SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP

The Sycamore Quarterly

WINTER 2026



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Fire Chief Rob Penny

Chief Penny's Legacy: 51 Years of Service & New Leadership Ahead

After more than five decades of dedicated service to the residents of Sycamore Township, Fire Chief Rob Penny is retiring, bringing to a close an extraordinary 51-year career in fire and emergency medical services. A 1975 graduate of Sycamore High School, he began his journey with the Sycamore-Montgomery Fire Department. Chief Penny was a founding member of the Sycamore Township Fire Department, joining the newly established department as Assistant Chief when it was created in 1995. Over his career, he advanced through the ranks of Lieutenant, Captain, Assistant Chief, and ultimately Fire Chief, a position he assumed in 2014.

During his tenure, Chief Penny helped shape the future of the organization by hiring the majority of the department's current full-time firefighters and promoting numerous officers who continue to lead today. He championed innovations that improved both firefighter safety and patient care, including the implementation of the department's pre-hospital 12-lead EKG program and the development of an incident command accountability system used during emergency operations.

When Chief Penny began his career in the Sycamore-Montgomery Fire Department in 1975, firefighters responded to approximately 350 calls annually. Today, the Sycamore Township Fire Department answers more than 5,000 calls each year! Through every stage of that growth, Chief Penny remained committed to ensuring that Sycamore Township residents received the highest quality fire and emergency medical services possible.

As we express our gratitude for Chief Penny's leadership, service, and dedication, we also look forward to the future. The Township is pleased to introduce the next generation of Fire Department leadership: our new Fire Chief Kelby Thoreson and Assistant Fire Chief Chris Ramsey.

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ELECTED OFFICIALS



Tom Weidman
Chairman of the Board of Trustees



Tracy Kellums
Vice-Chairman



Tracy Schwegmann
Trustee



Jonathan T. Deters
Fiscal Officer

ADMINISTRATION

Greg Bickford, Administrator
513-792-7254 – gbickford@sycamoretownship.org

Beth Gunderson, Assistant Administrator/HR Manager
513-792-7248 – bgunderson@sycamoretownship.org

Mary Tenorio, Finance Director
513-792-7256 – mtenorio@sycamoretownship.org

Sycamore Township Administrative Offices
513-791-8447 – info@sycamoretownship.org
www.sycamoretownship.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Brush Chipping Program
December 5
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Behind Township Administration Building
8540 Kenwood Road

Dillonville Luminaria
December 12
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Bechtold Pavilion
4312 Sycamore Road.

Curbside Leaf Collection Ends
December 14

Christmas Tree Drop Off Sites
December 26 – January 18
Bechtold Park
4312 Sycamore Road
McDaniel Sports Complex
11797 Solzman Road

Letter from the Vice Chairman

WOW! What a long, hot summer and fall! It is hard to believe that I am writing the winter newsletter article while it is 80 degrees outside but, believe it or not, snow is right around the corner.

As this year's road projects are finishing up, our road crews are preparing for the next seasonal transition. Curbside leaf collection for our residents began on October 13 and will continue until December 14. Once leaf season ends, crews will quickly convert the trucks by fitting them with salt machines and snowplows, ensuring we are ready to clear the roads of ice and snow. Our dedicated, hard-working road crews will be on the job day and night this winter to keep roads in your neighborhood clear. You can help by watching the forecast and remembering to park your car in the driveway instead of on the street when inclement weather is on its way.

December brings a couple of important dates to remember. The last Monthly Brush Chipping of the season will take place on Saturday, December 5th from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. behind the Township Administration Building at 8540 Kenwood Road. This popular program for residents will then break for the winter, returning the first weekend in April 2027. One of my favorite Sycamore Township events, the Dillonvale Luminaria, returns to Bechtold Park on Saturday, December 12th. This is always a fun event and a great way to get the family into the holiday spirit! Come out and see Santa, treat yourself to cookies and hot chocolate, and enjoy a hayride through Dillonvale to see all of the Christmas lights. I hope to see you there!

I want you to know that your Trustees provide you with these services and opportunities, along with well-maintained roads and public parks, local zoning, administration, sheriff protection, and an outstanding fire department, while being fiscally responsible. We know it is expensive to fill your tank or go to the grocery store to feed your family, and we don't want to add to that burden. We have the lowest Township taxes in the county while supplying some of the best services. There has not been a Sycamore Township tax levy on the ballot for over 20 years, and we are determined not to have one anytime soon. The Township is fiscally strong, and that comes from strong leadership and dedicated employees who are committed to serving our residents diligently while still being prudent.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to Chief Penny for over 50 years in the fire service and his 31 years of dedication to Sycamore Township. Best wishes in your retirement, and thank you, Chief Penny! At the same time, I would like to congratulate our newly appointed Fire Chief Kelby Thoreson and Assistant Chief Chris Ramsey on their promotions. Both Kelby and Chris have been promoted from within and have given the Township many years of dedicated service. Congratulations, Gentlemen!

On behalf of my fellow Trustees, Tom Weidman and Tracy Schwegmann, and our Fiscal Officer Jon Deters, we would like to wish you all a safe and happy holiday season, a peaceful and Merry Christmas, and a prosperous New Year. If there is anything we can do for you, or if you have any questions, please contact us at 513-791-8447 or at info@sycamoretownship.org.

Remember, "There's More In Sycamore"!

Tracy Kellums
Vice Chairman, Board of Trustees

Dillonvale Luminaria Returns December 12!

Join Sycamore Township for the beloved Dillonvale Luminaria on Saturday, December 12, 2026, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Bechtold Park Pavilion, 4312 Sycamore Rd.

Help light up Dillonvale by displaying luminaria along the sidewalks in front of your home. Luminaria kits can be ordered through Ace Hardware in the Dillonvale Shopping Center by calling 513-984-4447.





Make plans for a festive evening featuring visits with Santa Claus, a hayride through Dillonvale to enjoy holiday lights and decorations, complimentary refreshments courtesy of Dillonvale IGA, and a community celebration filled with holiday spirit!

Think your home has the best holiday display? Three winning homes will receive prizes from local businesses and be featured on the Township website!

Bring your family, gather your neighbors, and help make Dillonvale shine for the holidays!

Special thanks to Sunbelt Rentals for their generous support of this event.





Brought to you by:

Sycamore Township

Special thanks to our Sponsors

SUNBELT RENTALS

DILLONVALE IGA

ACE Hardware

Call 513-984-4447 today to order your Luminaria Kit While Supplies Last!



Assistant Chief Chris Ramsey
& Fire Chief Kelby Thoreson

Emergency: 911

Sycamore Township
Fire Department: 513-792-8565

Chief Thoreson
kthoreson@sycamoretownship.org

Assistant Chief Ramsey
cramsey@sycamoretownship.org



Fiscal Officer Jon Deters, and Trustees Tracy Schwegmann, Tom Weidman, and Tracy Kellums congratulate Chief Penny on his retirement. Chief Penny was recognized with a resolution honoring his 51 years in the fire service and wishing him well in retirement at the November 4, 2026, Trustee Meeting.

(Article Continued from Page 1)

Chief Thoreson has been with the Sycamore Township Fire Department since 2004. Throughout his career, he has advanced through the ranks, gaining extensive experience in fire department operations, personnel management, policy development, strategic planning, and administrative leadership. His involvement in both operational and administrative responsibilities has provided him with a well-rounded understanding of the department's needs and challenges. This experience has helped shape his leadership approach, emphasizing operational efficiency, fiscal responsibility, firefighter safety, and continuous improvement in services provided to the community.

First sworn in at the Rossmoyne Fire Department in 1993, hired by the Township in 1998, and promoted to Lieutenant in 2019, Chris Ramsey brings a wealth of knowledge to his new role as Assistant Chief. He is an experienced line officer with broad leadership experience and has also served as the department's software administrator for the past 15 years.



Members of the Sycamore Township Fire Department attended the November 4th Trustee Meeting to honor Chief Penny.

Assistant Chief Ramsey is a detail-oriented contributor to Fire Department policies and says it is his goal "to audit systems to maximize efficiencies within the department to provide top-level, cost-effective service to our community."

As we wish Chief Penny well in his retirement, we look forward to building upon the strong foundation he leaves behind. Congratulations to Fire Chief Thoreson and Assistant Chief Ramsey, who will continue the department's proud tradition of excellence and service to the community.

Police & Crime Prevention



Lt. Brian C. Sovern
District Three Commander

Hamilton County
Sheriff's Office 513-683-3444

Fire & Police Emergency 911

Non-Emergency
Dispatch 513-825-2280



Winter is nearly here, complete with holiday shopping, family gatherings, and dramatic weather changes!

If you are making a trip to the Kenwood Town Centre or your favorite place to shop, please remember to secure valuables out of sight if you need to leave things in your car.

With colder, wetter weather on the horizon, here are some things you can do now before the cold arrives in earnest to help with driving in winter conditions:

- Check your wipers and washer fluid. Replace worn or brittle wiper blades and keep washer fluid topped off to maintain clear visibility during rain, snow, and road-salt season.
- Inspect your tires. Make sure tires have adequate tread, proper inflation, and even wear. Cold temperatures can lower tire pressure, and worn tires reduce traction and increase stopping distances on wet, snowy, or icy roads.
- Slow down in wet or wintry conditions. Bridges and overpasses can freeze before other road surfaces, creating unexpected icy spots. Even after snow melts during the day, moisture can refreeze overnight and make roads slippery.

In anticipation of really bad weather days, here is a reminder of the Snow Advisory Levels and what those mean to Ohio drivers:

Level 1 — Advisory
- Roads are hazardous due to blowing/drifting snow or ice.
- Drivers should use caution; travel is not restricted.
- Conditions may worsen as temperatures drop.

Level 2 — Warning
- Roads are very hazardous with blowing snow, ice, or low visibility.
- Only those who feel it is necessary to travel should do so.
- Employers may require workers to check in about reporting to work.
- Nonessential travel may lead to prosecution in some counties.

Level 3 — Emergency
- Roads are closed to all non emergency personnel.
- Travel is prohibited unless absolutely necessary (e.g., medical emergencies).
- Violators may be subject to arrest or prosecution.

Hopefully, you find this information helpful. The Sheriff's Office wishes everyone a safe and happy holiday season.

Planning & Zoning



Harry L. Holbert Jr.
Planning & Zoning Admin.
513-792-7252
hholbert@sycamoretownship.org

As winter approaches, the Sycamore Township Planning & Zoning Department encourages residents and business owners to prepare their properties for the colder months while planning for upcoming projects. Whether you are considering a home improvement, installing a fence or shed, updating a commercial property, or exploring a new development, our department is here to help you understand applicable zoning requirements and navigate the review process. A little preparation now can help prevent delays, protect property values, and contribute to a safe, attractive community throughout the winter season.

WINTER PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

Cold temperatures, snow, and ice can create challenges for homeowners and property managers. Keep these seasonal reminders in mind:

- Keep properties clean and orderly. Secure loose outdoor items and remove debris that could become a hazard in winter weather.
- Maintain buildings and structures. Check roofs, gutters, exterior walls, and other areas for damage that may worsen during freezing temperatures.
- Store equipment appropriately. Keep outdoor equipment, materials, and refuse in appropriate locations.
- Maintain safe access. Keep entrances, walkways, and driveways clear of snow and ice, and avoid obstructing visibility or access.
- Address property concerns promptly. Report potential property maintenance or zoning issues through the Township's official service request channels.

For questions about property maintenance requirements, consult the Township's Property Maintenance Code or contact Planning & Zoning before beginning corrective work.

PLANNING A WINTER OR SPRING PROJECT?

Thinking about making improvements to your property? Winter is a great time to research requirements and prepare your plans before construction season begins.

Projects that may require zoning review or a zoning certificate include:

- Home additions, porches, and decks
- Fences, sheds, and other accessory structures
- Swimming pools
- New residential construction
- Commercial exterior renovations and signage
- Certain changes in property use or site development

Requirements vary by project and property. Contact Planning & Zoning at 513-792-7250 to review requirements and determine what approvals are needed before purchasing materials or starting work. Planning ahead helps make the application process smoother and reduces the risk of costly changes later.

STAY INFORMED

Residents are encouraged to follow Township notices, agendas, and public meetings to stay informed about development projects and zoning matters affecting the community. Zoning information, applications, and meeting updates are posted on our website. You can also sign up to have meeting agendas emailed directly to your inbox.

BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY, TOGETHER

Thank you for helping keep Sycamore Township a welcoming, well-maintained, and thriving community.

Sycamore Township Planning & Zoning Department

Plan responsibly. Build thoughtfully. Grow together.

Maintenance Department



Steve Reutelshofer, Superintendent
513-792-7258
sreutelshofer@sycamoretownship.org

SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP PREPARES FOR WINTER WEATHER WITH PROACTIVE SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL PLAN

As winter approaches, Sycamore Township's Maintenance Department is preparing to keep local roads safe and clear during snow and ice events. Through proactive road treatments, strategically located salt storage facilities, and the dedication of its maintenance crews, the township is working to improve winter road safety and respond efficiently when severe weather strikes.

INNOVATIVE TREATMENTS HELP FIGHT SNOW AND ICE

When winter weather is in the forecast, Sycamore Township maintenance crews pre-treat roadways with a liquid mixture of salt brine and beet juice. This environmentally conscious treatment helps prevent snow and ice from bonding to the pavement, making it easier for crews to clear the roads when conditions deteriorate.

The treatment offers several benefits, including reduced cleanup time, less fuel and salt consumption, fewer equipment-related costs, and decreased wear and tear on Township vehicles and machinery. This process is also an economical tool for improving winter maintenance operations while reducing environmental impact.



SALT DOME

STRATEGIC SALT STORAGE SUPPORTS FASTER RESPONSE TIMES

To help crews respond quickly across the community, Sycamore Township maintains two salt domes at key locations. One is located at the Administrative Complex on Kenwood Road and serves the southern portion of the Township. The second is at Robert L. Schuler Sports Complex on Deerfield Road and serves the northern portion. These locations help reduce response times and allow maintenance crews to treat roadways more efficiently during winter storms. Throughout every snow and ice event, the safety of the traveling public remains the township's top priority.

RESIDENTS CAN HELP KEEP ROADS CLEAR

Township officials are asking residents to take a few important steps when snow or ice is expected.

- Move vehicles off the street. Parking in driveways or other permitted off-street locations allows plow operators to clear roads from curb to curb.
- Keep driveway snow out of the street. Residents should not shovel, plow, or blow snow from their driveways into the roadway, where it can create additional hazards for motorists.

These simple actions help crews work more effectively and make neighborhood streets safer for everyone.

Maintenance Crews Work Throughout the Winter

Snow and ice removal is just one part of the Maintenance Department's year-round responsibilities. Township maintenance staff continue working throughout the winter to care for local infrastructure and perform essential maintenance duties across the community.

When severe weather arrives, residents can count on crews working hard to keep roads as safe and clear as conditions allow.

The department takes pride in its work and its commitment to serving Sycamore Township residents.

FRIENDLY REMINDERS

SAVE THE DATE!

Dillonvale Luminaria
Bechtold Park
December 12, 2026



SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP

8540 Kenwood Road
Sycamore Twp., Ohio 45236

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There's More in Sycamore!

Curbside Leaf Collection End Date

Curbside leaf collection ends the week of **December 14th**. All leaves must be raked to the curb by 8:00 a.m. on Monday, December 14th for guaranteed pickup.



Snow Removal

Please see page 7 for information on Sycamore Township's winter snow removal preparations. During winter weather events, residents can help our road crews work safely and efficiently by removing vehicles from the street, allowing crews to treat and plow roads curb to curb.

