

MARCH 1, 2014

HEIDELBERG HAPPENINGS

Special points of interest:

- Recycling the first Saturday of the month from 8-12 at the Township Building
- Street Sweeping to occur April 16th and April 17th.
- Fire Co. Easter Egg Hunt to be held April 19th

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AGRICULTURAL SECURITY AREA INFORMATION

Agriculture has been and continues to be the predominant land use in Lebanon County and is evident here in Heidelberg Township. Agricultural Security Areas (ASA) are a tool that farmers and municipalities use to promote more permanent and viable farming operations over the long term by strengthening the farming community's sense of security in land use and the right to farm. Agricultural security areas are created by local municipalities in cooperation with individual landowners who voluntarily request their land be placed in an ASA. Municipal officials reserve the right to exclude a parcel from their ASA.

Having land enrolled in an agricultural security area does not restrict a landowner's ability to use his property for non-agricultural development purposes and there is no cost to the landowner. Landowners may remove their land from an ASA via certified notification at any time if the ASA has existed for seven years.

There are benefits to landowners.

1. The municipality agrees to support agriculture by not passing nuisance ordinances which would restrict normal farming operations.

2. State agencies may not condemn a landowner's property without special permission from the State Agricultural Lands Condemnation Approval Board.

3. Landowners who are part of a 500 acre or larger agricultural security area may be eligible to apply to sell a perpetual agricultural conservation easement (or their development rights) through their local Agricultural Land Preservation Program managed by the Lebanon County Conservation District.

4. ASA land owners may qualify for certain reduced interest rate loans such as the Machinery and Equipment Loan Fund and the Small Business First Program.

Eligible Property

1. Noncontiguous farm parcels must be at least 10 acres in size OR have an anticipated yearly gross income of at least \$2,000 from agricultural production of crops, livestock and livestock products on such parcel, or account may be included. The farm tracts added to an existing ASA or needed to create a new 250 acre or larger agricultural security area do not have to be under the same own-

ership or even be located in the same municipality.

2. The property should be viable agricultural land. Cropland, pasture, and woodland can all be included in an agricultural security area.

3. Must have soils conducive to agriculture and be used for the production of crops, livestock, livestock products, horticultural specialties and timber.

4. The ASA parcel does not need to be zoned agricultural.

Agricultural Security Areas make a statement that the intended use of the land is to remain rural and in agriculture.

For more information or to obtain an ASA application forms contact Heidelberg Township at 949-3885 or the Lebanon County Conservation District at 272-3908 ext 4.

Source: PA Farmland Preservation Association; Lebanon County Conservation District; Heidelberg Township. PDA



	Heidelberg Township	County-Wide
Parcels in Ag Security	82 (57 landowners)	971 (751 landowners)
Acres in Ag Security	4,038.649	63,517.2
Parcels in Ag Preservation	11 (13% of county)	148
Acres in Ag Preservation	928.72 (about 5.5%)	17,031.79

Please check the Heidelberg Township website for dates of Fire Company AYCE Breakfast! \$9 Adult \$4 Kids 5 and under Free All money raised benefits the Fire Company!



ON-LOT SEWAGE PROGRAM TO START IN 2015

In 2015, Heidelberg Township will begin implementation of the On-Lot Sewage Disposal Program as required by DEP for those areas with on-lot sewage systems. This program is designed to maintain working on-lot sewage systems to prevent contamination of ground soil and well water. It will be administered by the Lebanon County Planning Department and Sewage Enforcement Officer Gordie Sheetz. Below are some FAQ's about the program:

What are the requirements of the sewage management program?

The municipality's ordinance, establishing a sewage management program, requires property owners with on-lot sewage disposal systems to have their treatment tank(s) (ie. septic or aerobic tank) pumped and inspected every three years by a registered pumper/hauler. The pumper/hauler must submit the Sewage Management Report form after each pumping and inspection along with the administrative fee to the Lebanon County Planning Department.

Why is the municipality implementing a sewage management program?

By adopting a sewage management program, the municipality is ensuring that on-lot systems are operating properly and that the public's health is protected. Because on-lot systems discharge contaminants that may cause disease, it is important that such systems work properly to prevent these contaminants from reaching the surface of the ground and/or the groundwater, where the public's health is at risk. Treatment tanks serve to settle solids and trap scum to prevent clogging of the absorption area (drain field). That's why these accumulated solids and scum must be pumped

out regularly to ensure proper operation of the system.

An inspection of the system helps to ensure that the system is operating properly and that no malfunction is evident. On-lot systems that are malfunctioning may require more frequent pumping, cleaning and unclogging of lines, and replacement of system components.

Why should I comply with this requirement?

First of all, it is the law. The municipality has enacted an ordinance establishing the sewage management program, and penalties are provided for those who do not comply.

However, there are numerous benefits associated with a sewage management program. These include the following:

- Maintains or improves the performance of on-lot systems.
- Extends the useful life of a system and generally can help to reduce the costs associated with repairs and/or replacements.
- Helps to prevent system malfunctions. Malfunctioning on-lot systems can affect public health and may lead to the need for costly community sewage collection and treatment systems (which may inadvertently promote unwanted development).
- Can help to maintain existing property values and ease of property transfers.
- Provides a less costly manner of sewage disposal (pumping tanks every three years) compared to monthly sewer bills if the home or building were connected instead to a public community sewage collection and treatment system.

▫ Helps to prevent community-wide problems, such as health concerns or reduced property values because of malfunctioning on-lot sewage systems.

What happens if I recently had my tank pumped?

To maintain accurate records of compliance with the required three-year schedule, the municipality and the Lebanon County Planning Department will only recognize pumping and inspection in compliance with the ordinance if it is done in the year assigned. Treatment tank pumping performed in years other than the required year does not exempt the resident from pumping and filing a report in the year required by the municipality. Therefore, property owners should make plans to pump and inspect their on-lot systems in the year assigned unless necessary for the proper functioning of the system.

However, we recognize that some property owners may have had their systems built, repaired, pumped, or inspected within the last year. If you fall in one of these categories, contact the Lebanon County Planning Department to provide proof of this activity and to ensure your system is on track with requirements for the next pumping/inspection cycle. You will be given an exemption for this pumping/inspection cycle if you can show proof (receipt from pumper/hauler or completed report form) that your on-lot system has been pumped/inspected within the last year. This exemption will only be provided for the first cycle and in limited cases in cycles after that, so be prepared to follow the municipality's schedule thereafter.

ON-LOT (CONT'D)

What if . . .

-my on-lot sewage system is only used part-time during the year?

Although, in general, the three-year pumping and inspection requirements must be met, the municipality and the Lebanon County Planning Department will consider valid requests with justification from property owners for a reduction in pumping frequency. We offer an alternative to pumping which is having a qualified inspector (someone from the pumper/hauler list) come out to evaluate the depth of solids and scum in the treatment tank(s). If the total depth of solids and scum is less than 1/3 the total capacity of the tank you would qualify for an exemption from the current pumping cycle. We recommend having your tanks pumped if you are close to 1/3 capacity and have a small size tank. You must complete an Exemption Application; send it along with the form for evaluating the solids and scum in treatment tanks (which the pumper/haulers must fill out) and the administrative fee to our department. Likewise, we are also authorized to increase the pumping frequency of on-lot system treatment tanks on properties for good cause, such as an undersized treatment tank, an above average solids buildup in the tank, use of a garbage disposal in the home or building, or a malfunctioning system.

-I am the only person living at my house?

As explained above, the municipality and the Lebanon County Planning Department will consider valid requests with justification from property owners for a reduction in pumping frequency. Again, you may qualify for an exemption by having a pumper/hauler evaluate the depth of solids and scum in the treatment tank (see above).

-I have a holding tank, outhouse, or cesspool?

Any system within the municipality is required to be pumped and inspected.

-I have vacant land with no buildings or on-lot sewage systems?

Contact the Lebanon County Planning Department. You must complete an exemption form stating that no on-lot sewage systems or buildings are present on the property. We will ask permission to field check your property to verify the information provided. Our department will then remove your property from the database. In the future, when the property is developed, you will be re-entered into the database and will be required to comply with the ordinance and fall into the regular three year cycle of the municipality.

-I have an abandoned house and on-lot sewage system?

It is recommended that you properly abandon the on-lot sewage system so you will not have to pump the treatment tank again the next cycle. Proper abandonment of an on-lot system would include removal and proper disposal of sewage and solids from all components and then either completely remove the tank(s) or collapse the tank top and at least one side and fill any voids with inert, clean material to the surface of the ground. Please notify the Sewage Enforcement Officer so he may verify this activity.

-I rent or lease the property?

The property owner (your landlord) is required to arrange for the pumping and inspection of the treatment tank(s) or face the enforcement consequences of the sewage management program ordinance

As this program comes closer to its start date, there will be further information distributed. If there is enough interested, the Township may hold an information night sometime in fall of 2014 so all residents affected by the program may ask questions and gather as much information as they need. Should you have any immediate questions, please call the Lebanon County Planning Department at 717-228-4444.



***First day of
Spring is
March 20th.
Get out and
enjoy the
season of
renewal!***

BOY SCOUT TROOP 417 NEWS

In November, Heidelberg Township Boy Scout Troop 417 collected 650 pounds of food during Scouting for Hunger Collection. The food collected was donated to the Lebanon County Christian Ministries food bank on November 9th. What a fantastic effort!!

The annual spaghetti Dinner fundraiser for Troop 417 will be held on March 15th at St Paul's UCC social hall from 4-7pm. Cost is \$7 for adults and \$4 for children 10-under. Take-out available is available!! Come out and support your local Boy Scout Troop.

HEIDELBERG HAPPENINGS

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Please email
htsewer@comcast.net
with any Township
news ideas
or events.

MEETING DATES FOR 2014

Look for the many exciting happenings around your community in the coming year. If you wish to be involved or attend a Township meeting, below is the list of scheduled dates for 2014.

Board of Supervisors: Second and Fourth Tuesday of the Month - 7:00pm

(No second meeting in November)

Sewer Workshop: Third Thursday of the Month - 6:30pm

Planning Commission: Third Monday of the Month - 7:00pm

Municipal Authority: Third Wednesday of the Month - 7:00pm

Zoning Hearing Board: Fourth Wednesday of the Month - 7:00pm if needed

Recreation Association: Second Monday of the Month - 7:00pm if needed

Please note that any necessary meeting date changes will be advertised in the Lebanon Daily News.

