucks County that is EPA certified for PFAS testing is Criterion Labs in Bensalem. Another lab in Bucks County

that can provide results from a separate EPA certified lab is Analytical Laboratories in Telford. Please note that PFAS testing is expensive, costing upwards of \$400 for a sample.

It is important to follow the procedures specified by whatever lab you choose, because the measurements they are making require precision.

What Should We Do if Our Results Exceed Pennsylvania Maximum Contaminant Levels?

After you get the results, explore alternatives with water professionals and decide how to move forward. Solutions can range from using water filter pitchers, faucet-mounted or under-the-sink filters, to whole house systems.

Whatever mitigation system you use, be sure to change filters in accordance with the system specifications.

Additional information

Some additional guidance is provided in the April 2024 Consumer Reports article "How to Get PFAS Out of Your Drinking Water" (go to www.consumerreports.org and search for the title).

Penn State Extension has put together quite a few helpful resources at extension.psu.edu/testing-and-treating-pfas-chemicals-in-pennsylvania-water-wells.

New State Law: Easy on the Fertilizer! Be Green, Protect Our Streams

Turfgrass has become a major component of Pennsylvania's flora. In fact, according to the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Pennsylvania now contains over 2 million acres of lawn.

Selecting a proper turfgrass management program, whether it is on a private lawn, sports field, public park, or golf course, is essential to protecting our local waterways.

Know What Your Lawn Needs

When looking to apply nutrients to your lawn, make sure you are aware of what your lawn needs and what the Pennsylvania Fertilizer Law allows. To determine your lawn's nutrient needs, it is best to first soil test. Soil tests provide specific recommendations for nitrogen, phosphate, and potassium. Following the soil test recommendations ensures that you are applying only what your lawn needs, thus reducing nutrient loss and fertilizer cost. Test kits can be purchased for a nominal fee from your local Penn State extension office.

The Pennsylvania Fertilizer Law

In July 2022, Pennsylvania adopted a new fertilizer law designed to minimize the movement of nutrients into our waterways. Anyone who applies fertilizers should be aware of the following nutrient limitations:

- Nitrogen is limited to 0.9 pounds of total nitrogen and 0.7 pounds of available nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft. per application.
- No phosphorus can be applied unless establishing or repairing turf.
- Both the nitrogen and phosphorus rates can be adjusted based on soil test recommendations and/or if using an enhanced efficiency fertilizer.

In addition, when applying fertilizer, applicators must follow specific environmental conditions to prevent direct movement of fertilizer nutrients into our streams.

- Do not apply if a heavy rain is expected.
- Keep fertilizer away from drainage ditches, storm drains, or water.
- Maintain a 15-foot buffer from the banks of all waterways.
- Remove fertilizer that lands on impervious surfaces (i.e. driveways, sidewalks, roads) back onto the application area.
- Do not use as a snow or ice melt.

- Do not spread fertilizer on snow-covered or frozen ground.

- Fertilizer application between Dec. 15 and March 1 is restricted to 0.50 lbs of total nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft. per application.

Lawn Care Considerations

Nutrient management is not the only tool that can be used for limiting nutrient loss. There are many additional lawn care considerations that can be used to promote a healthy lawn while protecting our local waterways. A few examples are listed below.

Reducing soil compaction can improve root growth and water infiltration. Maintaining an appropriate soil pH is essential to promoting proper nutrient availability. Soil texture and organic matter content influence water movement, nutrient availability, and the microbial ecosystem of the soil. A healthy soil supports a healthy lawn.

Raise your mower deck. Set your mower deck to 3 inches or higher. A taller lawn provides shade that discourages weed growth and promotes strong root development helping lawns to withstand environmental stress. Alternatively, you can use low mow turf species, such as fine fescue blends, that do best when mowing is limited. A taller, healthier lawn slows water movement and increases infiltration keeping moisture, soil, and nutrients where they are needed most.

Mulch your grass clippings. Keeping your clippings in place returns valuable organic matter and nutrients to your lawn.

Provide a buffer. Do not mow up to the banks of streams. Maintaining vegetative buffers along waterways provides wildlife habitat while slowing and filtering water before it enters the stream.

Convert your lawn. Replacing turf with native vegetation not only increases water infiltration, but also promotes biodiversity and creates habitats for pollinators and other wildlife.

For more information on the Pennsylvania Fertilizer Law, visit the Department of Agriculture's website at www.agriculture.pa.gov/fertilizer or contact Denise Uzupis at duzupis@pa.gov.

Still a Threat: Stomp Out Spotted Lanternflies

The Spotted Lanternfly is a pest that poses a significant threat to the grape, apple, and stone fruit industries. Since first discovered in Berks County 10 years ago, the pest has spread throughout Southeastern Pennsylvania and led the state to place 54 counties under quarantine, including Bucks County.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture is enlisting the help of all residents to help it track the spread of this insect and take steps to eradicate any infestation.

Identification

Adult lanternflies are about an inch long and a half-inch wide at rest. The lanternfly's forewing is gray with black spots, and the wingtips have a net-like appearance in black and gray. The hind wings have contrasting patches of red and black with a white band between them. The legs and head are black, and the abdomen is yellow with broad black bands. Immature stages, called nymphs, are first black with white spots and then develop red patches as they grow.

Lanternflies prefer the plant called Tree of Heaven, *Ailanthus altissima* — another invasive species in Pennsylvania — as their primary food source and mating and egg-laying location.

However, any smooth surface, from trees to vehicles, campers, yard furniture, farm equipment, and other items stored outside can act as sites for egg laying. Adult lanternflies begin laying eggs in late September and continue through late November or early December.



Tree-of-heaven is often confused with sumac, black walnut, and butternut. The leaf edges of all of these native trees have small teeth while those of tree-of-heaven are smooth. The foul odor produced by the crushed foliage and the scraped bark is also unique to tree-of-heaven.



Spring and Summer

Beginning in late April to mid-May, nymphs may be found on smaller plants and vines and any new growth on trees and shrubs. As the year progresses, older nymphs and adults will migrate to the Tree of Heaven, if available, and may be observed feeding on the trunk and branches. Springtime is not too late to remove Tree of Heaven from your property.

Trees may have weeping wounds of sap on the trunks, and heavy lanternfly populations will cause honey-like secretions to build up at the base of the tree, blackening it and the surrounding soil with sooty mold. Wasps, hornets, bees, and ants may be attracted to the secretions and tree wounds.

In areas with large populations of lanternflies, adults may also feed on other trees, including willows, maples, poplars, tulip poplars, birch, and ash.

The Department of Agriculture says that egg masses can be scraped off the trees, double bagged, and disposed of. You can also drop the egg masses into alcohol or hand sanitizer to kill them.

What to do

Anyone who observes spotted lanternflies should try to destroy them.

Because insecticides may kill beneficial insects on infected trees, including pollinators, property owners should consider using the integrated pest management strategy that the state is using. It involves locating Tree of Heaven

plants, killing all but a few to act as “trap trees” to attract the lanternflies, and then

treating those with a systemic insecticide to eradicate the pests.

To learn more about these pests, go to the Department of Agriculture's website, www.agriculture.pa.gov/spottedlanternfly, and check out information available from the Penn State Extension at extension.psu.edu/shopby/spotted-lanternfly.



Solebury Police News Roundup: National Night Out, New Tech, D.A.R.E. and Commendations

National Night Out '24 – Save the date

Aug. 6, 2024, starting at 6 p.m., join your police officers for a free fun night. We will have many fun activities for families to enjoy.



Police Reporting Software

Solebury Township Police had received a grant for a new police report management system. This new system has allowed STPD to start the integration of the National Incident-Based Reporting System. This new national data collection standard captures many details of crimes. NIBRS will enable STPD to give context to specific public safety problems and allow STPD to collect information on nearly every major criminal justice issue facing law enforcement. This additional detailed crime incident data will be captured in a standard format, which provides greater analytic capability to keep STPD and our residents informed.

D.A.R.E.

For her second year as the Department's D.A.R.E. instructor, Officer Gina Ferzetti is enjoying her time at the New Hope Solebury Lower Elementary School, teaching aspects of "What is an emergency?" and when to call 911. Safety tips, stranger awareness, and anti-bullying are part of the program. Officer Ferzetti also takes time with the students to join other fun activities after class.



Police Commendations

On March 19 Chief Dominick Bellizzie presented the following Solebury Township Police Officers and Emergency Medical Personnel with Official Commendations:

Commendation of Merit – Officer Gina Ferzetti and Officer Anthony Viruet-Melendez,

for the arrest of two suspects that were wanted by multiple police agencies.

Commendation of Merit – Paramedic Thomas Richmond, EMT Ashley Hutchinson, and EMT Conor Myers for life saving measures performed during a call for a suicidal subject.

Commendation of Merit – Officer Brendan Murphy, Officer Patrick Dorsey, and Corporal Michael Johnson (Plumstead Twp. Police), for life saving measures performed during a call for a suicidal subject.

Commendatory Citation – Police K9 Blitz and Officer Matthew Rice, for assisting in a narcotics investigation that resulted in the seizure of heroin with a street value of over \$10,000.

Commendatory Citation – Sergeant Kevin Edwards and Detective/Corporal Jonathan Koretzky, for a criminal investigation resulting in the arrest of three suspects and recovery of over \$4,000.00 in stolen property.

WELCOME TO THE HOBBS

SOLEBURY SOFTBALL

SOLEBURY BASEBALL & SOFTBALL CELEBRATES

OPENING DAY!

APRIL 20 | 10-3:30

RAIN DATE APRIL 27

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

~ FACE PAINTING ~ BOUNCE HOUSE ~ SPEED PITCH
~ CRAFTS ~ GAMES ~ 10:00 PARADE ~
~ SNACK STAND ~ POLICE CAR VISIT ~
~ COTTON CANDY & POPCORN ~

LAUREL PARK

SOLEBURYBASEBALL.ORG & SOLEBURYSOFTBALL.ORG

Know Who to Call to Report Potholes

Spring has sprung, and that means potholes are bound to pop up along with the daffodils. To help our road crew fix these potholes quickly, we need your help in reporting them as soon as they appear.

PennDOT is responsible for the state roads in the Township. Call 1-800-FIX-ROAD (1-800-349-7623) or file an electronic report at <https://customercare.penndot.gov>.

To report a pothole on any other road in Solebury, call 215-297-5656 or use the "Contact Us" button on the Township website.

State Roads in Solebury:

Aquetong Road ~ Carversville Road
Fleecydale Road ~ Green Hill Road
Lower York Road ~ Mechanicsville Road
Phillips Mill Road ~ River Road ~ Stoney Hill Road
Sugan Road (Paxson Road to Upper York Road)
Upper York Road ~ Windy Bush Road

Eagle Fire is Recruiting

The Eagle Fire Company has served the New Hope and Solebury areas for over 200 years. They are a nonprofit organization staffed by volunteers that answers your calls to fire, gas leaks, alarms, motor vehicle accidents, flooding, marine rescues and other emergencies 24/7. The Company assists EMS, and our Fire Police help with events, road closures, detours and other traffic.

Eagle volunteers are members of the community, your neighbors and friends. They save the residents of our community significant taxpayer money each year by volunteering their time.

To serve our growing community, Eagle recently purchased a much-needed new truck (Quint 46), through a combination of loans and fundraising. They continue to recruit members to serve the community as firefighters, apparatus drivers and water rescuers.

Volunteering with the Fire Company offers personal growth and intangible benefits, making it a rewarding way to serve, protect, and impact our community. Contact the Eagle Fire Company at recruit@nhefco.org if you are interested in volunteering. Eagle provides all required training, gear, and equipment to perform the requirements of the role safely and effectively.

For more information on the Company, follow their social media channels or visit their website, www.nhefco.org.

Sign up for Clean & Green

Solebury Township's Land Preservation Committee recently discussed the tax relief and preservation benefits of Act 319, also known as Clean and Green. The Pennsylvania General Assembly approved the program in 1974 to encourage the protection of farmland, forestland and open spaces. There are more than 9 million acres enrolled in the statewide program.

Eligible properties are required to be 10 acres or more, and in Agricultural Use, Agricultural Reserve, or Forest Reserve. Properties may be less than 10 acres if the property generates farm income of at least \$2000 annually. Participating in the program can result in tax savings for landowners.

If you or someone you know is interested in further information about this program, please

contact Jean Weiss, Land Preservation Administrator, at the Township Building 215-297-5656. You may read more about the program at the PA Department of Agriculture website, www.agriculture.pa.gov, and click on the Plants, Land & Water tab.



Storm Outage Contacts

PECO 1-800-841-4141 or www.peco.com/Outages/CheckOutageStatus/Pages/OutageMap.aspx

Verizon 1-800-837-4966 or www.verizon.com/support/residential/service-outage

XFINITY (Comcast) 1-800-934-6489 or www.xfinity.com/support/status

Bucks County Household Waste Recycling Events for 2024

Bucks County is hosting several household hazardous waste recycling events this year.

Pesticides, paints, weed killer—toxic chemicals are found in many household products, and when they are no longer needed they need to be disposed of safely. Every year the county sponsors recycling events for residents to responsibly discard these hazardous materials.

May 18, 2024

Upper Bucks

Upper Bucks Area Vocational Technical School
3115 Ridge Road, Perkasio
Bedminster Township

August 10, 2024

Lower Bucks

Bensalem High School
4319 Hulmeville Road, Bensalem
Bensalem Township

June 29, 2024

Central Bucks

Central Bucks South High School
1100 Folly Road, Warrington
Warrington Township

October 26, 2024

Upper Bucks

Strayer Middle School
1200 Ronald Reagan Drive, Quakertown
Richland Township

Please note that no electronics, including televisions and computers, can be accepted under state law. This program is available to Bucks County residents only; no material will be accepted from businesses, industry or institutions.

Township Directory

Police:

Emergency? Dial: 9-1-1. Nonemergency? Call: 215-297-8201.
General Inquiries: Police2@soleburytpd.org

Administration:

Township Number: 215-297-5656
General Inquiries: soleburytownship@soleburytpw.org

Township Manager Christopher Garges:

soleburymanager@soleburytpw.org

EAC Administrator Kate Robeson-Grubb:

krobesson-grubb@soleburytpw.org

HARB Administrator Zachary Zubris:

zzubris@soleburytpw.org

LPC Administrator, Planning Commission Administrator

Jean Weiss: jweiss@soleburytpw.org

Parks & Recreation Director Dudley Rice:

soleburyparks@soleburytpw.org

Right-To-Know Officers

Administrative Records: Jean Weiss,
soleburymanager@soleburytpw.org
Police Records: Police Chief Dominick Bellizzi,
police@soleburytpd.org

Board of Supervisors

Chair Mark Baum Baicker

mbaumbaicker@soleburytpw.org

Vice-Chair Hanna Howe

hhowe@soleburytpw.org

Supervisor Christy Cheever

ccheever@soleburytpw.org

Supervisor John Francis

jfrancis@soleburytpw.org

Supervisor Kevin Morrissey

kmorrissey@soleburytpw.org

Township Calendar

*Calendar information is subject to changes.
Confirm all dates and times with the Township office.
Meetings begin at 7 p.m. unless otherwise noted.*

April

4/17 Comprehensive Plan Committee
4/18 6 p.m. Land Preservation Committee
4/25 Parks & Recreation Board
4/29 Sustainability Subcommittee
4/30 Solebury Farm Committee

May

5/2 6 p.m. Human Relations Commission (as needed)
5/6 6 p.m. Historical Architectural Review Board
5/7 6 p.m. Board of Supervisors
5/8 Zoning Hearing Board (as needed)
5/14 Environmental Advisory Commission
5/15 Comprehensive Plan Committee
5/16 6 p.m. Land Preservation Committee
5/21 6 p.m. Board of Supervisors
5/23 Parks & Recreation Board
5/28 Solebury Farm Committee
5/29 Sustainability Subcommittee
5/30 Solebury Township Planning Commission

June

6/3 6 p.m. Historical Architectural Review Board
6/6 6 p.m. Human Relations Commission (as needed)
6/11 Environmental Advisory Council
6/12 Zoning Hearing Board (as needed)
6/18 6 p.m. Board of Supervisors
6/20 6 p.m. Land Preservation Committee
6/24 Sustainability Subcommittee
6/24 Solebury Township Planning Commission
12/14 Parks & Recreation Board
6/26 Comprehensive Plan Committee
6/27 Parks & Recreation Board

*Stay on top of meeting times with email alerts!
Visit: SoleburyTp.org and click "Email Sign-Ups"*