

NEWBURGH HEIGHTS

WINTER 2021-22

Living



Service and dedication

Newburgh Heights swears-in new firefighters
and recognizes safety forces' service



From the Mayor ♦

It is the technology! That is what is different with today's Housing Department from years and decades past. The thing that separates Newburgh Heights from our neighbors is the quality of our housing stock. A decade ago, there was no legitimate maintenance program in the Village. That is no longer true, and everyone has benefited as a result.

It was only the mere blink of an eye in time past that every single street in our community had multiple dilapidated and vacant eyesores with grass, rubbish, and weeds that were feet high. Property owners were clear, they wanted the neighborhood cleaned up, especially from predatory, out of town landlords.

What we learned through implementation of a universal housing inspection program though, is that it was not just tenants that were being forced to live in substandard, dangerous rentals. There was plenty of deferred maintenance on our owner-occupied units too. In fact, some of the Village's worst offenders were owner occupants. For generations, it seems there were two sets of standards: one for rentals and one for homeowners. Neither were very well nor universally enforced and often homeowners were permitted to skirt the same rules and laws that they were demanding rental owners be required to follow!

To be fair, the Village had to make sure every property was being inspected, something that had never been consistently done and the results became readily apparent following the end of the last recession as these eyesores contributed to the decline of the Village's overall property values.

In the process of working through rental and curbside inspections, it became apparent there are many misconceptions that have been passed down through the

years. Some of those include the idea and meaning of grandfathering. Some include the idea that if the homeowner installs a mechanical feature such as a hot water tank, furnace, or patio door, that a permit is not required, or an inspection is not necessary. These misconceptions are generally not accurate. The rules for inspections have not been implemented to punish people, but to protect people.

Every single year, we read the stories about how entire families are killed because of carbon monoxide poisoning as the result of a faulty installation that was not inspected. We do not want that tragedy occurring for our friends and neighbors here in the Village, as inconvenient as an inspection may be.

One of the greatest misconceptions is that the Village uses inspections as a punitive measure. This is preposterous. Inspections in Newburgh Heights are dictated by two fundamental governing bodies. The rules established by Village Council throughout the years and the rules established by the State of Ohio. The Housing Department does not arbitrarily target properties or property owners. The Village's inspectors are all qualified and trained to perform the inspections they are permitted to conduct according to the code of law they are inspecting under. It is an absolute falsehood that our staff is not trained, experienced, or qualified to meet their duty to help protect your asset.

Earlier I mentioned technology. That is because one of the greatest changes the Village has made is the use of software to inform the staff of timing. Often in years past, if an inspection occurred, no follow-up would also occur. Today, that is not true and that is most assuredly part of the frustration of some. The Housing Department's staff is

now well trained and equipped to ensure required corrections are completed so things don't fall through the cracks. To some, this may make them feel like they are being targeted when in fact, it is simply the Housing Department conducting the required follow through dictated by law.

Finally, before I go, one almost hysterical misconception out there is that the staff in the department is skulking around looking to catch offenders. This is just flat out not the case. Our department is active in the community and in that process, they often see violations with their own eyes. It is also very common for neighbors to raise concerns and provide direct visual evidence of issues. The department receives regular anonymous calls and complaints. When this occurs, the Housing Department is obligated to act to resolve the challenge, they're not picking on you.

The Housing and Building Department will work with you and your contractors. They want to work with you to ensure you're not getting taken for a ride by fly-by-night handymen, mechanics, and contractors. The work the Housing Department does is not just for you. It's for you, your neighbors, and the folks two blocks away too.

Remember, the employees of the department are public servants doing their job for you. They don't deserve to be lied to, lied about, insulted, berated, or abused. If you have a grievance, contact me or a councilperson, don't berate these folks that are working on your behalf to protect your investments and family.

Thank you and have a great rest of the Winter.

Sincerely,
Mayor Elkins

Village Council



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smoran@newburgh-oh.gov



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Public safety ♦



Photo: Kirksey House Pro



Photo: Kirksey House Pro

Newburgh Heights Village Council honors safety forces with awards reception

Newburgh Heights Village Council recognized the hard work and dedication of its safety forces and honored the department chiefs in a surprise awards reception on Tuesday, October 5, 2021.

In Fall 2019, Council President Pro Tempore Gigi Traore proposed the idea as a way to acknowledge the service, leadership, and commitment of Newburgh Heights' fire and police departments. However, the ceremony was postponed due to the global health pandemic and instead held this year. Councilwoman Traore and all of Council believes the way in which our safety forces responded to the past year's unanticipated challenges proved even more so, why it was pertinent to see this initiative to fruition.

The Awards Reception was held in Council Chambers at Village Hall and attended by Village Council, Mayor Elkins, staff

members and the families of each awardee. During the reception they were presented with an award as well as a resolution from State Senator Sandra Williams, 21st District acknowledging their service, leadership, commitment and dedication to the Village of Newburgh Heights.

Awards Presented Included:

- Officer of the Year went to Sergeant Rachel Halaska
- Fire Fighter of the Year went to Lieutenant Greg Jordan
- Chief of Police Honoree, Chief John Majoy
- Fire Chief Honoree, Chief Brian Higginbotham

As Village Council, we are extremely grateful for the men and women who not only perform their professional roles, but are truly dedicated to us as residents, elected officials and as the Village of Newburgh Heights.

Library Pick-up in Newburgh

You can now reserve items from the Cleveland Public Library and pick them up at Newburgh Heights Village Hall. The grab-and-go lockers are accessible 24/7.

On Friday, December 3, 2021 the Village of Newburgh Heights and Cleveland Public Library celebrated the installation of Grab & Go Book Lockers with a ribbon-cutting at Village Hall. The partnership was led by Councilwoman Gigi Traore after resident Ms. Knight brought the concern before council.

Spring Soccer signup info

The 2022 Newburgh Heights Spring Soccer Signups will be on March 1 & 3 from 7 - 8 p.m., for boys & girls age 6 - 14. Sign up in the Community Room at Village Hall, 3801 Harvard Ave.

Registration Fee for residents is \$15. & non-residents is \$20.

Call or text Bill Edelburg (Newburgh Hts Athletic Director) 216-906-2302 with any questions.





Housing Resources ♦



Help's at Hand for Home Maintenance

Newburgh's grant program is protecting local housing stock's future

A working furnace is how Liz Pearson summarizes Newburgh Heights's Home Maintenance Grant Program, and what it meant to her.

"We were trying to get our ancient furnace to trip through another year," says Pearson, but it wasn't working out. She guesses that the unit might have been 50 years old.

Then Pearson recalled a newsletter item from a few years ago, announcing home maintenance grants open to anyone who owns and lives in a Newburgh Heights home. At the time, she just filed away the information, but the expense of a replacement furnace made it suddenly relevant.

Pearson says working with the Housing and Building Department to apply was simple; "for me it was very easy, I have to say."

Tim Schoenbeck describes a similar experience, with an even briefer genesis. "I had been doing some home improvements and was in the middle of re-doing my driveway" in stages, he says,

"The process was pretty painless...it helped me be able to do the project earlier than I planned."

– Home Maintenance Grant recipient Tim Schoenbeck

when he received a postcard about the Home Maintenance Grant Program. He contacted the Housing and Building Department at once.

Schoenbeck says that applying for a grant not only helped with the costs, it let him get everything done in less time. Between an efficient application process, and the grant funds he qualified for, he was able to complete the entire project sooner. "The process was pretty painless," he says.

The Home Maintenance Grant Program can offer help with a variety of interior, exterior, and landscaping improvements.

It also helps the community pay for the larger goal of keeping an old housing stock in good repair. Grants can reimburse property owners for as much as 50% of a project's cost, up to \$1,000, and "a thousand bucks is always a good help," says Pearson.

Details of qualifying improvements and how to get started are available from the Housing and Building Department, and on the city's web site.

Service Department News ♦

Streets, Trees, Sewers, and Phone Calls

New Service Director Anthony Ciresi has long experience “in the trenches”

Tony Ciresi says he has “big shoes to fill,” in succeeding Joe Milano as director of Newburgh Heights’ Service Department.

“I love this community,” he says, “the fact that you come to work and there’s not a pothole in the road. It’s an amazing city.”

But Ciresi, who started November 1, arrived on the job with a wealth of relevant experience, as well as plenty of enthusiasm. In 27 years working all across Cuyahoga County, he has been responsible for streets, trees, sewer and water infrastructure; “Almost anything that has to do with the city, I’ve done” he says.

Ciresi says his initial focus as director will be maintaining the Service Department’s current work. Looking further out, he hopes to apply his tree-repair background and interest in landscaping to extend progress on the Village’s tree canopy.

In his most recent job, Ciresi worked for a city nearly a dozen times the size of Newburgh, and made a point of responding to every call even if that took well into the evening. He says he welcomes the calls he’s already fielding from residents.

“I’m available to speak any time they have need,” he says.



DID YOU KNOW...

If you think Tony Ciresi may have deejayed at a wedding you attended, once, you’re probably right. Though now retired, he was a weekend deejay at 2,000 weddings over the span of many years.

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR *Proclamation*

WHEREAS, Joseph Milano has become affectionately known to the Newburgh Heights family as, “Joe,” and

WHEREAS, Joseph Milano has decided to ~~abandon his post~~ retire after serving as the Village of Newburgh Heights Service Director for the past nine and a half years, and

WHEREAS, Joe has provided ~~comedic relief~~ critical leadership in the modernization of the Service Department, and

WHEREAS, Joe has not only been an employee of the Village, he has also invested countless hours of his personal time into the success and future of the neighborhood, and

WHEREAS, Joe’s ~~attendance at work~~ dedication and commitment toward the community shall serve as a model for all that follow in his footsteps, and

THEREFORE, I, Mayor Trevor K. Elkins, with the Council of the Village of Newburgh Heights, all of the Village Officials, and the residents, proclaim our gratitude and appreciation for the dedication and service of Joseph Milano.

Subscribed by my hand and sealed with the Great Seal of the Village of Newburgh Heights on this 5th day of October in the year Two Thousand and Twenty-One.

Trevor K. Elkins, Mayor
Village of Newburgh Heights



Be Ready for Snow

Newburgh Heights’s Service Department snow removal team members are trained and experienced at snow removal. Main streets are a priority and are plowed, salted—first, followed by the secondary mains, and then the side streets.

Useful tips

- Do not park vehicles on streets or cul-de-sacs when snow exceeds 2”.
- Do not shovel or push snow into or across the street, this can cause a traffic hazard.
- The snow being pushed by the plow can be thrown quite far and is extremely heavy.
- Please stay clear of the roadway when the plows are in your area.

Snow Removal from Driveways

The snow that falls in your driveway is yours to keep.

The Village of Newburgh Heights Ordinance 51351.03 prohibits anyone from plowing snow across a street and onto a neighbor’s property. Make sure your contractor or person responsible for this task is well aware of this. Placing snow in the roadway causes a hazard for motorists and our removal crews.

For more information on snowplowing please call the Service Department at (216) 641-2714



home in the Heights! ♦

By Bill Dunman, Village Council member, Newburgh Heights



As I write this, we have just had a successful Thanksgiving Day gift card event where each residence in the village was invited to pick up a \$100 gift card from Giant Eagle to help out with the holidays. I am pleased that some of the residents declined to pick up their cards in the hopes that the funds would be returned to the village coffers. Thank you for your support.

Moving into winter and the new year, I want to remind folks that the Building Department is available to help residents with their home repair needs and the permitting process where necessary.

You can go online to the Newburgh Heights web page and check out the codified ordinances to answer many of your questions.

Immediate emergency help can be had from our Newburgh Heights Fire Department and Newburgh Heights Police Department. In emergencies, call 9-1-1.

Happy Holidays from Newburgh Heights. Stay safe and healthy. Spring will be here soon with a new batch of activities.



In order to resolve any confusion regarding the informational card included with the Thanksgiving gift card, payment of photo enforcement citations by motorists excessively violating the speed limit is the primary source of the funding for the purchase of the Thanksgiving gift cards.

Newburgh Heights Resources

Village Council Meetings

March: 1st Tuesday
April: 1st Tuesday
May: 1st Tuesday
June: 1st Tuesday
July: 3rd Tuesday
August: NONE

September: 3rd Tuesday

October: 1st Tuesday

November: 1st Tuesday (if an election day, may be moved to 3rd Tuesday)

December: 1st Tuesday

Village and Department Information Housing and Building Department

216-641-4654

Business Hours:

Mon.-Thurs., 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Kristine Pagsuyoin, Housing and Building Commissioner

Fiscal Officer / Clerk of Council

216-641-2717

Cathleen Nagorski

cnagorski@newburgh-oh.gov

Newburgh Heights Fire Department

4105 Harvard Ave.

216-641-2134

Administrative Hours:

Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Newburgh Heights Police Department

Emergency: 9-1-1

Dispatch: 216-641-5545

Office: 216-641-2117

Service Department

216-641-2714

Business Hours:

Mon.-Fri., 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Anthony Ciresi, Service Director

aciresi@newburgh-oh.gov

newburgh-oh.gov/service-department

Clerk of Court

Suzanne Molnar

Officer Written Ticket Processing

3801 Harvard Ave., 44105

Phone: 216-536-4752, Fax: 216-641-2712

court@newburgh-oh.gov

Business Hours:

Mon.-Fri., 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Clerk of Courts works remotely.

Payments are accepted online at ohioticket-payments.com

Or, mail personal check or money order. Or place payments in the drop box outside of Village Hall.

Payments are accepted in-person on the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Event space reservations

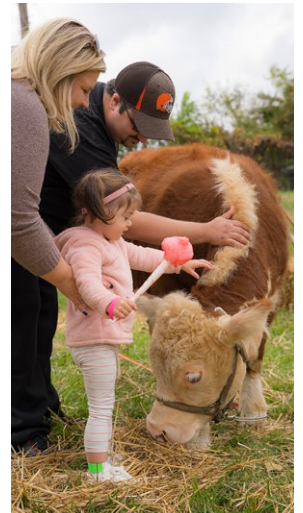
Pavilion and community room became available again this summer. Details are posted on newburgh-oh.gov. For questions contact Kayla Barfield at 216-641-2160



NEW: like and follow our Facebook page at facebook.com/NewburghHousingBuilding



Photos by Elaine Manusakis



Fall Fest 2021

The weather was cool, gray, and occasionally a little damp—it felt like Fall, in other words—which was just fine with Newburgh Heights.

People showed up for the outdoor event's return, in September, ready to eat, play, shop, stroll, rock, and explore. Along with the weather, features like the pumpkin patch and hay maze contributed to the Fall atmosphere.

Kids found the arrival of a little bit of rural America in Kathy Edwards Park—a reclaimed industrial site—particularly fascinating. The petting zoo's sheep, goat, cow and other animals, along with the tractor-drawn hayride, were big hits.

Thank you to all who helped make Fall Fest 2021 a success!





Community Event Calendar Winter 2022

FEBRUARY

- 14 Happy Valentine's Day**
Village Hall is open
- 21 Happy President's Day**
Village Hall is open

MARCH

- 1 Spring Soccer signup 7 p.m.**
Village Council meeting 7:30 p.m.
- 3 Spring Soccer signup 7 p.m.**