



# THE BINGHAM FARMS POST

Winter, 2009

## MDOT INITIATES NEW WINTER ROAD MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

How are your winter driving skills? They may be put to the test this winter.

MDOT has announced modifications to its snow cleanup procedures to control rising costs and shrinking resources. This means that some state trunklines (US and M- routes) may take longer to be cleared following a snow-storm.

State highways throughout Michigan are now designated either Priority Service Level 1 (Orange Routes) or Level II (Blue Routes). Freeways and other heavily traveled roads (such as Telegraph Rd.) are designated Orange Routes

The major difference between Orange and Blue routes is the level of service. Orange Routes will continue to be cleared even if overtime is incurred.

Blue routes (Woodward Ave., Square Lake Road & Orchard Lake Road) however, will be cleared only during the normal workday (7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.). When a storm hits outside those hours, clearing will be mini-

mized.

According to MDOT, Blue designated routes will be passable with a minimum of one lane open in each direction. The remainder of the snow and ice will be cleared as soon as possible without working overtime.



State Transportation Director Kirk Steudle says that "MDOT and its contract agencies will have all available staff and equipment working around-the-clock to clear snow and ice from all state highways and make them safe."

A word of caution. When a major storm hits, road conditions could be treacherous as crews cannot be everywhere. This means drivers must drive responsibly and according to conditions. That means slowing down.

It is estimated that the State will save millions of dollars in overtime costs with this new policy.

## WINTER MAINTENANCE REMINDERS

What a wild start to winter.

The last big storm emphasized the need for residents to comply with the Village ordinance of not plowing their snow across the road and dumping it on to the neighbor's property. Most residents have trained their snow removal contractors to abide by this law.

Plowing snow across a roadway leaves what are called "snow rows". These deposits create a safety problem for motorists and creates more work for the Village contractor.

The Village is not alone enforcing this law. The Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) has encountered similar problems. There have been times that roads had to be plowed a second time and delayed snow removal in other communities.



The practice is illegal (Michigan Vehicle Code 257.677a) and it can be costly. Property owners can be ticketed and fined.

The Village does not like to issue tickets to property owners but will, if necessary.

Safety is the primary concern of the Village. Help out. Have your snow plow contractor help out too. Keep the snow on your property.

## DIGITAL TRANSITION COMING FEBRUARY 18, 2009

Tired of listening to the Public Service Announcements about the digital transition? This will be the last time you will see it in this newsletter. Promise.

On February 17, 2009, the major broadcasters will stop sending TV signals on the analog spectrum and will revert solely to the digital tier.

Does this mean I **have to buy a new TV?** Not necessarily. It depends on several conditions. If you subscribe to a cable, internet or satellite TV provider, you're all set. Nothing should change.

If you still rely on rabbit ears to

receive TV signals, then you need to purchase a converter box. The cost for these boxes start at \$40. Major retailers such as Best Buy, Wal-Mart etc. carry the boxes.



The National Telecommunications & Information Administration is offering each household two coupons, worth \$40 each to offset the costs for eligible conversion boxes. These boxes are **not** intended

**Cont. on Pg. 4**

### VILLAGE COUNCIL MEETINGS 2009

January 26  
February 25  
March 24

Meetings begin at 8:00 p.m.

## YEAR END RESULTS ARE IN WEST NILE VIRUS HANGS TOUGH

## ECONOMIC WOES - VILLAGE FEELS THE PINCH

The statistics are in regarding human cases of the West Nile Virus in 2008. Seventeen cases have been reported state-wide, fortunately none in Oakland County

Last year, there were 30 human cases reported in Michigan but no deaths reported.

The height of West Nile cases was in 2002 with 644 cases reported and 51 people deaths.

Prevention measures are working. The best advice — keep doing what you are doing.

Most people infected with West Nile do not show any symptoms. Twenty percent however, have flu-like symptoms, including fever, fatigue, headache and muscle or joint pain. Less than 1% of those infected become severely ill.

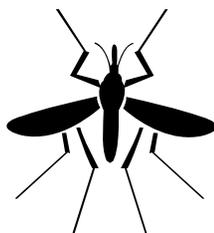
The Oakland County Health Dept. maintains that prevention is the best method to combat the virus. Specifically,

- ◆ Reduce areas where mosquitoes breed,
- ◆ Repel to protect against mosquitoes, and
- ◆ Report potential mosquito breeding areas.

Other measures that can reduce

the risk of contracting the virus include:

- ◆ Repair all holes in window and screens to keep mosquitoes out of your home.
- ◆ Empty water from mosquito breeding sites such as buckets, barrels, cans, old tires, or similar sites.
- ◆ Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are most active (dawn and dusk).
- ◆ Wear light colored, long-sleeved shirts and long pants when out doors.
- ◆ Apply insect repellants that contain the active ingredient DEET to exposed skin or clothing. Always follow the manufacturer's directions for use. (Avoid applying repellent containing DEET to children less than two years of age.)



For updates on West Nile Virus, log on to the state or county website at:

[www.michigan.gov/westnilevirus](http://www.michigan.gov/westnilevirus)  
or  
[www.oakgov.com](http://www.oakgov.com)

It appears that no one is immune to the economic situation in Michigan and that includes the Village.

- ◆ The State continues to reduce its funding to local municipalities.
- ◆ Cost of services continues to rise.
- ◆ Cost of road projects has skyrocketed.
- ◆ Home values are falling for the first time in decades.



Amidst all the uncertainty and reduced funding, the Village has been able to maintain its 6.8 millage rate for more than seven years.

The largest budget expenditure is the cost of reconstructing the Village's 25 year old roads.

The Village began the reconstruction program in 2000. The original plan included two road reconstruction projects each year. However, due to the escalation in costs fiscal constraints, the Village will do only one road per year.

Old Orchard Trail is the latest project. After this project is completed, the three remaining projects, (Shagwood, Fromm and Timber Trail) will be scheduled for 2009-2011.

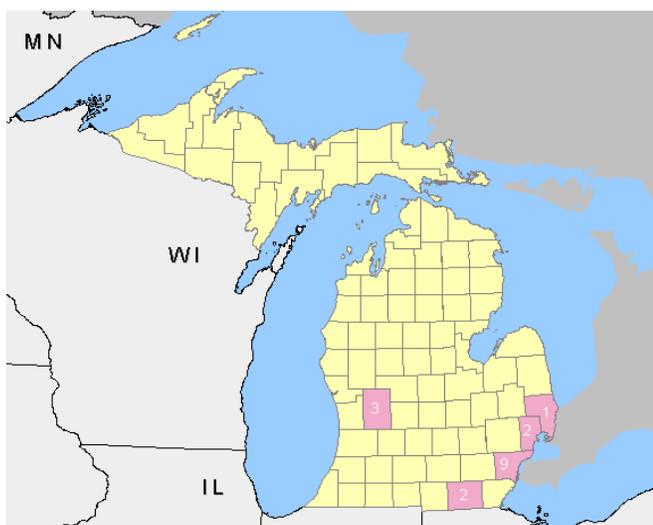
To put the project cost in perspective, the Old Orchard Trail project was estimated at \$160,000. Due to the rapid rise in the cost of materials, especially asphalt, the bid came in at \$243,000. Even though gasoline prices have fallen, asphalt pricing has not followed.

The Village has taken steps to control costs. In the past the Village's contract engineers, AEW, handled all road maintenance and drainage issues. Last year, the Village entered into an agreement with Beverly Hills which will now handle the smaller projects at a considerable savings.

Other Village programs and services are not impacted.

Counties reporting human cases of West Nile Virus

Kent	3
Lenawee	2
Macomb	2
St. Clair	1
Wayne	9



## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Mary Jane Bauer

Our introduction to winter was much earlier than we had anticipated. The first dumping of snow this season came before we had done the final mowing to mulch the leaves and the last of the windfall apples. Thank goodness for the slight respite so that we could finish up the yard work. We want to thank you for decorating your houses, yards and businesses for Christmas, Chanukah and the winter solstice. The darkest evenings of the winter were cheered and brightened by your participation. Driving home in the evening was a pleasure.

Speaking of snow, the plows must maintain a certain speed to plow effectively. Snow that is piled on the street surface by your private plowing service can freeze. The icy lumps make the plow blade jump and can cause structural damage to the truck. With this in mind, the plow trucks will generally avoid large piles of snow on the pavement and the result is a poorly plowed street. Remember that the snow that falls on your property is yours and cannot be donated to your neighbor's property.

The elections are now well behind us. Happy or not, there is no better country on this earth than ours and we

must fully support the new administration. Our country and state are now plagued with financial problems. The survival of our automobile companies, their suppliers and the jobs of their white collar and blue collar employees are yet to be determined.

We pray for the support of the almighty to help everyone weather through. Be proactive and don't be afraid to inform our representatives of your support or concern for upcoming legislation.

Just a word of caution. It may be tempting, but as irritated as we may become with the growing herd of deer, please remember, no type of hunting is allowed in the Village.

Finally, we are always looking for volunteers willing to be appointed to commissions and advisory boards. A new application form has been designed for prospective applicants. It may be found on Pages 5-6 in this newsletter. Just cut it out and send the completed form to the Village office. You may not be called to serve immediately, but your availability is important to us.

## MOBILE WATCH DOES IT AGAIN!

As we get close to the end of each year, Bingham Farms Mobile Watch counts the Village tours taken so far in the year, estimates what the balance of the year will yield, and challenges itself to improve on the previous year's performance.

This year there was no need to do all that work. With an active membership in 2008 including several new members, we could see by early December that we will beat the last year by over 25%!

So we celebrated the feat at our December Holidayfest – complete with champagne and hot and cold hors d'oeuvres. We always have a Holidayfest, but we are not usually able to celebrate a new touring record. You can thank any Mobile Watch member for that!

Want to join the fun and help your Village? Call Dick Holloway at 248.644.2622 for more information or drop in as a guest at the Bingham Woods Clubhouse on the first Wednesday evening of the month at 7:30 pm.

Even if it is another Holidayfest, you will still be home by nine.



By Bingham Farms Mobile Watch

## REMINDERS TO KEEP YOU AND YOUR BELONGINGS SAFE

The holidays are over but it's no time to stop protecting yourself. Thieves rarely take a break.

According to our Police Chief, Pat Brown, thieves are always looking for that opportunity to steal whether from a home or a business.

In the past two months in Beverly Hills, several homes were broken into and personal items were taken.

Keep an eye out for anything out of the ordinary, like a slow moving vehicle that may be canvassing a neighborhood.

If a stranger rings the doorbell and asks for someone, don't let them in. Immediately call police dispatch at

248.626.5444. Give them a description. Often the thieves will just go to another home looking for an opportunity.

If you're in a parking lot, look around. Keep your personal items close to you. Have your keys already out before you get to your car.

Above all, don't leave GPS systems in easy view. It takes just a few seconds for a thief to break in and these items are prime targets.



**UPCOMING VILLAGE EVENTS**

**June, 2008**  
**Large Item Pick Up**

Watch for details in the Spring Edition of the Bingham Farms Post and on the Village website at [www.binghamfarms.org](http://www.binghamfarms.org)



## ***NEW LIBRARY LOAN POLICY***

A change in a library loan policy will impact Bingham Farms residents.

In the past, village residents were able to reserve books at both the Baldwin Library in Birmingham and the Bloomfield Twp. library at Lone Pine & Telegraph.



Due to the dramatic increase in the overall number of reserve requests, Bloomfield Twp. Library has decided to terminate hold privileges to Baldwin patrons. This is the only service that has been curtailed. Village residents continue to have all other borrowing privileges.

This move is fairly typical of current library practices, according to Baldwin Library Director, Marti Custer. "The Baldwin Library has weighted their holds for almost 4 years, pushing township borrowers to the bottom of the list".

The good news is that many people continue to use the library, even in the age of the internet.

For new residents, library cards must be obtained from the Baldwin Library in Birmingham. Once obtained, the card is accepted at the Bloomfield Township Library.

The Village pays approximately \$257 per household per year for resident services at the Baldwin Library.

## ***CLEAN WATER IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY***

Where pollution is concerned, every home is waterfront property. Stormwater runoff from lawns, gardens, driveway and rooftops contributes to the pollution of the Rouge River and other waterways.

Rainwater and water from sprinkler systems push soil, fertilizer, oil, leaves and grass clippings into drains and open ditches. These products ultimately into a waterway.



To reduce the impact, try mulching your leaves with your mower. The mulch can be used around ornamental plants, shrubs and trees.

Ask your landscape contractor to use slow release fertilizers. Sweep up excess fertilizer that has spilled onto a driveway or other hard surface. Avoid weed-and-feed combination products as they often can add unnecessary herbicides.

When planning new gardens or planting new trees use native trees and shrubs. Look for disease-resistant plantings.

Everyone benefits from clean waterways.

**(Cont. from Pg. 1-Digital Transition)**

for analog TVs connected to a **paid provider.**

Don't forget those TVs that may be in the basement or study.

For more information log on to

[www.dtvanswers.com](http://www.dtvanswers.com)  
or  
[www.ntia.doc.gov](http://www.ntia.doc.gov)

You may also contact the FCC to receive the free coupons at

1-888-CALL-FCC  
(1-888-225-5322)

## ***UPCOMING ELECTIONS***

And you thought elections were over for at least four more years. Not quite so fast.

The Village Annual Elections will be held in September, 2009. At this time, registered voters in Bingham Farms will vote for Village President and three trustees.

In order to run these elections, the clerk needs hearty election inspectors who can last a long, arduous day. The day begins at 6:30 a.m. and finishes up around 8:45 p.m. The village has one precinct and four inspectors are needed to adequately man the polls.

Elections inspectors are paid.

State law requires a voter to put in writing his/her request to be placed on the Permanent Absentee Ballot List,

A form may be accessed from the Village website. Just log on to [www.binghamfarms.org](http://www.binghamfarms.org) and click on the link "Volunteer Application". Fill out the form and mail to Southfield Twp. at the address provided.

## ***FIRE DEPT. EXPANDS COVERAGE***

The Franklin Bingham Fire Dept. consists of predominantly volunteers - men and women with a desire to give back.

In an effort to improve response times in the overnight hours, Chief Tony Averbuch has added one additional firefighter on overnight coverage. The Chief says he hopes this added manpower will reduce overnight response times by 50%. "With the added manpower, early morning response times should go down to 4-5 minutes."



The Chief indicated that the Fire Dept. averages about 5-6 calls per month during the hours of 10 p.m. and 7 a.m.

Village of Bingham Farms
Village Clerk's Office
24255 W. Thirteen Mile Rd. Ste. 190
Bingham Farms, MI 48025
248.644.0044

(Return Completed Application to Above Address)

APPLICATION FOR BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Thank you for your interest in serving on an Advisory Board or Committee. The purpose of this form is to provide the President and Village Trustees with basic information about residents considered for appointment.

(PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Mr./Mrs./Ms): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you lived continuously in the Village of Bingham Farms? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a registered voter in Bingham Farms? Yes No

Are you related to an elected official or employee of the Village? Yes No

What is your relationship to elected official or employee? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been convicted for anything other than a minor traffic violation? Yes No

Select which Board(s) you wish to apply for in the order of your preference: 1= First Choice 2=Second Choice

- \_\_\_ Design Review Board
\_\_\_ Planning Commission
\_\_\_ Cable Board

Professional Qualifications and/or Work Experience:

Three horizontal lines for text entry.

Community Activities and/or Other Experience:

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Educational Background:

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References (Please list name and address):

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Indicate reasons for desiring to serve:

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Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Your application will be kept on file for 2 years

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

**Received by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## HHW DROP OFF FACILITIES OPEN YEAR ROUND

Last year, the Village entered into an Agreement with SOCRRA (South Oakland County Resource Recovery Authority) to provide Village residents the ability to drop off household hazardous waste year round. Used electronic equipment is also accepted.

Electronic equipment accepted includes: TVs, computers (remember to purge the hard drive of any personal material), radios, camcorders, CD players and old telephones. Console TVs (in wooden cabinets) are **not accepted**.

Also, TVs are expensive to recycle. SOCRRA pays \$25 to the recycling company for each TV. An alternative might be

- ♦ Asking the retailer to take the old TV when you are purchasing a new one
- ♦ Donate it to charity (if it's in good condition).

With regard to household paints, SOCRRA accepts oil-based paints. While latex-paint is accepted, SOCRRA recommends drying the paint and placing it in your regular trash. To dry the paint, follow these easy directions.



1. Dry the latex paint in a well ventilated area, away from children and pets.
2. Add absorbent material such as kitty litter or sawdust to help absorb the moisture.
3. The dried paint can be placed in your regular trash.
4. The empty container can be placed in the recycling bin with the lid off.

The SOCCRRA facility is located on Coolidge Highway, between Fourteen Mile & Maple Roads.

An appointment is necessary. Call 248.288.5153. Don't forget to bring a license or other proof of residency.

## TOUGH TIMES FOR RECYCLERS

The tough economic times have hit the recycling industry too. Trying to keep "green" is getting quite expensive.

The market for recyclables is being pummeled. As demand has fallen, so have the prices.

Waste Management, a rubbish disposal company, has seen prices for paper drop by up to \$90 a ton and the price for metal, dropping more than \$100 a ton.

Some recycling companies have had to pay to get rid of some of the recyclables.

Mills that were paying \$120 per ton for cardboard back in March are now paying \$5 a ton. Newspaper has gone from \$160 per ton to \$15.

This drop is not only in Michigan but throughout the U.S.

Even in this economic climate, the Village remains strong on "going green" and encourages residents to keep recycling.



## LEGAL BATTLE OVER ACCESS CHANNELS

It was just over a year ago that Comcast Cable announced that Birmingham Area access channels (Ch. 15, 16, 17 & 18) were going to digital. Subscribers were told that in order to view these channels, a digital converter box was needed. The boxes would be available free of charge up to February, 2009.



To date, that transition has not been instituted.

Shortly after Comcast's announcement, two municipalities (Dearborn & Meridian Twp.) filed suit in federal court to stop the migration of the channels.

An injunction was obtained and is in effect until the court reaches a decision. The Court forwarded several questions to the FCC to clarify several issues and is awaiting a response.

No word on when a decision will be reached.

## WHERE IS AT&T TV SERVICE AVAILABLE?

You see the AT&T's ads offering TV and cable service. What many do not see is that the service is only available in select locations.

AT&T is offering service in parts of Bingham Woods condominium complex, but not everyone there can get it. One side of the street may have availability, but not the other side.

As to when the rest of Bingham Farms will be offered service, AT&T is not saying, citing competitive concerns.

The best suggestion is to check availability on AT&T's website, [www.att.iverse.com](http://www.att.iverse.com), type in your address and see if the service is available.

It has been AT&T's practice to leave door hangers on houses when service is available.

### EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

<b>Police &amp; Fire</b>	<b>9-1-1</b>
<b>Police (dispatch)</b>	<b>248.626.5444</b>
<b>Police (office)</b>	<b>248.626.9672</b>
<b>Fire (office)</b>	<b>248.626.9862</b>
<b>DTE (electric)</b>	<b>1.800.477.4747</b>
<b>Consumers (gas)</b>	<b>1.800.477.5050</b>

# CHANGE YOUR CLOCKS! CHANGE YOUR BATTERIES!

Spring forward and fall back. Come March 8th, we give back that extra hour of sleep gained in the fall.

Turn your clocks ahead one hour on Sunday, March 8th. Or as many do, turn them back before you go to bed on Saturday night. Daylight Savings Time begins at 2:00 a.m. Sunday morning.

On the positive side, the time change means that warmer weather is soon to arrive.

Remember, while changing your clocks, change the batteries in your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors too.

Be proactive. Take a few minutes to make sure all your detectors are working. It might not just save your house, it may also save YOU.



# HAPPENINGS AROUND TOWN

**Birmingham**  
**January 11-13 & 18-20** “Three Tall Women” at the Village Playhouse - 248-644-2075

**February 4-8** - Birmingham Restaurant Week

**March 2-22 & 28-30** “Into the Woods” at the Village Playhouse

**Beverly Hills** -  
**Jan. 25** - Family Fun Day

**Baldwin Library** - **Jan. 12, 26** 7:00 p.m. Knitting Group  
**Jan. 24** 2:00 p.m. Genealogy Program

**Oakland County** - The Fridge Toboggan Run

Wed-Fri 4:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.  
 Sat. 10:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.  
 Sun Noon - 6:00 p.m.

For more information log on to [www.oakgov.com/parksrec](http://www.oakgov.com/parksrec).



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 Bingham Farms, MI 48025  
 (248) 644-0044  
[www.binghamfarms.org](http://www.binghamfarms.org)

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 clerk@binghamfarms.org  
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 Website: [www.binghamfarms.org](http://www.binghamfarms.org)