



EAU CLAIRE COUNTY, WISCONSIN
5750 Old Town Hall Road ♦ Eau Claire WI 54701
(715)834-3257 ♦ Fax (715)834-3325 ♦ <https://townofwashington.wi.gov>

TOWN OF WASHINGTON NEWSLETTER

Vol. 46 No. 3 ~ December 2024

Spotlight from Town Chair - Fire Department

I would like to take this opportunity to talk about our Township Fire Department, otherwise known as TFD. TFD serves and is supported by five towns: Brunswick, Pleasant Valley, Seymour, Union, and Washington. Each town has a fire station. The Washington fire station is part of the Town Municipal Building. Each station is equipped with trucks and volunteers.

In addition to TFD's firefighting role, it also provides for first responders. This division is a group of Emergency Medical Responders called Emergicare. Emergicare personnel are called to respond whenever an ambulance is dispatched. This service is especially critical given the rural nature of the towns and the sometimes longer response times for an ambulance to come from Eau Claire.

TFD is faced with 2 major challenges going forward...funding and volunteers.

Funding for TFD is primarily from the 5 member towns. For 2024 that funding totaled \$540,000. The total is assigned proportionately to each town based on equalized value. Given that Washington is by far the largest town, our share this year was \$200,070. It is projected to increase by approximately 5% for 2025; which falls far behind increased equipment costs.

A major reason for the funding challenge is the skyrocketing cost of fire trucks. As an example, TFD is expecting to take delivery of a fire engine late this year that was ordered 3 years ago at a cost of \$514,000. That same truck ordered today will be over 1 million dollars.

TFD is built on the willingness of civic minded people, like you, to step up to be a firefighter. Although Washington is the largest town, we have the fewest number of firefighters of any other TFD station. It is a volunteer position, but there is compensation for calls and training. You must be 18, but there is also a student firefighter program for 16 to 18 year olds.

Robert Solberg, Town of Washington Chair

Target Practicing or Hunting?

Consult the Town's Weapon Discharge Map to see what type of firearm or bow may be discharged in your area. On the Town's webpage, under Community, select Maps, select Weapons Discharge Map.

Categories include:

- No Weapon Discharge
Except Bow/Crossbow Hunting Only
- Bow/Crossbow Discharge
- Bow/Crossbow & Shotgun Discharge
- Open Discharge

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Note: WIDNR hunting regulations apply.

Village of Washington

Your excitement at the prospect of a portion of the Town becoming a village is evident! It is the number ONE question at our office; “when are we going to become a village?!”

We look forward to being able to control our destiny free of city regulation, annexation, and dense development. Area folks want a responsible path forward that works with our transportation system and infrastructure and retains our natural character and position in the Chippewa Valley as a regional asset. Washington is a desirable area and fulfills an important place in regional housing and the real estate market. The Village of Washington will meet that need.

So... what are the next steps? We are awaiting a hearing date from the Eau Claire Circuit Court. The City of Eau Claire has filed as a party in interest to oppose the incorporation petition. Upon the court holding a hearing and determining the standards have been met, the incorporation petition goes to a state-level Incorporation Review Board for its review, a hearing, and a decision to grant, dismiss, or refile the petition with amended borders. A process that could take several months to complete.

What can we do in the meantime?

- Talk to your friends and legislators of the Chippewa Valley about the need and the importance of Washington becoming a village.
- Consider testifying before the Incorporation Review Board if the need arises.
- Read our bi-weekly updates at townofwashington.wi.gov for the latest news.



2024 Road Projects Recap

Reconditioned Roads

Hobbs Road, Maplewood Court,
and Schumacher Road

Chip Seal Roads

Elm Road



New Hobbs Road

Tentative 2025 Road Projects

Roads to be Paved:

Balsam Rd, Pinewood Rd, Lila Ln, and Silver Springs Dr.

Chip Seal Projects:

Whitetail Drive, Voight Road, and Hillview Road

All projects are subject to bids and Town Board approval

Tax Collection

The 2024 tax bills will be mailed out near December 9.

Options for Submitting Tax Payments:

Drop Box: A 24 hour secure drop box is located just outside our front entrance; include your payment stub.

US Postal Service: Mail your payment to our office; include the payment stub from your bill

Pay Online: By credit card/debit card or echeck; convenience fees are applied - go to townofwashington.wi.gov; click Pay Online at the top of the home page—ONLY available for Town of Washington parcels

In-Person Collection:

Monday - Friday 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM beginning December 11

December 24 Closed at Noon

December 25 Closed

January 1 Closed

- 1st installment (or full payment) is due by January 31, 2025 to the Town of Washington.
- Receipts will only be mailed to you if a self-addressed stamped envelope is included with your payment. You can view or print a copy of your receipt by going to the Eau Claire County website at <https://ascend.eauclairecounty.gov/LandRecords> - then type in your last name and/or address.
- Checks are deposited on the date received. All returned checks will be charged a \$35 service fee.
- **Do not included payment of dog licenses on the same check as your tax bill;** a separate check is required.
- If you have delinquent taxes, they can only be paid to the Eau Claire County Treasurer's Office.

The Town of Washington collects all real estate taxes that are due and distributes them to the separate taxing jurisdictions. Your bill includes taxes that are payable to the school district you reside in, Eau Claire County, the Town of Washington, the Chippewa Valley Technical College, and a small portion of our residents pay into the Lake Altoona District if they live in that district.

Breakdown of your tax bill according to the school district you live in by percentage:

EC Area School Dist	Alt Area School Dist	Alt School & Lake Dist	FC Area School Dist
School Dist - 59%	School Dist - 58%	School Dist - 48%	School Dist - 61%
+1 school referendum until 2031	EC County - 27.5%	EC County - 23%	+1 school referendum until 2038
+1 school referendum until 2042	Town - 9 %	Lake Dist - 17%	EC County - 26%
+1 school referendum until 2028	CVTC - 5.5%	Town - 7%	Town - 8%
EC County - 27%	+1 CVTC referendum until 2040	CVTC - 5%	CVTC - 5%
Town - 8.5%		+1 CVTC referendum until 2040	+1 CVTC referendum until 2040
CVTC - 5.5%			
+1 CVTC referendum until 2040			

There are also credits from the State that are applied on your tax bill. One is called the first dollar credit and, if you have lived in your home as of January 1st, you should also have a lottery credit.

There are two separate special charges that are placed on your tax bill from Eau Claire County. If you have any questions regarding these special charges, contact Eau Claire County. For the SC Sewage charge call 715-839-4718 and for the SC Recycling charge call 715-839-2756.

Dog Licenses & Animal Regulations

A courtesy postcard will soon be mailed to those who licensed their dog(s) with the Town of Washington last year. Dog owners that are new to the Town of Washington should license their dog by January 1. Applications are on our website (under How Do I tab) or at the Town Office; you must provide written proof of vaccination against rabies from your vet. **If you no longer have a dog in the Town, let us know so we can remove them from our list.**

The Town does not require cats to be licensed however, you can be issued a citation if your cat is at-large. To report obsessive barking, animals at large, biting, an animal being mistreated, or a vicious animal; call the Human Association and leave a message at 715-839-4747. A humane officer will not be dispatched to pick up a dog or cat at-large unless the animal has first been contained.

2024 Dog License
Spayed/Neutered - \$18
Unaltered - \$28

(If sent with tax payment,
a separate check is required)



Winter Regulations and Reminders

School bus routes and hills are always given first priority. The larger the snowfall, the more time it takes to plow; we encourage you to be patient. When possible, our drivers begin their routes in the middle of the night before commuters and school buses are on the road; however, depending on the timing of the snowfall this is not always possible. The Town Road Department plows over 200 lane miles of roads after a snow fall. Our drivers will periodically push back snow farther off the road into the right-of-way to make room for additional snow.

If you live on a County road within the Town of Washington, your road is plowed by the County. Any questions or concerns should be directed to the Eau Claire County Highway Department at 715-839-2952. County Roads within the Town include: E & W Beaver Creek Road, Chickadee Road, Deerfield Road, E & W Lowes Creek Road, Mathwig Road, part of Mayer Road, Nine Mile Creek Road, Otter Creek Road, and State Street.

GARBAGE & RECYCLING

- Garbage and recycling receptacles and bins are only allowed at the edge of your yard or driveway on your collection day and should be at least 5 feet off the road, in your driveway, or yard. They are **never** allowed on the shoulder of the road, across the road from your residence or in a cul-de-sac.
- If your garbage hauler requests anything different, they are asking you to violate town road right-of-way ordinances and you are subject to a citation.
- For safety reasons, if your receptacles or bins are an obstacle during plowing operations, our drivers will not exit their truck to move them.

PARKING

- No vehicles are allowed to park on roads during and 24 hours after a snowfall.
- We do not have Odd/Even Parking.
- In the event of a snow emergency **NO PARKING** on the road for 48 hours.
- Violators will be ticketed by the Eau Claire County Sheriff's Department.
- Vehicles that present an obstruction and are not removed will be towed.

PLOWING & SIDEWALKS

- Snow you remove must remain on your property. Depositing snow back onto the roadway or across the road when plowing your driveway or parking lot is not only unsafe - it is illegal.
- Snow and/or ice must be cleared from sidewalks on your property within 24 hrs. from the time snow ceases to accumulate.



Township Fire Department, Inc. - Station 2

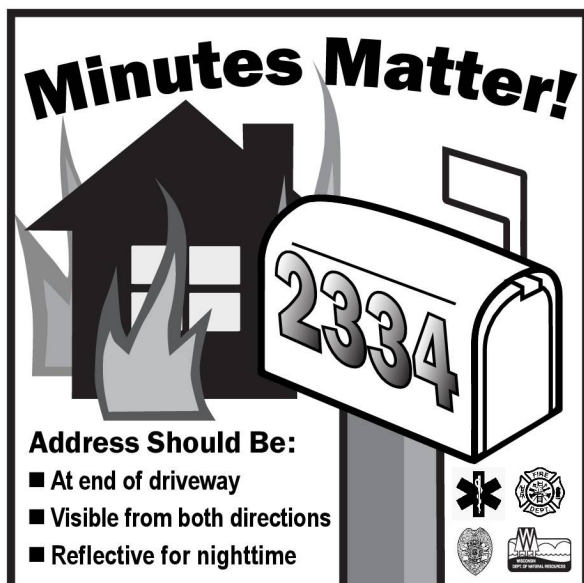
Road conditions change quickly this time of year. With snow and poor driving conditions, the Fire Department sees an increase in calls for vehicle crashes. Please slow down and provide enough stopping distance to keep you and everyone else safe.

As the temperatures decrease, structure fires increase. We commonly see chimney fires. Homeowners should have their wood burning fireplace inspected and the chimney cleaned by a professional on a yearly basis; having this done should be considered regular maintenance. If you have a chimney fire, call 9-1-1, you can use a fire extinguisher to try and put it out in the meantime. Never use water to suppress a fire in a fireplace or chimney. The expanding hot vapor from the water will crack chimney walls and will allow fire to escape into walls and the attic of the building. Even if you think the fire is out, call 9-1-1 and the Fire Department will check to make sure the fire did not spread.

In the month of November, we changed our clocks back an hour for day light savings. That means it is also time to change your batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Testing and checking the expiration date on your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors is something you should be doing as well. Most smoke detectors only last 5 to 10 years and will not be reliable if they have expired, and carbon monoxide detectors only last 3 to 5 years and will not be reliable if they have expired.

We are a paid per call department which means everyone at our station responds to calls during their own time, from their house or maybe their day job. Due to this factor and having LOW staffing for some calls, Station 2 cannot always get fire fighters to respond due to their schedule. Anyone over the age of 18 can join the Fire Department as a fire fighter and anyone aged 16 to 18 can join as a student fire fighter. If you know someone who is curious about joining but may have questions, they can reach out to me, Battalion Chief, Jared Rico at chief20@townshipfire.org. You do not have to live in the Town of Washington to join our station, most of our fire fighters live on the south side of the City of Eau Claire. What matters is that someone wants to make a difference and help serve the community.

The Town of Washington station is the busiest of all five stations of the Township Fire Department because of our central location as well as Interstate 94 and Highway 53. If the fire side of emergency services does not interest you, we also need first responders. Our membership on the entire department is at some of its lowest numbers that we have ever seen. Training is provided through the Department and in most cases are evening classes at Chippewa Valley Technical College. We encourage anyone who may be interested to check out our webpage at www.townshipfire.org to obtain more information. Please strongly consider giving back to your community and join us!



Jared Rico, Battalion Chief

Township Fire Department, Inc.
townshipfire.org
715-834-6868



5750 Old Town Hall Road
Eau Claire WI 54701

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*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!
From the Town Board and Staff*

TOWN STAFF & BOARD MEMBERS

Administrator/ Clerk/Treasurer:	Janelle L. Henning	715-834-3257
Deputy Clerk:	Jackie Vold	715-834-3257
Deputy Treasurer:	Aleta Kauffman	715-834-3257
Chairperson:	Robert Solberg	715-829-3138
Supervisors:	Jane Mueller	715-878-4058
	James Rolbiecki	715-379-0087
	Karen Tomesh	715-835-4742
	Jeff White	715-379-0699

Town Board Meetings

3rd Thursday each month at 5:00 PM

Office Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00 AM – 4:00 PM