

TOWN OF HINSDALE E-NEWSLETTER – APRIL 2017

WELCOME MESSAGE

Greetings!

In the interest of helping to keep residents informed of important “goings on” in town, we have begun producing a town-wide newsletter that will be disseminated by email on a regular basis (likely monthly) to all individuals who subscribe to the mailing list. Our hope is that the number of recipients on this list will continue to grow over time to ensure that most households receive these important updates. If you have friends or family that may be interested in receiving this newsletter in the future, please have them contact Ryan Aylesworth, Town Administrator, at 413-655-2300 X 355 or town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov.

Thank you for being a part of our community and we hope you enjoy the newsletter!

REMEMBER TO “LIKE US” ON FACEBOOK!

Just a reminder that the Town of Hinsdale recently launched an official Facebook page (“Town of Hinsdale, Massachusetts”) that can be accessed at the following web link: www.facebook.com/HinsdaleMA

This page is being maintained by town officials and be used to help disseminate important updates about community affairs and alert residents when new/detailed information is available on the Town’s official website (www.hinsdalemass.com). We hope you will “Like” this page and start receiving regular updates on your Facebook news feed!

ELECTION RESULTS – WAHCONAH HIGH SCHOOL FEASIBILITY STUDY

On Saturday, April 8, a special election was held in each of the seven members towns comprising Central Berkshire Regional School District (CBRSD) to determine whether up to \$850,000 would be appropriated to fund a feasibility study pertaining to Wahconah High School. More specifically, the proposed study would evaluate the options of renovating or rebuilding the current facility for a high school serving students in grades 9-12. A simple majority of voters from the member towns were required to vote in support of the measure in order for funding for the feasibility study to be appropriated.

The final vote count was 1313 to 448 (74.6% to 25.4%) in support of the proposed feasibility study.

Tally of votes:

TOWN	Yes	No	Total
Becket	108	38	146
Cummington	22	48	70
Dalton	774	178	952
Hinsdale	171	83	254
Peru	65	65	130
Washington	80	12	92
Windsor	93	24	117
TOTAL	1313	448	1761

The study will now go forward with support from the state. The state is expected to reimburse up to 54 percent of the cost, leaving roughly half of the cost, \$425,000, to be paid by taxpayers in district towns. The costs to towns will be on a proportional basis, given the number of students they send to the district. The vote does not authorize school officials to proceed to a renovation or replacement of the school. That would happen only after the study is conducted, if officials deem it necessary.

At present, based on census figures and other variables, the Town of Hinsdale contributes approximately 14% of the funding for operating and capital expenses of the school district. It is anticipated that our respective financial obligation for funding the feasibility study will be as follows over the next five fiscal years:

- Fiscal Year 2018 (interest payment only) - \$1,829
- Fiscal Year 2019 (interest payment only) - \$2,008
- Fiscal Year 2020 (principal & interest payment) - \$23,482
- Fiscal Year 2021 (principal & interest payment) - \$23,097
- Fiscal Year 2022 (principal & interest payment) - \$22,547

Questions about the Town's estimated financial obligation for funding the feasibility study should be directed to Ryan Aylesworth, Town Administrator, at 413-655-2300 X 355 or by email at town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov.

Questions about election results for the April 8 special election should be directed to the Town Clerk's office at 413-655-2300 X 301 or by email at town.clerk@hinsdalema.gov.

REMINDER – 2017 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING AND LOCAL ELECTIONS

We would like to remind all residents that the 2017 Annual Town Meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 17 beginning at 7:00 PM in the Kittredge Elementary School gymnasium. Similarly, the annual town elections will be held on Saturday, May 20. Voting at Town Hall (Community Room, first floor) begins at 10:00 AM and concludes at 6:00 PM.

The deadline for filing nomination papers for local elected office was March 31. The Town Clerk has verified that the following individuals received the required number of signatures to be included on the ballot (all candidates are running unopposed):

- Select Board (one 3-year term) – Richard Kardisan
- Town Clerk (one 3-year term) – Dawn Frissell
- Board of Assessors (one 3-year term) – Neil Barrocas
- Finance Committee (three 3-year terms) – Ray Bolduc, Christine Pike, Mary Rice
- Finance Committee (two 1-year terms) – Heather Brown, Shaun Galliher
- Planning Board (one 5-year term) – Dan Brown
- Planning Board (one 1-year term) – Bill Pike

If you have any questions about the Annual Town Meeting or local elections, please do not hesitate to contact the Town Clerk by phone (413-655-2300 Ext. 301) or email (town.clerk@hinsdalema.gov).

HINSDALE RECEIVES GRANT FOR OPEN SPACE & RECREATION PLAN

The Town of Hinsdale has received a \$12,000 grant from the Conservation Assistance for Small Communities grant program, which is administered by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs' Division of Conservation Services. The grant will be used to develop a detailed Open Space & Recreation Plan, identify potential sites for land acquisition for recreation purposes, as well as pursue zoning bylaw updates that can help our community better protect land for conservation. Stay tuned for more updates!

If you have specific questions about this grant, please contact Ryan Aylesworth, Town Administrator, at 413-655-2300 X 355 or town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov.

FROM THE POLICE CHIEF – BEAR ACTIVITY

If a bear is sighted in town, leave the animal alone. In most situations, if left alone, the bear will return to the forest on its own. Keep dogs under control. Stay away from the bear and advise others to do the same. Often a bear will climb a tree to avoid people. A gathering of people not only stresses the animal, but it adds the risk of having a bear chased out into traffic or into a group of bystanders.

If a bear is in a densely populated area, contact the Environmental Police Radio Room at 1-800-632-8075 (24 hours) or the nearest MassWildlife District Office (weekdays during business hours) to report the sighting and get advice. The mere presence of a bear in a densely populated area is NOT a public safety threat and the bear will leave the area on its own. The Environmental Police or MassWildlife will provide advice and determine if a response from the Large Animal Response Team (LART) is necessary. LART consists of MassWildlife biologists and Environmental Police Officers with specific training in chemical immobilization of large animals. Decisions on appropriate response in these situations are governed by a standard protocol. Depending on the situation, members of the team can provide anything from technical advice to responding to the scene. LART will coordinate efforts with local/state police, animal control officers, MassDOT and local public works departments to ensure public safety as well as the welfare of the animal. In most cases, bears in residential areas do not require a LART response and will leave the area on their own.

If you have a bear EMERGENCY on your property, please contact the Hinsdale Police Department immediately at 413-655-0201.

If you have any additional questions about how to handle bear sightings, please do not hesitate to contact the Animal Control Officer by phone (413-655-0201) or email (kburgess@hinsdalema.gov).

HELP WANTED – VOLUNTEER EMTs & FIREFIGHTERS

The Town needs more volunteer EMT's and/or Firefighters from Hinsdale or bordering communities. If you are interested, or know someone that is, please call us today! No experience is necessary, our Fire Department will be happy to train you. You will be joining a great group of experienced volunteers of all ages and skill levels. If you are interested, please call Larry Turner, Fire Chief, 413-655-2533 or fire@hinsdalema.gov.

FROM THE TOWN COLLECTOR

Real Estate, Personal Property and Sewer Betterment Bills

The second-half real estate, personal property and sewer betterment bills for Fiscal Year 2017 (July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017) were mailed on April 1. These bills cover the period January 1 through June 30, 2017. Payment on these bills is due on or before May 1. Interest of 14% will be added to all late payments. The Town Collector's office hours are: Monday 9:00 AM-12:00 PM, Tuesday-Thursday 8:00 AM-1:00 PM, and 5:30-7:00 PM on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month.

The Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles controls the names and addresses on motor vehicle excise tax bills. The Town cannot change this information on your behalf; that must be done by the taxpayer with the Registry.

ALL requests for (i) address changes for real estate personal property and (ii) abatements should be sent directly to the Board of Assessors at Hinsdale's Town Hall, not to the Town Collector. Similarly, address changes for water and/or sewer bills should be directed to the Water & Sewer Department.

Please contact Pauline Wheeler, Town Collector, at 413-655-2300 Ext. 306 or tax.collector@hinsdalema.gov, with any questions concerning payments. Questions pertaining to assessment, address and name changes should be directed to Dave Zagorski, Assistant Assessor, at 655-2300 or assessors@hinsdalema.gov, if you have any questions.

Motor Vehicle Excise Tax Bills are Now Overdue

Annual motor vehicle excise tax bills were due by March 20 and will now be assessed penalties and interest.

The Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles controls the names and addresses on motor vehicle excise tax bills. The Town cannot change this information on your behalf; that must be done by the taxpayer with the Registry.

Please contact Pauline Wheeler, Town Collector, at 655-2306 or tax.collector@hinsdalema.gov, with any questions concerning payments.

FROM THE WATER & SEWER SUPERINTENDENT

Flushing schedule

The Water & Sewer Department currently anticipates that the semi-annual flushing program will begin on or around May 1. The exact timing is subject to change based on weather conditions. The precise flushing schedule will be posted on the Town's website and in the Berkshire Eagle as that information is confirmed. If you have questions about the Town's flushing schedule/procedures, please contact Larry Turner, Water & Sewer Superintendent, at 413-655-2300 Ext. 307 or water.sewer@hinsdalema.gov.

Semi-annual bills

The semi-annual water and sewer bills that were mailed in January were due on March 15. Please note that delinquent accounts are assessed a \$10 late fee/penalty on a monthly basis until full payment is made (a \$20 late fee is assessed for households that are served by both the water and sewer systems). Additionally, water service can and will be shut off if a bill becomes delinquent for more than 30 days. Shutoffs will begin taking place in late-April. If you have questions about the Town's water or sewer policies or shutoff procedures, please contact Larry Turner, Water & Sewer Superintendent, at 413-655-2300 Ext. 307 or water.sewer@hinsdalema.gov.

APRIL OFFICE HOURS FOR VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER

As has been previously reported, the Town of Hinsdale has entered into an inter-municipal agreement with the City of Pittsfield's Veteran Services Department. Under this agreement, James Clark, Director of Veterans' Services, will serve as our community's Veterans Service Office (VSO). Hinsdale veterans will have access to a full-time VSO with significant knowledge and experience in the field of veteran aide. Office hours will be primarily administered in Pittsfield City Hall, but a limited amount of office hours will also be conducted at Hinsdale Town Hall on a monthly basis (those hours will soon be posted). The next set of scheduled office hours will be taking place at Town Hall on **April 26 (Wednesday) at 1:00 PM**

Questions about veterans services should be directed to James Clark, Director of Veterans' Services, at 413-499-9433 or by email at jclark@pittsfieldch.com

2017 PAINT COLLECTIONS SCHEDULE (NORTHERN BERKSHIRE SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT)

Paint collections are open to residents of Adams, Cheshire, Clarksburg, Florida, Hancock, Hinsdale, Lanesborough, Monroe, New Ashford, Peru, Savoy, Williamstown and Windsor. All collection dates fall on a Saturday. Oil-based paints, varnish, stain, and spray paint can be dropped off. Latex paints can no longer be dropped off because these paints are not considered hazardous waste. Residents with latex paint are encouraged to use it or dry it up before disposing at the transfer station.

Hinsdale Transfer Station – May 13 & June 10
Williamstown Transfer Station – May 20 & June 24
Cheshire Transfer Station – May 6 & June 3

Please contact Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District staff at 413-743-8208 (www.nbswmd.com) with any questions about paint collection.

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RECENT NEWS (from past months)

CHARTER/SPECTRUM HIGH-SPEED INTERNET NETWORK EXPANSION PROJECT UPDATE

Charter/Spectrum is working on the walk-out and design of the network for the unserved areas of Hinsdale and has begun to apply for the required pole licenses. The pole licensing and completion of make-ready work on the poles is probably the most time-consuming aspect of the project. Charter expects to begin offering service to the residents in these unserved areas by late summer. Charter’s commitment to the Massachusetts Broadband Initiative (MBI) is to complete the project by first quarter 2018. If you have any additional questions about Charter/Spectrum’s network expansion, please contact the Town Administrator at 413-655-2300 Ext. 355 or town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov.

CALLING ALL PHOTOGRAPHERS!

We would like to invite anyone with a collection of high-quality/high-resolution digital photos taken in the Town of Hinsdale to consider sharing them for possible inclusion in a variety of town publications (annual report, website, brochures, etc.). Photos of people/events, buildings and businesses, and landscapes/nature are all appreciated. If you are interested in making

photos available for use by the Town, please contact the Town Administrator at 413-655-2300 Ext. 355 or town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov to discuss further. Thank you!

TOWN-WIDE GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS) NOW COMPLETE AND AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC

We are very happy to report that the company the Town of Hinsdale has been working with to develop a town-wide geographic information system (GIS) has completed this important project. The GIS can be accessed at the following link: <https://www.axisgis.com/hinsdalema/>

A GIS is a system designed to capture, store, manipulate, analyze, manage, and present spatial or geographic data. AxisGIS is an Internet-based service for communities and businesses that want to publish their GIS online. AxisGIS is a cost-effective option to distribute GIS data and utility to town employees/officials as well as to the general public (which reduces the number of trips residents have to make to Town Hall for activities like generating an abutters list). AxisGIS is compatible with all internet browsers and is also compatible and functional in a mobile environment. Among other functions, AxisGIS is helping communities publish their parcel data online, enabling homeowners and real estate professionals to print maps from their own computers, providing geographically explicit information on zoning and key natural features (i.e., wetlands), supporting economic development projects, providing a platform for police and school collaboration, and creating a connection between local government, businesses, and communities.

HINSDALE OBTAINS TWO DISTRICT LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS FROM BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The Town of Hinsdale has received two competitive District Local Technical Assistance grants (both grants are valued at \$5,000) from the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. One of the grants will be used to help the town update its Open Space & Recreation Plan (which many other granting bodies require to be in place in order to obtain significant levels of funding for things like acquisition of land for a community park). The other grant will be used to help the Town develop a strategy for reducing incidence of structural blight throughout the community. Both of these important projects are being undertaken to enhance Hinsdale's overall attractiveness and amenities offered to our residents and visitors.

If you have specific questions about these grants, please contact Ryan Aylesworth, Town Administrator, at 413-655-2300 X 355 or town.administrator@hinsdalema.gov.

TOWN HALL REPAIRS ARE NOW COMPLETE

We are very happy to report that, with the exception of some post-construction cleaning services and re-grouting limited sections of the second floor bathrooms, the extensive building repairs and renovations that having been ongoing at Town Hall over the past several weeks are complete. Town officials wish to extend a big “thank you” to Appalachian Contractors, ServiceMaster, all the subcontractors, and the Town employees that helped coordinate and carry out all the needed repairs stemming from water damage earlier this winter. We appreciate everyone’s patience while this project was in the works!

FROM THE HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

Information Provided by Residents

Although the Town’s dedicated crew of Highway Department workers regularly monitors the condition of town-owned/town-maintained roads and other public infrastructure to identify and resolve any issues that could pose potential safety risks, we want to remind residents that informative calls are always welcomed and appreciated. Timely information provided by residents can help our Highway Department ensure that hazards are removed as quickly as possible. Please direct information and/or concerns to Rene Senecal, Highway Department Superintendent, at 413-655-2300 X 304 or dpw.highways@hinsdalema.gov.

UPDATE FROM THE POLICE CHIEF

IRS Scams

Please be advised that if you have any questions regarding this or ANY scam please call or stop at the station and talk to one of the officers.

The IRS continues to warn consumers to guard against scam phone calls from thieves intent on stealing their money or their identity. Criminals pose as the IRS to trick victims out of their money or personal information. Here are several tips to help you avoid being a victim of these scams:

- Scammers make unsolicited calls. Thieves call taxpayers claiming to be IRS officials. They demand that the victim pay a bogus tax bill. They con the victim into sending cash, usually through a prepaid debit card or wire transfer. They may also leave “urgent” callback requests through phone “robo-calls,” or via phishing email. Callers try to scare their victims. Many phone scams use threats to intimidate and bully a victim into paying. They may even threaten to arrest, deport or revoke the license of their victim if they don’t get the money.
- Scams use caller ID spoofing. Scammers often alter caller ID to make it look like the IRS or another agency is calling. The callers use IRS titles and fake badge numbers to appear legitimate. They may use the victim’s name, address and other personal information to make the call sound official.
- Cons try new tricks all the time. Some schemes provide an actual IRS address where they tell the victim to mail a receipt for the payment they make. Others use emails that contain a fake IRS document with a phone number or an email address for a reply. These scams often use official IRS letterhead in emails or regular mail that they send to their victims. They try these ploys to make the ruse look official.
- Scams cost victims over \$23 million. The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, or TIGTA, has received reports of about 736,000 scam contacts since October 2013. Nearly 4,550 victims have collectively paid over \$23 million as a result of the scam.

The IRS will not:

- Call you to demand immediate payment. The IRS will not call you if you owe taxes without first sending you a bill in the mail.
- Demand that you pay taxes and not allow you to question or appeal the amount you owe.
- Require that you pay your taxes a certain way. For instance, require that you pay with a prepaid debit card.
- Ask for your credit or debit card numbers over the phone.
- Threaten to bring in police or other agencies to arrest you for not paying.

If you don’t owe taxes, or have no reason to think that you do:

- Do not give out any information. Hang up immediately.
- Contact TIGTA to report the call. Use their “IRS Impersonation Scam Reporting” web page. You can also call 800-366-4484.
- Report it to the Federal Trade Commission. Use the “FTC Complaint Assistant” on FTC.gov. Please add "IRS Telephone Scam" in the notes.

If you know you owe, or think you may owe tax:

- Call the IRS at 800-829-1040. IRS workers can help you.

Phone scams first tried to sting older people, new immigrants to the U.S. and those who speak English as a second language. Now the crooks try to swindle just about anyone. And they've ripped-off people in every state in the nation. Stay alert to scams that use the IRS as a lure. Tax scams can happen any time of year, not just at tax time. For more, visit "[Tax Scams and Consumer Alerts](#)" on www.IRS.gov.

Each and every taxpayer has a set of fundamental rights they should be aware of when dealing with the IRS. These are your [Taxpayer Bill of Rights](#). Explore your rights and our obligations to protect them on www.IRS.gov.

License to Carry (LTC) and Firearms Identification Cards (FID)

Applications for renewals can be found at the following URL:

<http://www.mass.gov/eopss/firearms-reg-and-laws/frb/firearms-forms-and-applications.html>

Completed applications must be turned in to the Hinsdale Police Station, where applicants can schedule a subsequent appointment with the Chief of Police to review their application.

Questions about PD-related business should be directed to Susan Rathbun, Police Chief, either in-person or by email (police.chief@hinsdalema.gov).

ENCOURAGING RESIDENTS TO SIGNUP FOR "CodeRED"

Following an extensive and thorough evaluation and review of alerting systems, the Town of Hinsdale (in coordination with the Town of Dalton and other neighboring towns) has implemented the CodeRED system, a high-speed emergency notification service provided by Ormond Beach, FL-based Emergency Communications Network.

The CodeRED system is intended to serve as the backbone of Hinsdale's emergency planning and communications outreach to both citizens and local officials/personnel by using the system capabilities to send telephone calls, text messages, emails and social media in an effort to effectively inform residents to protect life and property. CodeRED, among other notification systems available, was selected for its unrivaled reliability and accuracy, as well as the system's global use.

The Town has been provided an initial database of residential and business telephone numbers, but this does not include cell phone numbers or text and email addresses. All residents are encouraged to visit the CodeRED website - <https://public.coderedweb.com/cne/en-US/BFE8C454173E> - and enter

additional contact information. Please be sure to enter zip code so that your information will connect directly to the system. You also have the option of signing up for CodeRED by filling out hard copy registration forms available at the Hinsdale Police Station or Public Library.

Please contact Ray Boldoc, Emergency Management Director, at 822-6856 or rrboldu@berkshire.net, with any questions regarding CodeRED.

HELP WANTED – HINSDALE MEMORIAL DAY COMMITTEE

The Hinsdale Memorial Day Committee is looking for assistance over the next couple of months to help out Gloria Greb. If anyone would be willing to lend her a hand, please contact her at 413-655-0206.

NEED FOOD AND/OR FUEL ASSISTANCE?

You may be eligible for financial assistance from your friends and neighbors right here in town. Contact the Berkshire Community Action Council at 413-445-4503 or visit their website at <https://bcacinc.org/>. All correspondence is strictly confidential.

MEALS ON WHEELS

The Elder Services of Berkshire County "Meals on Wheels" menu for the current month is available on line at www.esbci.org/mow/current.pdf and on the Town Hall Bulletin Board

NEWS & UPDATES FROM THE ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

Providing Proper Care & Shelter for Your Animals

As temperatures fluctuate through the winter, it is important to remember to provide proper shelter and protection for our animals. According Massachusetts General Law (Ch. 272, Section 77), the owner or keeper of an animal must provide it with proper shelter and protection from the weather during all seasons. A dog or other animal may remain outdoors provided it is in good health and weight (for its breed), had access to an appropriate shelter, and is not of an age or breed where temperatures could be potentially dangerous (sick animals or very young or old animals).

If you have any questions or concerns about these legal requirements, please contact Officer Kristin Burgess, Animal Control Officer, at kburgess@hinsdalema.gov or call 413-655-0201.

License Acquisition & Renewal

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU LICENSE AND/OR RENEW ALL DOG LICENSES BY MAY 31, 2017. AFTER THIS DATE THERE WILL BE A LATE FEE ASSESSED.

All dogs owned or kept in Hinsdale for eleven (11) consecutive days in any calendar year shall be licensed.

- Licensed period April 1 through May 31 each year
- Licenses may be obtained through the Town Clerk
- Failure to license your dog(s) can result in a fine of up to \$50, plus applicable late-fees

Animal Control Officer Burgess is collecting any donations of:

- Bleach, dawn dish soap, disinfectant wipes and sponges
- Bones, large rawhides and training treats
- Toilet paper and paper towels
- Durable dog and cat toys
- Purina One dry dog food
- Canned dog food

ANY DONATIONS ARE FOR THE SONSINI ANIMAL SHELTER
THESE DONATIONS CAN BE BROUGHT TO THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Also, as a reminder, all dogs owned or kept in the Town of Hinsdale shall be restrained from running at large 24 hours a day, each day of the year. Violations are subject to monetary fines.

Other Announcements

The Hinsdale Police Department is looking into various trainings in the area related to animal rescue and emergency response more broadly. One of these trainings is Basic Animal Rescue Training (BART), which is a Department of Homeland Security approved course that empowers emergency personnel with training, knowledge, and equipment necessary to address animal needs in emergency situations. Who should attend? First Responders (police, fire, EMT/ambulance service) and animal control professionals. If you are interested in this training, please contact Officer Kristin Burgess, Animal Control Officer, at kburgess@hinsdalema.gov or call 413-655-0201.

BURNING SEASON

The Open Burning Season in Massachusetts runs from January 15 to May 1.

According to MA Department of Environmental Protection regulation (310 CMR DEP 7.07), open burning must:

- be a minimum of 75 feet from all buildings;
- be conducted between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.; and
- take place on the land closest to the source of material to be burned.

You must also be sure air quality conditions are acceptable for burning by calling the Hinsdale Fire Department business line: 413-655-2533. You need to provide the dispatcher your name and street address. It is important to note that residents need to call the Fire Department business line every day that they wish to burn (please call the day of as opposed to the day before).

Additional information on air quality conditions can be obtained by calling the Massachusetts DEP Air Quality Hotline at (617) 556-1021 or by visiting the MassAir Online website at

<http://public.dep.state.ma.us/MassAir>

Only Certain Materials Can Be Burned:

- Brush, cane, driftwood, and forestry debris from other than commercial or industrial land clearing operations.
- Agricultural materials such as fruit tree and bush prunings, raspberry stalks, and infected bee hives for disease control.
- Trees and brush resulting from agricultural land clearing.
- Fungus infected elm wood, if no other acceptable means of disposal is available.

Burning Leaves and Other Materials Is Prohibited

- Brush, trees, cane and driftwood from commercial and/or industrial land clearing operations.
- Grass, hay, leaves, stumps, and tires.
- Construction material and debris.

For a more detailed list of safety tips for Open Burning Season, please visit the following page:

<http://www.mass.gov/eopss/docs/dfs/dfs-briefs/april-2016/9-public-education-firefactors-safety-tips-for-open-burning-season.pdf>

If you have any related questions, don't hesitate to contact Larry Turner, Fire Chief, at 413-655-2533 or fire@hinsdalema.gov

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY SAFETY TIPS

Visit www.mass.gov/KnowPlanPrepare. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has set forth a statewide campaign to encourage Massachusetts residents, families and communities to make plans and prepare for public health and medical emergencies, threats and disasters.

A preparedness checklist is available on the DPH campaign website listed above, and it is posted as a fillable pdf. Individuals can enter the personal information for themselves and all family members. This includes relevant medical information, evacuation locations, family meeting places and important identification data.

Important themes of the campaign are:

- Build an emergency kit
- Create a family communication plan
- Plan for all medical needs
- Stay safe and well
- Include your pets in planning

Again, www.mass.gov/KnowPlanPrepare is the campaign website that can provide information, tips and links for the public. Other useful websites on emergency preparedness are:

<http://www.mass.gov/eopss/agencies/mema/emergencies/hurricanes>

<http://www.mass.gov/eopss/agencies/mema/be-prepared>

<http://www.mass.gov/eopss/agencies/mema/emergencies/power-outage>

TRANSFER STATION UPDATE

We have “punch cards” on sale at Town Hall for those who don’t want to pay for disposal fees by check at the transfer station. \$20 and \$40 cards are available. The “punches” on the \$20 card are done in \$2 increments (10 punches per card) and the “punches” on the \$40 card are done in \$5 increments (eight punches per card). Cards do NOT have an expiration date and there is no limit on how many you can buy! Transfer station annual stickers (\$65) and punch cards are available for sale at Town Hall during regular office hours of the Select Board Admin Assistant. Any questions, please email Kathe Warden at select.board@hinsdalema.gov.

UPCOMING PUBLIC MEETINGS (SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

- April 11 @ 9:00 AM – Water & Sewer Committee
- April 11 @ 7:00 PM – Conservation Commission
- April 12 @ 5:00 PM - Mission & Vision Working Group
- April 12 @ 7:00 PM - Select Board
- April 19 @ 6:30 PM – Board of Assessors
- April 24 @ 9:30 AM – Water & Sewer Committee
- April 26 @ 1:00 PM - Select Board (public hearing for commercial solar array special permit application)
- April 26 @ 5:00 PM - Mission & Vision Working Group
- April 26 @ 7:00 PM - Select Board (regular meeting, plus review of Annual Town Meeting Warrant)
- April 27 @ 6:00 PM – Finance Committee (review of Annual Town Meeting Warrant)
- May 1 @ 5:30 PM – Council on Aging
- May 2 @ 9:30 AM – Board of Assessors
- May 2 @ 6:30 PM – Planning Board
- May 4 @ 7:00 PM – Finance Committee
- May 8 @ 9:30 AM – Water & Sewer Committee
- *May 17 @ 7:00 PM – Annual Town Meeting (Kittredge Elementary)*
- *May 20 from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM – Annual Local Elections*

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS (SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

- April 26 @ 6:00 PM – Hospice Care in the Berkshires (HCIB) is hosting a workshop entitled “New to Grief” at HCIB’s office in Pittsfield (877 South Street, Suite 1W). Losing a loved one can be a difficult time, especially during the first few months. The flood of emotions can leave us feeling exhausted and confused. Come join us for this informational meeting on the grief process, what to expect, and how to cope. Anyone who has lost a loved one is welcome to attend.
- May 15 @ 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM – Super Senior Birthday Party (includes a turkey dinner with all the fixings for Residents 90+ Years of Age) Sponsored by the Council on Aging at Ozzie’s Steak & Eggs (26 Maple Street)