

CLT Newsletter

Summer 2019

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Boating & Fishing: New for this year! Protecting the water in Crystal Lake Township has always been top priority. But towards that end, there are new state regulations to help thwart invasive species. As of March 21, watercraft users in the state are required to take steps to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. They affect both motorized and non-motorized watercraft, trailers and other conveyances designed to move watercraft. In addition to the existing law requiring all aquatic plants be removed from boats and trailers before launching, the changes specifically require the following, prior to transporting any watercraft over land, even as small as a kayak:

- **Remove all drain plugs from bilges, ballast tanks and live wells.**
- **Drain all water from any live wells and bilges, and remove plants and debris from all watercraft, trailers and other conveyances.**
- **Ensure the watercraft, trailer and any conveyance used to transport the watercraft or trail are free of aquatic organisms, including plants.**

Anyone fishing with live or cut bait or practicing catch-and-release fishing will also need to take precautions. Basically, anglers are prohibited from releasing bait fish in any Michigan waters that the fish didn't originally come from. In other words, any baitfish an angler collects may be used only in the waters where it was originally collected. "It is important to clarify that anglers are allowed to catch and release fish," said Seth Herbst, the DNR's aquatic species and regulatory affairs manager. "Anglers who are catching and releasing fish should only release the fish back into the same water or in a connecting body of water the fish could have reached on its own."

The DNR is hoping these new precautions will help limit invasive species like Asian Carp, zebra and quagga mussels and the New Zealand mudsnail, which can hitchhike from river to river when mud or debris is left on kayaks, canoes and gear. Moving fish from different bodies of water can also help the spread of fish diseases like heterosporis (a parasite of yellow perch) and viral hemorrhagic septicemia virus (VHSV), a serious disease that can affect many fish species. Fish diseases also can be spread to new locations when water carrying parasites or infection is transferred via bilges, live wells or ballast tanks.

To help you comply with this law, visit the free boat washing station at the Mollineaux Road DNR boating access site. (For this, thank you Crystal Lake Watershed Association and the Benzie Conservation District.) For more information including directions, see <http://crystallakewatershed.org/water-quality/boat-wash>. For complete details, search <http://www.michigan.gov/invasives> and click on 'Laws'.

Buildings & Grounds: The township staff continues to make our physical facilities safer, more efficient, and more pleasant for workers and visitors alike. We have new LED lights, new fire-protected storage for files, and a totally cleaned out basement. We thank Jill Marble for employing her amazing cleaning and organizing skills to the situation. The township continues to seek solutions to problems, most notably lack of space and all the problems associated with an aging facility.

Cemeteries: The township has recently done quite a bit of trimming, cutting and grinding of stumps in its continuing efforts to beautify and, overall, better manage the cemeteries. The overarching goal is fewer bushes and more well-placed, well-spaced trees to provide overall aesthetics and ease of maintenance. As always, no plastic, please.

Clean Up Day & Recycling: Two Saturday clean up days are scheduled for 2019. The first was 4 May and the next is **8 to 11 a.m., Sat., 10 Aug.**, at the Frankfort Dow Memorial Airport, at 650 Airport Road. Metal recyclers will be present. See our website for additional details. Please contact the Benzie County Recycling and Solid Waste Department at www.benzieco.net or (231) 882-0554 for special household, hazardous waste and electronic recycling. Are you pulling garlic mustard weed or other invasive species? The dumpster for that disposal is located near the high school, next to the cardboard collection site.

Elections: Reminder that **ALL VOTERS CAN NOW VOTE EARLY VIA ABSENTEE BALLOT**. An Absentee Voter Application gives you the option of choosing to receive a ballot by mail before an election. Then, if you choose to vote in a particular election in person instead of by absentee ballot, simply don't return the application. Please contact Clerk Sue Sullivan if you would like to be placed on the list to automatically receive an application prior to each election [clerk.clt@gmail.com]. Also, voter registration is now available at the township hall up to and including the day of the vote. See "Elections: Information for Voters" at michigan.gov/SOS for instructions on how to register to vote.

Voters went to the polls on May 7th. CLT voters had only one question on the ballot, and they approved the renewal of the Frankfort-Elberta Area Schools Operating Millage Renewal Proposal, 179=yes/43=no. It asked for a 5-year continuation (for 2020-2024) of a rate limitation of 19.7491 mills (or approximately \$20 on each \$1000 assessed on all qualified property.) The current millage was to expire this year.

Another issue will be up for a vote later this summer. On August 6th, 2019 CLT voters will be asked to decide another referendum, this one on **whether to "prohibit all marijuana establishments" in our township**. The exact wording of the ballot will be available on our website, and at the township hall. There will be a public hearing on July 9th, 6 PM in the hour before the regularly scheduled monthly board meeting, public comments and concerns on this issue can be shared.

Fireworks: Previously, the State of Michigan allowed 30 days in a year for "residential" fireworks. When this legislation protecting the use of fireworks went into effect, the law said that smaller government entities, such as townships, could still impose minimal local restrictions, which Crystal Lake Township opted to do. Because there have been so many complaints about the nuisance and abuse of fireworks, Michigan legislators recently significantly cut the number of days fireworks are allowed by state law from 30 days down to 12. As of November 2018, these are now the days and hours when firework usage is allowed by the state:

- Dec. 31 to 1 AM on Jan. 1
- The Saturday and Sunday before Memorial Day until 11:45 PM (but not Monday, actual Memorial Day)
- June 29 - July 4 until 11:45 PM
- Also, July 5 ONLY if that day is a Friday or Saturday, until 11:45 PM
- The Saturday and Sunday before Labor Day until 11:45 PM (but not Monday, actual Labor Day)

HOWEVER, CLT maintains an ordinance that restricts that usage even on those 12 days, as is its statutory prerogative to do. A full, updated 2019 policy on fireworks is available in hardcopy at the township hall or is readily available online at the township website. Check the ordinance for details, but what follows is a summary.

No matter what day of the year, discharge of fireworks is not allowed if

- before 8 AM;
- they result in the inordinate disruption of residents as indicated by the injured party's specific request to desist;
- ignited by person(s) under the influence of alcoholic liquor or a controlled substance, and/or acting in a manner that such behavior would reasonably be judged to jeopardize the health, safety and general welfare of people or property;
- ignited by a minor or, if a minor, not directly supervised by a parent or guardian;
- within 200 feet of a residential building or a vehicle;
- they result in damage or pollution (littering or contamination) to public or private property **including bodies of water;**
- a burn ban is in effect;
- deemed illegal for consumer use;
- on public property;
- within 20 feet of open flame, or something capable of combustion (e.g. gasoline, ignited cooking grill);
- otherwise deemed an imminent danger or threat to public health, safety or welfare.

Taxes: The Summer 2019 tax bills will be mailed 8 July, of 2019, and are due 14 Sept. The Winter 2019 tax bills will be mailed 15 Nov., of 2019, and will be due 14 Feb. Tax bills are not a requirement, only a courtesy. If you do not receive a bill, you are still liable for your tax. **Please contact Jill Brown, CLT Assessor, at assessing.clt@gmail.com with any address edits.** Your cancelled check is your official receipt for your tax payment. If you wish, you may go to bsaonline.com to print a receipt, view assessing and tax information, or make your tax payment via credit card. BS&A will charge a 3-percent convenience fee for the tax payment.