

# Upper Milford Township Newsletter

**Chairman**  
Susan J. Smith

**Vice-Chairman**  
Daniel J. Mohr

**Supervisor**  
Henry H. Kradjel

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Spring / Summer 2005

Editor: Kim Shaak

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## Act 537—Vera Cruz Sewer Project

The Vera Cruz Sewer Project has been an ongoing project for many years. In early December the Township withdrew its Act 537 Plan from the Pennsylvania DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) review process pending necessary revisions. During this time Manager DeLong, SEO Brian Miller and LCA (Lehigh County Authority) have been coordinating efforts to resubmit a revised plan. Various things have been completed, including detailed map-

ping of the proposed Sewer Project Area, detailed cost estimates and analysis for the project and impacts to the homeowners affected by the proposed sewer.

There will be a future Public Meeting for the Sewer Plan. This information will be announced at a later date. On Good Friday, March 25th the Board of Supervisors held a Special Meeting in which they met with representatives of U.S. Senator Rick Santorum's office. The purpose

of that meeting was to discuss the Sewer Project. The Township was advised to proceed with a request for an appropriation for the amount of \$1,000,000 for the proposed project. At this time, Manager DeLong has submitted the necessary paperwork for the appropriation. A decision has not been made on the appropriation funding but if the funds become available they will provide additional much needed assistance to the impacted residents.

## Environmental Advisory Council

At the January 20th, 2005 Board of Supervisors Meeting the Supervisors approved the creation of a Joint Environmental Advisory Council with Emmaus Borough. On March 17th, 2005 the Board of Supervisors appointed the following four people to the Joint Environmental Advisory Council: Diana Erney, Angelika Forndran, William Ahlert, and Timothy Bollinger. Representatives from Emmaus Borough are Steve Baier,

Brian Evans, Katrina Kraft and Chris Kita. The first meeting was held on March 29th, 2005. The council has completed its internal organization and adopted its bylaws and is looking forward to becoming a community asset.

Meetings of the Emmaus Borough / Upper Milford Township Joint Environmental Advisory Council will be scheduled at 7:00 p.m. on the fourth (4th) Monday of each month

and will alternate between Emmaus Borough Council Chambers, 28 South Fourth Street, Emmaus on the odd months (January, March, May, July, September and November) and Upper Milford Township Meeting Room 5831 King's Highway South, Old Zionsville on the even months (February, April, June, August, October, and December). Special or re-scheduled meetings will be advertised if so needed.

## King's Highway School ?

There has been a lot of speculation as to what will happen to the King's Highway School if the East Penn School District decides to close it. We have been informed that there is a 90-day waiting period before a final decision can be made by the School District.

Previously, the Township has provided written communication to the School District expressing interest in the plans for the property.

There have been discussions regarding the development of an ad hoc committee. The purpose of the committee would be to coordinate the development of ideas of what could or should be done with the King's Highway School, should the Township be interested in obtaining it. The committee could make recommendations and propose ideas to the Township Supervisors, which would aid them in making a decision

on the pursuit of this project.

Before the Township Supervisors' commit any funds to a project of this magnitude, they would like input and support from the community. **VOLUNTEERS** are needed. If you would like to volunteer to serve on or help set up this committee, please contact Secretary/Treasurer, Kim Shaak at (610) 966—3223.

~ **Fire Companies are always looking for New Volunteers** ~

## Household Hazardous Waste

Lehigh County has sponsored two, two-day programs dedicated to the proper disposal of household hazardous waste materials for this year. The Household Hazardous Waste Program is designed to help residents dispose of paints, solvents, cleaners and other products not safe to dispose of in municipal waste stream. The two, two-day drop off dates are April 16—17, and September 17—18 from 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. at the Lehigh County Pretreatment Plant in Fogelsville, PA. Residents that are interested in this program must **pre-register** by calling the Office of Solid Waste Management at 610-782-3046. The Household Hazardous Waste Program is offered by Lehigh County at no cost to the participant.

You may go to the Township's website to see a copy of the memorandum from Lehigh County and see a list of acceptable and unacceptable household wastes that will be accepted at the program.

### **Current List of Trash Haulers:**

**A.J. Blosenski, Inc.—610-942-2707; BFI—215-723-0400; Chest-Mont Disposal—610-524-3200; CHRIN—Commercial Only—610-258-8737; J.P. Mascaros & Son—610-434-2501; John's Hauling—small truck—610-965-3160; Reiss Brothers Hauling—610-346-7535; Waste Management—Allentown—610-285-6321**

## The Basics of Home Composting

You can make your own compost. Composting is a natural process. Organic materials such as leaves, grass, and vegetable scraps are broken down by microorganisms, forming a rich soil-like substance called compost or humus.

**Keys to successful home composting:** **Organic Materials**—A good mix consists of three parts "browns" (materials such as dead leaves that are high in carbon) and one part "greens" (such as fresh grass clippings and garden prunings that are high in nitrogen). **Moisture**—Composting materials should feel moist but not overly soggy. **Temperature**—Composting materials should feel warm to the touch except in the cold winter months. **Air**—To prevent unpleasant

odors that can occur when materials decompose without oxygen, compost should be turned regularly to ensure that air is reaching the center of the pile.

**High Carbon "Browns"** - Leaves, dead plants, straw, shredded paper, shredded twigs, pine needles, sawdust from untreated wood.

**High Nitrogen "Greens"** - Grass, green weeds, manure, alfalfa or clover, seaweed or pond algae, non-meat and non-dairy kitchen scraps.

**Sources of Composting Organisms**—Old Compost, soil, cow manure, chicken manure, horse manure, commercially available composting "starters", old compost.

## Easy Steps to a Low-Maintenance Lawn

Grass clippings make up a large percentage of the household waste produced each year. About 1,000 square feet of lawn in Pennsylvania can produce 200—500 pounds of clippings during the growing season.

A simple alternative to bagging clipping is "grasscycling". Simply leave clippings on your lawn where they break down in 7—14 days. The clippings act as top dressing fertilizer and help keep your lawn green and healthy.

**Hints for practicing "grasscycling" in your backyard:**

- Mow often and cut less than 1/3 of the grass growth when mowing.
- Mow when conditions are dry and use a sharp mower blade.
- Don't let large clumps of grass clippings accumulate on the lawn.
- Avoid overuse of chemicals and fertilizers.
- Water your lawn less frequently, but for longer periods of time.
- Mulching mowers that grind grass clippings can be used, but are not necessary.

Grass clippings also can be used as a surface mulch around vegetables or flowers to inhibit weed growth and retain soil moisture. Remember to keep clippings at least two inches away from young plants to avoid "burning" the new growth. Put grass clippings in your compost pile to add extra nutrients. To avoid odors, no more than one third of your composting pile should be made up of grass clippings.

## Tax Collector

The Tax Collector, Bill Weber, will be at the Township Office on the following dates: Saturday, May 14th and 21st, 2005 from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 (noon). He will be available to receive payment for property taxes. The Tax Collector's Regular Office hours are from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Monday and Thursday, 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. on Wednesday. Other hours are by appointment only. The Tax Collector's address is 5563 Acorn Drive, Emmaus, PA 18049. For more information you may contact the Tax Collector at (610) 966—5355 during regular business hours.

## Pavilion Rentals

Pavilions at Jasper and Lenape Parks can be reserved, for a fee, by either calling the Township Office at 610-966-3223 or by stopping in at the Township Office during office hours (8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.). The Township has recently made a change that the Township will now accept reservations a year in advance.

## Newsletter Input

Residents are encouraged to make suggestions for articles in the Township Newsletter. Should you have a suggestion, please contact Kim Shaak at the Township Office.

The purpose of this newsletter is for it to be informative to our Township Residents. A Township Newsletter will be going out twice a year.

## Permits Required

Upper Milford Township is a zoned community and the following permits are required.

**Bonfire Permit** - Required at least ten (10) days in advance of the proposed bonfire.

**Building Permit** - Required for new construction, additions or alterations to exterior of existing structures, deck, patio, pool, spa or hot tub, electrical work or wiring, plumbing, HVAC, and shed.

**Driveway Permit** - Required for the construction of a driveway or other means of ingress or egress onto a Township or PennDOT road.

**Fence or Wall Permit** - Required for the installation of any fence or wall over 2' high.

**Grading Permit** - Required if not in conjunction with another permit.

**Moving Permit** - Required when moving into, out of, or within Upper Milford

Township. There is no fee for this.

**Occupancy Permit** - Required prior to occupying a newly constructed building.

**Park Permit** - Required in order to reserve a pavilion in a township park.

**Peddler's Permit** - Must be obtained before engaging in solicitation or peddling in Upper Milford Township.

**Sewage Permit** - Required for the installation of a new septic system and for the repair or enlargement of an existing system.

**Tree Cutting and Logging Permit** - Required to cut or remove trees.

**Use or Change of Use Permits** - Required for any activity, occupation, business, or operation carried on or intended to be carried on in a structure or on a lot.

Other permits may be required for certain activities. For specific information call (610) 966-3223.

## How a Septic System Functions

There are two types of anaerobic (without oxygen) on-lot systems—gravity distribution systems and pressure distribution systems. In both types, there are three major components: (1) the septic tank, (2) the distribution box (gravity system) or dosing tank (pressure system), (3) the absorption area or drainfield.

Sewage flows to the septic tank, where the primary treatment process takes place. In the tank, the heaviest matter settles to the bottom (forming sludge) and the lighter matter (scum) floats on top of the clear liquid. The sludge and scum must be pumped out regularly every three years.

The liquid and some suspended solids flow out of the tank to a distribution box or dosing tank, which is then directed to the absorption area. This liquid exits the pipes into a layer of gravel and then percolates through the soil for additional treatment. The bacteria in the soil neutralizes many

of the contaminants in the wastewater.

Signs of an on-lot system in trouble include:

- Toilet runs sluggish.
- Sewer odors in the house and / or drinking water.
- Sponginess around septic tank, distribution box or dosing tank and absorption area.
- Surfacing raw sewage.
- Dosing pump runs constantly or not at all.
- Dosing tank alarm light is on.
- Backup of sewage into laundry tubs or other fixtures.

For more information regarding septic systems you may call the Township's Sewage Enforcement Officer, Brian Miller at (610) 966—3223.

## Census

The U.S. Census Bureau began expanding the American Community Survey (ACS) throughout the nation in December 2004. This survey will allow the Census Bureau to conduct a short form-only census in 2010 and to provide you with socio-economic information every year, rather than just once a decade. **Each month**, a sample of different households in Upper Milford Township will receive the ACS questionnaire to complete and return by mail. **Response to this survey is mandatory.** You can learn more about the ACS at <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>. The U.S. Census Bureau is also recruiting permanent part-time workers to conduct interviews with those households that do not complete the forms. The Census Bureau's phone number is 800-262-4236 extension 1 to learn more and to obtain an application.

## Community Map

The Township is in the process of allowing CMC Communications, Inc. to develop a "Community Information Guide", which will replace the year 2002 version. This guide and map are sponsored by local community businesses and will be distributed to the Township resident at no cost when it is completed.

Township staff is currently verifying the sponsor information and mapping. If you are interested in this publication you may view additional information at <http://www.communityinfoguide.com>.

The final publication will also be linked to Upper Milford Township's web site and extra copies will be made available to new township residents.



## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO WITH YOUR STREAMSIDE PROPERTY?

### MANAGING, RESTORING, AND MAINTAINING LEHIGH COUNTY'S RIPARIAN AREAS TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY AND PROTECT STREAM BANKS

*Submitted By Rebecca Hayden, Watershed Specialist*

With all the rain this past year, the Conservation District has received numerous calls from landowners experiencing severe erosion of stream banks on their property, and many more calls from others concerned about floodwater property damage. This year's high rainfall has combined with increasing storm water running off of ever-more impervious surfaces, as land development replaces forests and farm fields with roofs, parking lots, and roads. This is creating higher flood peaks than many life-long Lehigh County residents ever recall seeing, damaging stream banks, flooding basements, and eroding soil. As the Conservation District has gone out to look at these sites, we have found that many streamside property owners are caring for their stream banks in ways that exacerbate erosion damage. Further, as sediment is now the leading cause of water pollution in the area, many more Lehigh Valley residents are affected by this problem than just streamside property owners. Anglers, recreational boaters, park visitors, and municipal water utilities are among those adversely impacted by sediment pollution of our waters. Dealing with the problem of stream bank erosion is one of the District's top priorities to improve water quality.

The problem of excessive flooding and stream bank erosion has two major causes. First, as land development paves over forests and fields, rainfall, which once soaked into the ground, is now rapidly running off during storms, creating greater, and longer, flood peaks. This means that stream channels now carry a greater volume of water, for longer periods, during storms than they have historically. This large amount of fast-moving water has a great ability to erode stream banks, creating sediment pollution.

The second cause of stream bank erosion is the way in which the stream bank property itself is cared for by the landowner. Historically, Eastern Pennsylvania was nearly entirely forested. This meant that streams had a variety of mature vegetation growing along their banks – a mix of grasses, shrubs, and trees. The ground cover provided by fallen leaves, combined with the deep roots of the grasses and shrubs, was very stable, and acted to prevent soil erosion. Further, the streamside area, which was naturally prone to flooding, could flood regularly without creating lasting effects. Streams could jump their banks without disturbing more than the wildlife.

By contrast, as people built houses near streams, they generally tried to make the water part of their home landscape by removing the vegetation that kept the stream banks stable and replacing it with lawn grass, which was then kept closely mowed. At the same time, floodplains have become filled with valuable structures so when floods happen, they cause costly damage. Beyond that, bridge abutments, dams, and diversions have changed the shape of the stream bank, historically straightening them, leaving the flood waters nowhere to go. The combination of removal of riparian vegetation with the modification of the streams and floodplains has turned normal flood events into expensive disasters. Addressing this problem requires a combination of different approaches, among them expansion of flood plains, removal of stream modifications, and the proper management of riparian buffer zones.

#### **Riparian Buffers**

The term "riparian" refers to the area directly adjacent to a stream or river. This area is of particular importance to water quality and wildlife. A properly maintained riparian buffer has the potential to provide habitat to birds, amphibians, and mammals, and to improve fish habitat. The riparian zone also has the potential to capture pollutants being transported overland before they enter the stream. Plants in the riparian zone can trap sediment, capture nutrients such as phosphorous and nitrates, and neutralize some chemicals that would have a toxic influence on stream life. Further, riparian areas growing in their natural state have the capacity to absorb and hold floodwaters, decreasing flood intensity downstream.

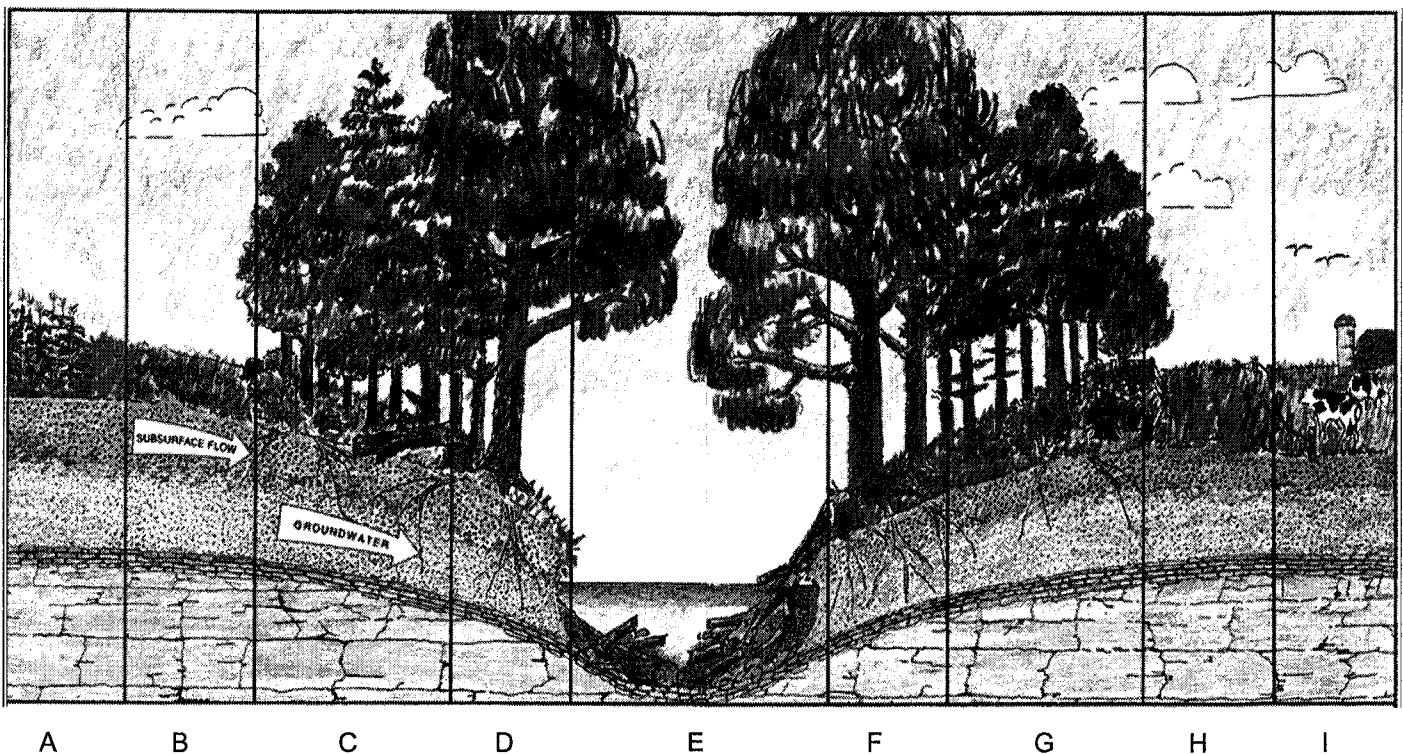
One of the basic first steps in maintaining a healthy stream is to allow full-height native vegetation to grow along the banks instead of mowed lawn grass with its shallow root system. While grasses that grow in farm fields may have roots greater than two feet deep, lawn grass (such as Kentucky bluegrass) has roots only one or two inches deep. When fast-moving floodwaters flow through stream channels protected only by closely mowed grass, there is no root structure in place to keep that dirt from washing away. However, when the stream bank is protected by natural vegetation with deep roots and tall stems, the dirt is bound in place.

Happily, this is a simple problem to correct. The easiest solution is to stop mowing near the stream bank and let whatever plants are there grow up to their full height. This approach will increase the ability of the grasses and shrubs to trap sediment and bind the soil together. The taller plants will take up excess nutrients as well. However, doing this creates the strong possibility that non-native invasive plants, such as multiflora rose and jimson weed, will take over and begin to spread. Also, few trees are likely to spring up on their own in areas that had previously been lawn. Trees are needed for shading the stream, which is beneficial for fish, who prefer cool water. Further down the line, fallen woody debris creates hiding spots for fish to live and spawn.

A second, preferable solution is to re-plant the riparian area with native plants and trees. This option takes more effort, as the newly-planted vegetation will require care for the first few years, removing non-native competitors to make sure the right plants get established. However, the benefit of replanting the riparian area is that the landowner gets to choose what plants to grow. For example, plants can be chosen to attract butterflies, deter deer, for shade, for colors of flowers and foliage, and for many other site-specific conditions. A good source for further information on the web is Bohman's Hill Wildflower Preserve at [www.bhwp.org](http://www.bhwp.org). Plant lists are even available for the area under walnut trees, where vegetation can be difficult to establish. Look under their native plants and resources fact sheets.

### How wide should the buffer be?

The answer to that depends upon what the goals are. One size doesn't fit all – it depends upon what you want the buffer to do. There isn't one generic buffer that will keep the water clean, stabilize the banks, protect fish and wildlife, and satisfy human demands upon the land. On smaller streams, good erosion control may only require covering the banks with shrubs and trees and a 35' managed grass buffer. If there is active bank erosion, or on larger streams, the width needs to be greater. If you are interested in installing a riparian buffer zone on your property, contact the Lehigh County Conservation District at 610-391-9583.



#### **A. Cropland -**

Sediment, fertilizer and pesticides are carefully managed.

#### **B. Zone 3 Runoff Control -**

Concentrated flows are converted to dispersed flows by water bars or spreaders, facilitating ground contact and infiltration.

#### **C. Zone 2 Managed Forest -**

Filtration, deposition, plant uptake, anaerobic denitrification and other natural processes remove sediment and nutrients from runoff and subsurface flows.

#### **D. Zone 1 Undisturbed Forest -**

Maturing trees provide detritus to the stream and help maintain lower water temperature vital to fish habitat.

#### **E. Stream Bottom -**

Debris dams hold detritus for processing by aquatic fauna and provide cover and cooling shade for fish and other stream dwellers.

#### **F. Zone 1 Undisturbed Forest -**

Tree removal is generally not permitted in this zone.

#### **G. Zone 2 Managed Forest -**

Periodic harvesting is necessary in Zone 2 to remove nutrients sequestered in tree stems and branches and to maintain nutrient uptake through vigorous tree growth.

#### **H. Zone 3 Runoff Control -**

Controlled grazing or haying, lawns and other uses can be permitted in Zone 3 under certain conditions.

#### **I. Pasture - Lawns - Development -**

Watering facilities and livestock are kept out of the Riparian Zone insofar as practicable. Sediment, pesticides and fertilizer carefully managed.

## UPPER MILFORD TOWNSHIP

5831 King's Highway South  
PO Box 210  
Old Zionsville, PA 18068  
Phone: 610-966-3223  
Fax: 610-966-5184  
Email: [info@uppermilford.net](mailto:info@uppermilford.net)  
Website: <http://www.uppermilford.net>

### Office Hours:

Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.  
Saturdays and Sundays the office is closed.

### MEETING SCHEDULES:

#### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1st and 3rd Thursday of the Month  
Workshop Meeting at 7:00 pm  
Regular Meeting at 7:30 pm

#### ZONING HEARING BOARD:

2nd Monday of each Month at 7:30 pm

#### PLANNING COMMISSION:

The Monday preceding the 1st Thursday of  
the Month at 7:30 pm

#### RECREATION COMMISSION:

3rd Monday of the each Month at 7:30 pm

### From the Residents

Mr. Scott Bieber, a resident of Upper Milford Township submitted a proposal to the Board of Supervisors at the March 3, 2005 Township Meeting asking the Board of Supervisors to place a referendum question on the fall election ballot. This proposal and referendum would ask the township voters if they favor the imposition of a tax increase, which funds generated would be used solely for the purpose of preserving Open Space, i.e. buying development rights, conservation easements, etc.

The discussion was continued at the Board of Supervisors meeting held on March 17, 2005 when additional residents in support of this concept voiced their opinions on the Open Space preservation concept. The Board of Supervisors at the same meeting authorized the formation of an ad hoc committee to look into this project in greater detail.

The Board of Supervisors is aware that this concept was approved and taxes were levied for the specific purpose of Open Space preservation in

other communities but point out that if the process were to be implemented and the question were to be placed on the November ballot and should the majority of the voters approve the referendum question the Board of Supervisors would be obligated to adopt the Open Space Tax resulting in an additional expense to residents or property owners.

The Township sent out a Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Environmental Plan questionnaire in 2003 soliciting public input and opinion. Township residents overwhelmingly responded in favor of preserving Open Space but the majority indicated that they did not want to pay additional taxes for the purpose of preserving Open Space.

Please voice your opinion on this issue. Any information, concerns or opinions will be forwarded to the soon to be formed Open Space Committee. If you are interested in this project please forward your contact information to Secretary / Treasurer Kim Shaak at (610) 966—3223.

### Yard Waste / Recycling

The Township accepts yard wastes dropped off by residents at the Township's Yard Waste Drop Off area behind the Township's Garage accessed via Church View Road. Materials may only be dropped off by Township residents and this service is not offered to lawn maintenance or landscape businesses.

Grass, leaves and brush or branches must be kept separated and unloaded at the appropriate location as identified by the signage at the site.

Branches are limited to 4" diameter and must be no longer than 8'. Larger sizes must be delivered to the Lehigh County Yard Waste Facility.

The Township, most of the time, has a supply of single ground wood mulch available to the public. Residents may load their own vehicles at any time or the Township will load your truck or trailer by appointment only. Appointment hours are based on employee availability so please call prior to stopping by.

Telephone books may be recycled by dropping them off in the foyer at the Township Offices.