



# Township of Maple Shade

200 Stiles Avenue  
Maple Shade, NJ 08052  
(856) 779-9610  
[www.mapleshade.com](http://www.mapleshade.com)

Mayor Nelson Wiest • Deputy Mayor Sandy Nunes  
Councilman Charles Kauffman • Councilman Steve Schmidt • Councilwoman Claire Volpe

## *Township of Maple Shade News* April 2021

*Township of Maple Shade News is generally published monthly to provide residents with pertinent information and reminders related to Maple Shade and the surrounding area. The Township views this as another important means of keeping residents informed about our community.*

### **1. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS - BRUSH COLLECTION**

The Department of Public Works would like to thank our residents who tie/bundle the brush for a quick and easy collection. (*see photo below*) This enables our employees to collect and clean-up the area in a more time effective way which allows them to move to their next task quicker.

**THANK YOU FOR HELPING US HELP YOU!**



### **2. TRASH COLLECTION REMINDERS**

Please remember Mattresses and Box Springs **MUST** be WRAPPED IN PLASTIC when placed curbside for trash collection per health code. This prevents the spread of bed bugs and keeps the workers safe.



### 3. COMMUNITY YARD SALE

**Saturday, April 17<sup>th</sup>**

**8:00AM - 1:00PM**

Registration for the Community Wide Yard Sale is CLOSED; however, EVERYONE is welcome to participate in the Yard Sale.

The Map of all Yard Sale locations will be available online beginning Monday, April 12<sup>th</sup>. Houses participating will have "YARD SALE SIGNS" on their front yard.

More information is available at [www.mapleshade.com](http://www.mapleshade.com).

Please see the [COMMUNITY YARD SALE FLYER](#) for additional information.



### 4. HOUSEHOLD CLEAN-UP EVENT

**April 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup>**

**9:00AM - 1:00PM**

**Public Works Facility located at 620 Cutler Avenue**

Residents may bring the following items to the Public Works Facility during the dates & times above:

- Mattresses and Box Springs
- Unwanted items in your garage
- Furniture
- Debris from SMALL Homeowner "Do-It-Yourself" Projects
- Debris from around your property

Please see the [HOUSEHOLD CLEAN-UP EVENT FLYER](#) for additional information.



## 5. FROM THE DESK OF POLICE CHIEF CHRIS FLETCHER



### **The New Marijuana Laws – What to Expect with the Recent Changes?**

In November 2020, the following public question was placed on the ballot for input from the citizens of New Jersey:

*Do you approve amending the Constitution to legalize a controlled form of marijuana called “cannabis”? Only adults at least 21 years of age could use cannabis. The State commission created to oversee the State’s medical cannabis program would also oversee the new, personal use cannabis market. Cannabis products would be subject to the State sales tax. If authorized by the Legislature, a municipality may pass a local ordinance to charge a local tax on cannabis products.*

Based upon the outcome of this vote and the work done by the state legislature, Governor Murphy signed into law three bills changing the legal status of Marijuana on February 22, 2021. Several of these bills focused on the “Under 21” population which was not the topical area the public question focused on as noted above. Most concerning of these bills was a provision geared towards those under 18 years of age. More specifically, if a police officer observed a person under 18 years of age in possession of Marijuana and/or Alcohol, police were required to issue a written warning for the 1<sup>st</sup> offense to this person and WERE PROHIBITED from notifying a parent or guardian of the encounter or risk being charged with an INDICTABLE CRIME for doing so. A Police Officer was also prohibited from asking for consent to search their person or possessions (i.e., backpack) during this contact or the police officer would face being charged with an INDICTABLE CRIME. Marijuana and/or Alcohol observed in plain view or sight could be seized as contraband by the officer, but items concealed on their person or possessions which could be ingested later would not be seized because of the wording in these laws and the threat of prosecution to the police officer.

After the public and police leaders made their dissatisfaction widely known to the legislators who approved these provisions of the bills and to the Governor himself who signed them into law, the legislature drafted several changes to address these concerns about parental notification. Under the amended law, which was released to the public on March 26, 2021, police are now REQUIRED to notify a parent by way of a “written warning” that their under 18 child was found in possession of Marijuana and/or Alcohol for a 1<sup>st</sup> offense. Still present in these laws are the provisions stating that the police will face a criminal charge if they KNOWINGLY violate certain portions of these new laws regarding searches. It is further concerning to all of our law enforcement officers here in Maple Shade which the manner and way these bills were passed without having the proper training, warning forms, community resources and systems necessary to track these encounters as noted in the laws. These new Marijuana laws were originally signed by the Governor on February 22, 2021 and took effect immediately, which is not something I would describe as common for complex and complicated laws effecting our officers in such a comprehensive way.

As your current Chief of Police and a township police officer in Maple Shade for well over 25 years, the release of these new laws has been anything but smooth. The lack of meaningful direction and substantive guidance from our top law enforcement partners put our officers in a precarious position while all this played out and reinforced a position of uncertainty. As a parent myself, it is tremendously difficult to even imagine an officer walking away from this type of encounter without letting a parent or guardian know the circumstances by which we contacted your under 18 child. While I am grateful to our community and its local elected officials for advocating to correct this piece of the legislation, I still have concerns with other provisions left in these bills.

For well over two decades, our agency has made a concerted effort to build mentoring relationships with the youth in our community and to explore other methods of handling these situations besides a criminal charge and they have always included the parent or guardian of the child involved. Whether it was through the DARE program, Adopt-A-Cop, the School Resource Officer Program, the Special Law Enforcement Officer III Program, supporting A Place to Go or the soon to be added LEAP program in partnership with Community Alliance, we care about the kids in our community and protecting their futures.

In more recent years, our agency has been one of the leading departments in the County diverting youth from the Criminal Justice System by partnering with the Police Chaplain Corp and Social Service Organizations in exploring non-punitive based programs to teach and mentor rather than punish. This program, known as the Stationhouse Adjustment Program, also always included the parent or guardian of juveniles accepted into it.

You have the continued commitment of the Maple Shade Police Department to do our level best to make certain that any person we determine to be in immediate physical danger receives the necessary medical and/or psychological interventions required by law and in accordance with our best judgement. We care about the young adults and children in our community and our actions, words and deeds continue to mirror that. In this type of situation, especially those involving children under 18 years old, you can depend on our agency to contact you as the parent or guardian and bring this situation to your attention while being careful not to run afoul of the new laws.

In closing, please know that our agency prides itself on our connection to the community be it through our support of sports, entertainment, or civic based programs in partnership with PBA Local #267, our work with the Maple Shade School District, our work with the Police Chaplain Corp and our work with the Maple Shade Police Chaplain Association – A NJ Non-Profit 501(c)3 Corporation.

Sincerely,  
Chief Chris Fletcher

## 6. **2021 PRIMARY ELECTION INFORMATION**

**2021 Primary Election is June 8, 2021**

Deadline to Register to Vote is May 18, 2021

For Information about Voting, please visit [www.state.nj.us/state/elections](http://www.state.nj.us/state/elections)

Select “NJ Voter Information Portal” to access the following:

- Register to Vote (Online or Paper Application)
- Apply to Vote by Mail
- Track your Ballot
- Locate a Drop Box
- Locate your Polling Place



## 7. PASS THIS IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO YOUR NEIGHBORS

### **Register for Important "NIXLE MESSAGE"**

This system expedites immediate text messages to registered cell phones and email addresses to notify residents and businesses of emergency announcements and community updates.

Communication via Nixle assists the Township in notifying residents of important issues, events, etc.

**Residents are encouraged to register for the notifications by texting "08052" to the number 888777 from their cell phone.**



Residents can also register online at [www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com) to receive the notifications via email and/or mobile phone. Please note that regardless of your zip code, you must register under the zip code **08052** to receive Nixle alerts concerning the Township of Maple Shade.

## 8. SUSTAINABLE MAPLE SHADE

### **Tree City USA & Arbor Day**

Maple Shade achieved Tree City USA status from the Arbor Day Foundation for the second consecutive year joining more than 3,400 cities and towns across America. This recognition honors our commitment to effective urban forest management. To be eligible, a municipality must meet the program's four requirements: a tree board or department (for Maple Shade this is the Public Works Department in coordination with the Maple Shade Green Team), a tree-care ordinance, an annual community forestry budget of at least \$2 per capita, and an Arbor Day Observance and Proclamation (this requirement was waived for 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic).

Trees are assets to a community when properly planted and maintained. They help to improve the visual appeal of a neighborhood, increase property values, reduce home cooling costs, remove air pollutants, absorb carbon dioxide that is a significant contributor to climate change, and provide wildlife habitat, among other economic, social, and environmental benefits.

Last year, Maple Shade received a \$1,200 grant from The Nature Conservancy, in association with Sustainable Jersey, under their Roots for River Program. The Green Team and community volunteers spent over 80 hours last fall, planting 200 native tree seedlings on municipal property along the South Branch Pennsauken Creek to help reduce erosion, improve wildlife habitat, improve water quality, and contribute to flood protection and other associated floodplain values.

Arbor Day originated in Nebraska City, Nebraska in 1872 before Nebraska achieved statehood. It is estimated that more than 1 million trees were planted in Nebraska on their first Arbor Day. By 1920 more than 45 states and territories were celebrating Arbor Day and is celebrated in all 50 states today. While most holidays celebrate something that has already happened and is worth remembering, Arbor Day represents a hope for the future. The simple act of planting a tree represents a belief that the tree will grow providing benefits previously described as well as healthy communities and endless natural beauty – all for a better tomorrow. National Arbor Day is always the last Friday in April. For more information on Arbor Day and the Tree City USA Program visit the Arbor Day Foundation at [www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org).

If you decide to plant your own tree this Arbor Day, the nursery should provide you with planting instructions. If they do not, you may have to ask for it. Regardless, we highly recommend you read the *Tree Owner's Manual for the Northeastern and Midwestern US* which is available by click [HERE](#). This manual is a wealth of information covering all aspects of siting, transporting, planting, pruning, mulching, maintenance and much more.



## 9. TAX COLLECTOR - HELPFUL INFORMATION

- **Property Tax 2021 Remaining Due Dates:**

- May 1<sup>st</sup>
- August 1<sup>st</sup>
- November 1<sup>st</sup>

- **Property Tax Relief Information:**

Property tax relief may be available for eligible individuals.

To learn about the NJ Division of Taxations' Property Relief Programs, please click [HERE](#).

- **Options for Tax & Utility Payments:**

- Credit Cards & E Checks are only accepted online.
- **Online Payments:** To review and pay your Taxes & Utility Bills online go to [www.mapleshade.com](http://www.mapleshade.com). Look for the "View & Pay your Taxes & Utilities" in the top, blue bar on the home page.
- **Bill Pay:** This option is done through your bank. When using this option, please identify the property that the payment is intended for.  
*Example:* Taxes use the Block & Lot and Utilities use the Account Number. Unidentified checks will be mailed back to the address on the check. Please note that "Bill Pay Checks" take at least 7-10 days to reach the Tax Collector's Office.
- **Checks & Money Orders:** With this option your payment may be mailed or put into the drop box located to the left of the main entrance at the Municipal Building.



## 10. April Meetings & Events

Thursday, April 1, 2021

Site Plan/Sub-Division Review Meeting @ 7:00PM

Thursday, April 8, 2021

Town Council Meeting @ 7:00PM

Wednesday, April 14, 2021

Zoning Board Meeting @ 7:00PM

Thursday, April 22, 2021

Town Council Meeting @ 7:00PM

Wednesday, April 28, 2021

Planning Board Meeting @ 7:00PM

\*All Meetings will be held via virtually only via Zoom platform. The Zoom link, Meeting ID #, and Passcode will be accessible on each individual meeting agenda. The agendas can be found on the township's website at [www.mapleshade.com](http://www.mapleshade.com).

