

Nov. 7, 2025

## Bill proposes change on investment of public funds

Legislation to broaden investment options for local units of government was before the House Government Operations Committee this week. [House Bill 4757](#), sponsored by Rep. Brad Slagh (R-Zeeland Chtr. Twp.), is permissive and would allow for more investment opportunities and flexibility for possible increased returns on investments. The bill would add permissible kinds of investments, revise criteria for certain investments such as certificates of deposit, and require local units of government and other public corporations to file their investment policies with the state Department of Treasury annually. MTA is seeking an amendment to clarify that if no changes are made to an investment policy, the investment policy would not be required to be filed annually.



## MTA opposes zoning preemption bill

MTA testified Thursday in opposition to a bill that would preempt local zoning authority. [House Bill 4085](#), sponsored by Rep. Bryan Posthumus (R-Oakfield Twp.), would amend the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act to provide that digital asset mining is a permitted use of property in an industrial zone and would not be subject to special land use approval. Under the legislation, a local unit of government could not impose any zoning restriction or requirement on a digital asset mining business that is not also imposed on a data center nor could they set a specific limit on decibels generated from a digital mining business different from limits applied to industrial zones, regardless of where located.

## Water affordability bills approved by committee

Legislation to create and fund a new state water affordability program was approved by a Senate committee this week. Senate Bills 248-256 would create the Low-Income Water Residential Affordability Program and ensure that a water customer who had a household income of up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or who was eligible for certain assistance programs did not pay more than a specified percentage of the customer's household income on a water bill. The bills would create the Low-Income Water Residential Affordability Fund and require water or sewage customers to pay a monthly \$1.25 fee on each retail water



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## Upcoming MTA Training

Nov. 19: *Now You Know* Lunchtime Webinar [Wait, Who's Supposed to Do That?!](#)

Dec. 17: *Now You Know* Lunchtime Webinar [Legislative Wrap-up](#)

Jan 13-14: Hone your [Board Leadership Skills](#) at MTA's Winter Academy in Frankenmuth

## MTA QUICK LINKS

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

meter to be deposited into the fund for the program's implementation. This would not impact individuals on a septic system or with well water.

Under the legislation, a water provider (municipality) could opt out of the statewide program if it were to implement its own local option program that corresponded with the state Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) program. A provider with 6,000 or fewer retail water customers (meters) could also opt out of the program and fee, but it could not shut off water or pursue debt collections for any customers. The bills would require providers to submit reports to DHHS. The bills will be considered next by the full Senate.



## Alerts for E. coli authorized under House bill

A county could be required to issue a “brown alert” for high E. coli levels after a sewage discharge or overflow event under legislation passed by the House this week. [House Bill 4427](#), introduced by Rep. Alicia St. Germaine (R-Harrison Chtr. Twp.), would amend the Emergency Management Act to require a local health department to notify the county emergency management coordinator when dangerous levels of E. coli are found in any waters of the county. The county emergency management coordinator would have to notify the public about the threat and issue the alert as soon as possible, not later than 12 hours after receiving notification from the health department. At a minimum, the brown alert would have to contain the location of the contamination and the health risks of exposure to the contaminant. The bill passed the House with bipartisan support and heads to the Senate for further review.

## Voters approve majority of township ballot proposals

While there were only 47 township proposals on Tuesday's ballots across the state, 81% of the proposals were approved by voters. Public safety and road millages made up the majority of the proposals presented to voters. Funding for general operations, public sewer and water infrastructure, pest control, senior citizens and libraries, as well as proposals on marijuana and short-term rentals completed the list.

## Critical Infrastructure Pre-Development Funding now available

A new pilot program to help communities move infrastructure projects to the funding stage was announced this week by the Michigan Infrastructure Office (MIO) Technical Assistance Center

## ALLIED SERVICE PROVIDERS



[www.Acrisure.com/GreatLakes](http://www.Acrisure.com/GreatLakes)



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

\* [Consumers Energy](#)

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

\* [Foster Swift Collins & Smith, PC](#)

\* [Hartleb Agency](#)

\* [ITC Holdings Corp.](#)

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

\* [Mika Meyers, PLC](#)



(TAC). Municipalities can apply for up to \$50,000 in grant funding to pay for required infrastructure pre-development activities for surface transportation, transit, and drinking and wastewater infrastructure projects under development. The Pre-Development Accelerator Pilot Program funds can be used to pay for activities such as preliminary engineering and design, feasibility studies, environmental review, public engagement, technical studies, data gathering, and more. Applications can be filed until 11:59 p.m. on Dec. 1. A live webinar will be held Monday, Nov. 10 at 11 a.m. to help communities better understand the program and application process. To apply for the program, register for the webinar, or learn more about technical assistance opportunities available to your community, visit the [MIO Technical Assistance Center webpage](#).

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## Updated rail emergency contact information

The Michigan Railroad Association recently released an updated [Railroad Emergency Contact Phone list](#) for all railroads operating in Michigan. If you have railroad crossings in your township, please use the updated contact list for any emergency.



## Build Michigan's future—become an Asset Management Champion

From the slide at your local park to the bridges that connect our communities, every piece of Michigan's infrastructure tells a story. The Asset Management (AM) Champions program is where those stories turn into smarter plans, stronger teams and safer outcomes for every community. Township officials and staff are invited to apply by Jan. 6 to be part of the [Infrastructure Asset Management Champions Program](#), a free, self-paced training that aims to equip infrastructure professionals with practical tools to manage assets, make informed investment decisions, and connect with peers across the state. Through interactive modules and virtual sessions, you'll learn how to prioritize resources, build collaboration and lead with confidence in every decision you make about your community's infrastructure.

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## EGLE webinars and public comment opportunity

- The state Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) is planning an update to the administrative rules that enact the Public Sewerage System program. A Nov. 20 [webinar](#) will review proposed changes to the construction and operation of wastewater facilities. (Attendees can earn 0.1 Wastewater Continuing Education

- credits in the "Managerial" category for participating.)
- Submit public comment EGLE's triennial review of Part 4 Rules (Water Quality Standards) and Part 8 Rules (Water Quality Based Effluent Limit Development for Toxic Substances) until Dec. 19. An [online informational presentation](#) on Nov. 20 will also include time for public comment on how the department should modify the [current rules](#). No proposed changes have been made by the department; the open comment period is the first step of updating the ruleset. Comments may also be submitted to Kevin Goodwin, EGLE, WRD, P.O. Box 30458, Lansing, MI 48909-7958 or [GoodwinK@Michigan.gov](mailto:GoodwinK@Michigan.gov).
  - Hazardous waste site inspectors from EGLE are hosting a webinar detailing what they look for during a site walk-through and how they respond to issues needing correction in the field. Register for the Nov. 12 webinar [online](#).
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## Reminders for clerks

- **Administrative rules—public comment:** The state Bureau of Elections (BOE) is working to promulgate [Election Challengers and Poll Watchers administrative rules](#) that will codify its [The Appointment, Rights, and Duties of Election Challengers and Poll Watchers manual](#). Submit public comment to [Elections-PublicComment@Michigan.gov](mailto:Elections-PublicComment@Michigan.gov) until Dec. 12, at 5 p.m.. A public hearing will also be held at 10 a.m. on Dec. 12, at the Binsfeld Office Building in Lansing. Drafts have been provided to Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks and Michigan Association of County Clerks legislative liaisons, and previous comments from clerks in response to those drafts have been incorporated. However, all clerks are encouraged to submit any additional feedback regarding the rules. The current draft can be viewed from the "[Draft Rule Language](#)" link.
  - **Administrative rules:** On Oct. 23, the Michigan Department of State's [Use of Electronic Pollbook](#) (EPB) ruleset took effect. The rules allow for live connectivity between an electronic pollbook and the Qualified Voter File once the BOE has completed programming for that functionality. This ruleset was initiated in response to clerk requests following use of live-connected EPBs during early voting in 2024.
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## Input sought on state forest road map

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources regularly reviews and updates the state forest road inventory to ensure maps are accurate and reflect changes in road conditions and evolving recreational and community use. Review [proposed changes](#) and submit comments by Dec. 1 to [DNR-RoadInventoryProject@Michigan.gov](mailto:DNR-RoadInventoryProject@Michigan.gov), at [Michigan.gov/ForestRoads](http://Michigan.gov/ForestRoads), or at January and February [Michigan Natural Resources Commission meetings](#).



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## New state unemployment system launches Dec. 15

As employers, townships must participate in the state's

unemployment insurance system as either a “reimbursing” or a “contributing” employer. By default, townships are reimbursing employers—that means the township makes payments to the state Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) when an eligible employee files and is granted a claim for unemployment compensation. Some townships have elected to be contributing employers, and make regular payments to the UIA based on a formula. The UIA is transitioning to a new computer system, MiUI, to replace its current system (MiWAM). Starting Dec. 15, employers and third-party administrators will perform certain duties in MiUI, including filing quarterly wage and tax reports (for applicable employers), uploading wage files, and more. The UIA has numerous resources available, including [an employer checklist](#), [key dates](#), and an [MiUI University](#) with additional information, guides and more.

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## Workplace mental health webinar series continues

The next installment of the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity’s (LEO) [Mental Health in the Workplace](#) webinar series is on Nov. 20 at 2 p.m. on [Teams](#). The series highlights LEO’s new Healthy Work, Healthy Mind LEADS program for employers that helps leaders foster healthier, more supportive work environments. [Session one](#) provided an overview of the program, and [session two](#) will discuss how to be one of the first employers to participate in the program.

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## Nov. 24 deadline for member input on MTA’s 2026 legislative issues

As a member township official, you can review and provide input on the MTA legislative policy platform. The legislative policy objectives—reviewed, updated and approved annually—guide the Association’s government relations efforts and reflect emerging issues and goals. MTA members are encouraged to review the current [2025-2026 Policy Platform](#) and share any proposed additions and revisions by Monday, Nov. 24. Member-proposed policy changes will be reviewed by MTA policy committees and will be presented at the 2026 MTA Annual Meeting in conjunction with our 2026 Annual Educational Conference in April. Contact [legislation@michigantownships.org](mailto:legislation@michigantownships.org) with questions, comments or suggestions.

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## Read the November issue of *Township Focus*—online now

[Your November issue of \*Township Focus\* is now available.](#)

In this month’s issue, we remember 2025 MTA President **Harold Koviak**, who passed away unexpectedly last month, and honor his leadership, dedication and lasting contributions to the MTA community. In our cover story, “Empowering local government: Best practices for records



management," discover how effective records management can help your township operate in an efficient, cost-effective and legally compliant manner. Our feature story highlights a township's inspiring efforts to become a Purple Heart Community, honoring the bravery and sacrifices of Purple Heart recipients. In "Financial Forum," we explore how to build trust, ensure accountability and promote long-term financial sustainability through sound financial stewardship. This issue's "Hello, MTA ...?" column addresses common questions related to assessing records.

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### **Federal updates for week of Nov. 3**

Check out the National Association of Towns and Townships [Weekly Legislative Update](#) for the latest on federal actions impacting townships.

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