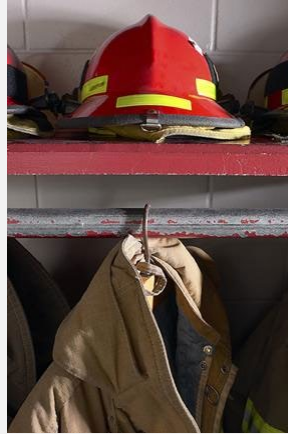


# Michigan Township **INSIGHTS**

July 7, 2023

## Monday is deadline to submit for MI Fire Equipment grant

Townships and authorities with part-time, on-call or volunteer firefighters have only until **Monday, July 10** to apply for a [MI Fire Equipment Grant](#) to purchase fire equipment. The grant program provides up to \$10,000 to purchase fire equipment and may also be requested to reimburse for eligible fire equipment expenses incurred on or after Aug. 1, 2022. Additional information—like FAQs, program guidelines and application material—is available on [the grant program website](#). Questions on the grant program or eligibility should be emailed as soon as possible to [Treas-MIFireGrant@michigan.gov](mailto:Treas-MIFireGrant@michigan.gov).



## Changes to disabled veterans property tax exemption pass Senate

Taken together, three bills recently passed by the Senate would make changes to the disabled veterans property tax exemption. [Senate Bill 176](#), sponsored by Sen. Sylvia Santana (D-Detroit), [SB 330](#), sponsored by Sen. Mary Cavanagh (D-Redford Chtr. Twp.), and [SB 364](#), sponsored by Sen. John Damoose (R-Harbor Springs), would require a property tax exemption on real property used and owned as a homestead by a disabled veteran or the veteran's surviving spouse granted on or after Jan. 1, 2025, to remain in effect until it was rescinded by the individual granted the exemption or denied by the assessor. Additionally, the legislation would prescribe methods to prorate the exemption for a qualified individual who did not use and own the property as a homestead for the entire tax year, proposes a local assessor audit program to audit the exemption and allowing an assessor to deny a new claim or rescind an existing claim, and would include, for tax year 2023 only, a denial of an exemption by the board of review as a

Easy-to-use and affordable

## TOWNSHIP WEBSITES!



**STG** VIEW OUR PORTFOLIO →

### Upcoming MTA Training

#### [Now You Know webinars](#)

- \*\*July 12: [Summer Legislative Update](#)
- \*\*Aug. 9: [Spending Public Money](#)

#### [U.P. Education Extravaganza](#)

- \*\*July 18: [Cemetery Management & Administration](#)
- \*\*July 18: [Insights into Planning & Zoning](#)
- \*\*July 19: [Financial Fundamentals](#)
- \*\*July 19: [Hot Topics for Township Fire Departments](#)

#### [August Workshops](#)

- \*\*Aug. 1: [Fundamentals of Assessment & Taxation](#)
- \*\*Aug. 2: [At Your Service: Meeting Township Needs](#)

### MTA QUICK LINKS

[MTA COVID Relief Webpage](#)

"qualified error" that could be corrected upon appeal to a board of review. The bills now move to the House for consideration.

JOIN MTA AT THE  
**EDUCATION  
EXTRAVAGANZA**  
COMING TO THE ISLAND RESORT IN HARRIS  
JULY 18 & JULY 19  
**CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE!**

### **Bill would make more housing financing available**

Communities would see more financing available to middle income households for housing under a bill recently passed by the Senate. [Senate Bill 293](#), sponsored by Sen. Kristen McDonald Rivet (D-Bay City) and supported by MTA, would amend the State Housing Development Authority Act to expand the scope of the program to make its financing for middle-income housing projects. The proposed change in the statute would not eliminate any funds from housing for low-income, but would provide greater flexibility for the use of funding available. The changes would provide indirect benefits to the state and local units of government because of increased middle-income housing volume, such as increased property and income tax revenue. The bill will next be considered by the House.

### **Sixteen- and 17-year-olds could pre-register to vote under House bill**

A bill that allows individuals who meet citizenship and residency requirements to pre-register to vote if they are between 16 and 17.5 years old passed the House last week. Current law allows 17.5-year-olds to register. Under [House Bill 4569](#), sponsored by Rep. Betsy Coffia (D- Traverse City), the pre-registered individuals would become officially registered when they turn 17.5 years old, but would not be permitted to vote until they turn 18. The bill now moves to the Senate for further consideration.

[Answer Center](#)  
[Training](#)  
[Advocacy](#)  
[Classifieds](#)  
[Community Connection](#)  
[Webcasts](#)  
[Store](#)  
[Township Governance](#)  
[Academy](#)  
[Allied Service Providers](#)  
[NATaT](#)

#### **ALLIED SERVICE PROVIDERS**



[\\* Asphalt Materials, Inc. \\_](#)

[\\* Bauckham, Sparks, Thall, Seeber & Kaufman, PC](#)

[\\* Consumers Energy](#)

[\\* Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC](#)

[\\* Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith, P.C.](#)

[\\_ \\* Hartleb Agency](#)

[\\* ITC Holdings Corp.](#)

[\\* Rosati, Schultz, Joppich & Amtsbuechler, P.C.](#)

## Bills codifying Affordable Care Act pass House

A five-bill package that would codify into state law various provisions of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, including some that have been challenged in federal court, passed the House last week. [House Bill 4619](#), sponsored by Rep. Julie Rogers (D-Kalamazoo), would prohibit an insurer from limiting the amount of coverage available or charging different rates based on gender, gender identity and sexual orientation. [HB 4620](#), sponsored by Rep. Kimberly Edwards (D-Eastpointe), would prohibit an insurer from limiting or excluding coverage for a pre-existing condition. [HB 4621](#), sponsored by Rep. John Fitzgerald (D-Wyoming), would require health insurance policies that offer dependent coverage to provide that coverage until a dependent has reached 26 years of age. [HB 4622](#), sponsored by Rep. Reggie Miller (D-Van Buren Charter Twp.), would prohibit an insurer from instituting annual or lifetime limits on the dollar value of insurance coverage. [HB 4623](#), sponsored by Rep. Matt Koleszar (D-Plymouth Charter Twp.), would require insurers that offer insurance in the individual or small group market to provide coverage for several services, including emergency services, prescription drugs, hospitalization, and preventive and wellness services. The bills now move to the Senate for consideration.



\* [Mika Meyers, PLC](#)



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## Michigan Energy Assistance Program to continue

Local units of government that contract with the state Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) to provide energy assistance can continue to do so. Set to expire after Sept. 30 of this year, the Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP) will continue to aid eligible low-income households with their home energy costs. [Senate Bill 288](#), sponsored by Sen. Sam Singh (D-East Lansing), repealed the end date for the program—originally enacted in 2012 and extended twice since that time. The law requires MDHHS to administer the program through payment or partial payment of eligible low-income households for electricity, natural gas, propane, heating oil or other heating fuel bills. The assistance also includes services that will enable participants to become more self-sufficient in minimizing, budgeting and paying their energy costs. The department, in consultation with the Michigan Public Service Commission, can contract with public or private entities, including local units of

government, to provide energy assistance. The bill was given immediate effect and will be effective upon signature by the governor.

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## Peace officer definition expanded in Mental Health Code

Currently, the Mental Health Code authorizes a peace officer to take an individual into protective custody if, for among other reasons, the person presents a danger to themselves or others due to a mental illness. The provisions generally include only state troopers, county sheriffs and deputies, and local police officers. [Senate Bill 59](#), sponsored by Sen. John Cherry (D-Flint), expands the definition of peace officer to now include individuals licensed under the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards Act to include conservation officers such as park rangers, and other officers, including members of a campus public safety department. These officers undergo similar training in both de-escalation and the use of force. If an individual is incapacitated or in distress and in need of being placed in protective custody and transported to a hospital or mental health screening facility for their own safety or the safety of others, the first on the scene is often a conservation officer for an incident at a state park or a department of public safety officer on a college campus. The changes will take effect once the governor signs the bill.

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## MIHI encourages residents to weigh in on findings, join final listening tour stops

The Michigan High-speed Internet Office (MIHI) is gearing up to complete the final 10 stops of its statewide MI Connected Future

Tour, aimed at collecting input from Michigan residents on how best to prioritize the [\\$1.5 billion federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment \(BEAD\) funding the state will receive](#) to deliver affordable, equitable and reliable high-speed internet service throughout the state. During the first portion of the tour, MIHI gathered community input and feedback about the internet needs that are most important to the state's communities, especially topics like affordability, accessibility, digital skills development and access to internet enabled devices. The next 10 stops of the tour aim to present MIHI's findings and provide a high-level overview of the draft Michigan Five-Year Action Plan and Michigan Digital



Equity Plan, which was written based on feedback from the initial stops of the tour. Attendees will be able to provide their thoughts in the form of an official public comment on the findings before the final Michigan Five-Year Action Plan and the Michigan Digital Equity Plan is created. Starting the week of July 10, the MIHI team will be visiting the following locations and encourage local officials and residents to provide input and feedback. To learn more about the next leg of the MI Connected Future Tour and register to attend, visit [Michigan.gov/MIConnectedFuture](https://Michigan.gov/MIConnectedFuture).

- **Escanaba:** July 11, 5 to 7 p.m., Bay College, JHUC 952 Conference Room, 2001 N. Lincoln Rd., Escanaba, MI 49829
- **Petoskey:** July 12, 5 to 7 p.m., Emmet County EMS, 1201 Eppler Rd., Petoskey, MI 49770
- **Fremont/Newaygo:** July 18, 5 to 7 p.m., Newaygo County RESA, Multi-Media Room, 4747 W. 48th St., Fremont, MI 49412
- **Atlanta:** July 20, 5 to 7 p.m., Atlanta Senior Center, 11780 M-33, Atlanta, MI 49709
- **Beaverton:** July 25, 5 to 7 p.m., Beaverton Junior/Senior High School, Cafeteria, 3090 Crockett Rd., Beaverton, MI 48612
- **Sandusky:** July 27, 5 to 7 p.m., Westpark Inn, 440 W. Sanilac Rd., Sandusky, MI 48471
- **Okemos:** Aug. 1, 5 to 7 p.m., Okemos Event Center, 2187 University Park Dr., Okemos, MI 48864
- **Three Rivers:** Aug. 2, 5 to 7 p.m., George Washington Carver Community Center, 436 Jefferson St., Three Rivers, MI 49093
- **Howell:** Aug. 9, 5 to 7 p.m., Cleary University, 3725 Cleary Dr., Howell, MI 48843
- **Detroit:** Aug. 10, 5 to 7 p.m., Focus: Hope, 1400 Oakman Blvd., Detroit, MI 48238

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## Share concerns on state's Rural Perspectives and Priorities Survey

If you live or work in a rural community, the Michigan Office of Rural

Development is seeking

your input on issues of greatest concern to your community. The [Rural Michigan Perspectives and Priorities Survey](#) will identify



issues most important to local officials, residents and business leaders in rural communities across Michigan. Your input is critical to uplifting rural priorities in policies and programming for the Office of Rural Development as it continues to prioritize outreach and engagement.

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## Rural Emergency Preparedness Resources webinar is July 18

Join a [Accessing Emergency Preparedness and Response Resources for Rural Communities](#) webinar on **July 18 at noon** for a discussion on accessing resources for emergency preparedness and response. Hosted by the Rural Health Information HUB, the webinar will include speakers from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Center for Health Emergency Preparedness and Response at the Texas Department of State Health Service, and city of Gulf Shores, Ala.

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## Updates and reminders from the Bureau of Elections

**Election inspectors.** Election inspectors for the August election must be appointed by the township election commission no later than **July 18**. Election commission



meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Act, and formal action must be taken to appoint election inspectors. When recruiting election inspectors, townships can hire anyone registered to vote within the state, as well as 16- or 17-year-olds. In addition, the inspectors can be of any state-recognized political party; however, they may not choose “independent.” Election inspectors appointed by the election commission must have received proper election inspector certification within the last two years from a county or authorized jurisdiction. For more information, review [Appointing and Training Election Inspectors](#) in the *Election Official Manual*.

**Weekend hours.** All clerks must report the hours the clerk's office will be open for absentee voting the Saturday and/or Sunday prior to the Aug. 8 election. The clerk's office is required to maintain a minimum of eight hours over those two days, which may be split between Saturday and Sunday, or all conducted on one day. This information must be entered into the Qualified Voter File (QVF) no

later than **Monday, July 10**, and also must be posted with other township postings in a central location. See the QVF Manual Chapter 11—Clerk Contacts in the [eLearning Center](#) for further instructions.

**Reimbursement updates.** The state Bureau of Elections (BOE) has not yet begun processing reimbursement submissions for prepaid postage and drop box submissions. **For 2022 Election Security Grants**, all reimbursement requests that have been received with full and proper documentation have been processed. If the bureau has contacted the township clerk because additional information or documentation is needed, or if the clerk believes they have submitted all required documentation and have not yet received reimbursement, contact the BOE at [MDOS-BOEreimbursement@michigan.gov](mailto:MDOS-BOEreimbursement@michigan.gov) with that documentation or questions as soon as possible.

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## **EGLE announces grant, webinar for water conservation best practices**

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) is seeking [requests for proposal](#) for a project to identify innovations and technological advancements in water conservation best practices that can benefit Michigan’s water sectors and support long-term sustainability of Michigan’s water resources. The project also will advance Michigan’s goals under the MI Healthy Climate Plan to protect public health and the environment. Among the entities eligible to apply are local units of government. One chosen applicant will receive a maximum of \$100,000. The anticipated project award period is December 2023 to November 2024. A webinar will be held **July 25 at 2 p.m.** to explain this funding opportunity. The webinar is free, but [registration](#) is required. Complete applications must be received no later than **5 p.m., Aug. 28**, sent to [Frantzk@michigan.gov](mailto:Frantzk@michigan.gov) with the subject line “Water Conservation BMP Application” and the application attached as a PDF file. Applicants unable to submit by email should call (517) 275-0829.

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## **Updates on federal funding programs**

- The [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#) is looking for pass-through entities, including local governments that have relationships with underserved communities, to develop and implement a subaward funding program to fund restoration projects that advance environmental justice in those communities. Applications are due **Aug. 11**.

- The [Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation Program](#) offers planning and resilience improvement grants to ensure surface transportation resilience to natural hazards including flooding, sea level rise and extreme weather events. The application window closes **Aug. 18**.
- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has made \$575 million in funding available for the [NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge](#), which seeks to support projects that build the resilience of coastal and Great Lakes communities to extreme weather and other climate impacts. Technical assistance is also available. Letters of Intent are due **Aug. 21**.

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## Nearly 100 parcels of DNR land available through online auctions in August and September

Lake frontage, river frontage and vacant forested acreage surrounded by private ownership are just some of the 95 parcels available in the next round of surplus land auctions from the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Land is available in a dozen counties throughout the Lower and Upper Peninsulas. Nine online auctions will feature available land parcels by county:

- Aug. 4—Lake County
- Aug. 10—Montcalm County
- Aug. 15—Alger, Chippewa and Mackinac Counties
- Aug. 16—Dickinson County
- Aug. 22—Oscoda County
- Aug. 23—Presque Isle County
- Aug. 29—Allegan and Kent Counties
- Sept. 6—Midland County
- Sept. 7—Iosco County

Pre-register and get more information about the online auction schedule at [Michigan Public Land Auction Tax-Sale info](#). All bidders must register before a property's auction date. A detailed list including minimum bid, acreage, maps and location information of offered properties can be found at [Land Auctions and Sales](#). Interested bidders are encouraged to review the [DNR Land Sales: Terms and Conditions](#).

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## EGLE webinars: harmful algal blooms, community solar, weatherization projects

- As part of its Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response series the state Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) is hosting a [webinar](#) on **July 13 from 1 to 2 p.m.** on harmful algal blooms in Michigan's recreational waters. The webinar will share what harmful algal blooms are, how they impact surface waters and what can be done about them. For program questions, contact [blazicr@michigan.gov](mailto:blazicr@michigan.gov). For registration questions, contact [bertholda@michigan.gov](mailto:bertholda@michigan.gov) or [roseberryj@michigan.gov](mailto:roseberryj@michigan.gov).
- Join EGLE on **July 12 from noon to 1 p.m.** for a [webinar](#) featuring a case study on successful community solar and weatherization pilot projects in Michigan. Over the last six years, EGLE worked with local community action agencies and utilities to develop three separate community solar pilot programs in Grand Traverse County, L'Anse, and Lansing, which showed a large impact on both bills and usage.

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## MTA bringing experts, resources to the U.P. this month

Join MTA at our first-ever [U.P. Education Extravaganza](#) coming to the Island Resort in Harris July 18 & 19. We're bringing four timely township topics for you to choose from: *Cemetery Management*, *Financial Fundamentals*, *Insights into Planning & Zoning* and *Hot Topics for Township Fire Departments*. [Click here](#) for a message from our very own Cindy Dodge, who is teaching two sessions at the event, or [here for all the details](#). [Register online now](#) or get a [form with class descriptions here](#).

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