



Ordinance Division 2009 Annual Report

"Keeping blight out of your neighborhood!"



*Patricia Voelker, Director
Planning, Building & Ordinance*

Table of Contents

Employee List.....	Page 2
Number of Vacant Properties.....	Page 3
Maintenance Cost of Vacant Properties.....	Page 4
Noxious Weeds Administrative Fees.....	Page 5
Property Maintenance Fees.....	Page 6
Tickets Issued.....	Page 7
Ordinance Permits.....	Page 8
Illegal Signs Removed.....	Page 9
Ordinance Inspections.....	Page 10
Goals & Accomplishments.....	Page 11

Ordinance Division Employee List



From left to right: Lead Ordinance Officer, Brenda Schlutow, Ordinance Secretary, Kelly Jacobson, Ordinance Officer, Bill Boss, and Director, Patricia Voelker



Ordinance Officer
Jim Wright,
Building Inspector

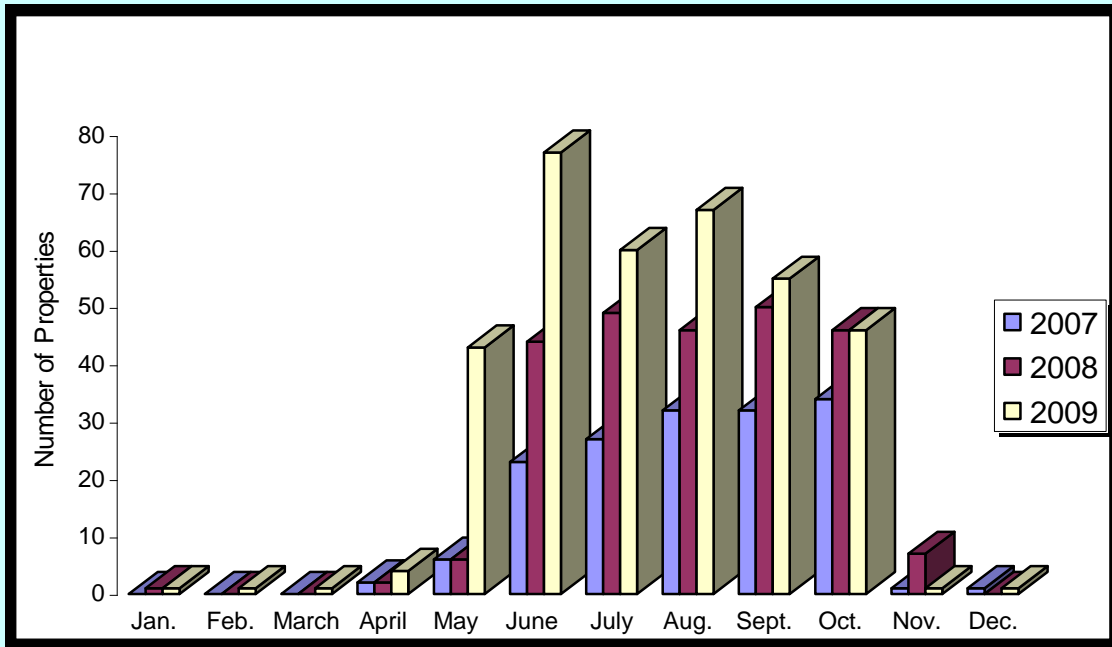


Ordinance Officer
Mike McCully,
Fire Marshall



Ordinance Officer
Noah Mehalski,
Environmental Specialist

Number of Vacant Properties Maintained
2007 - 2009

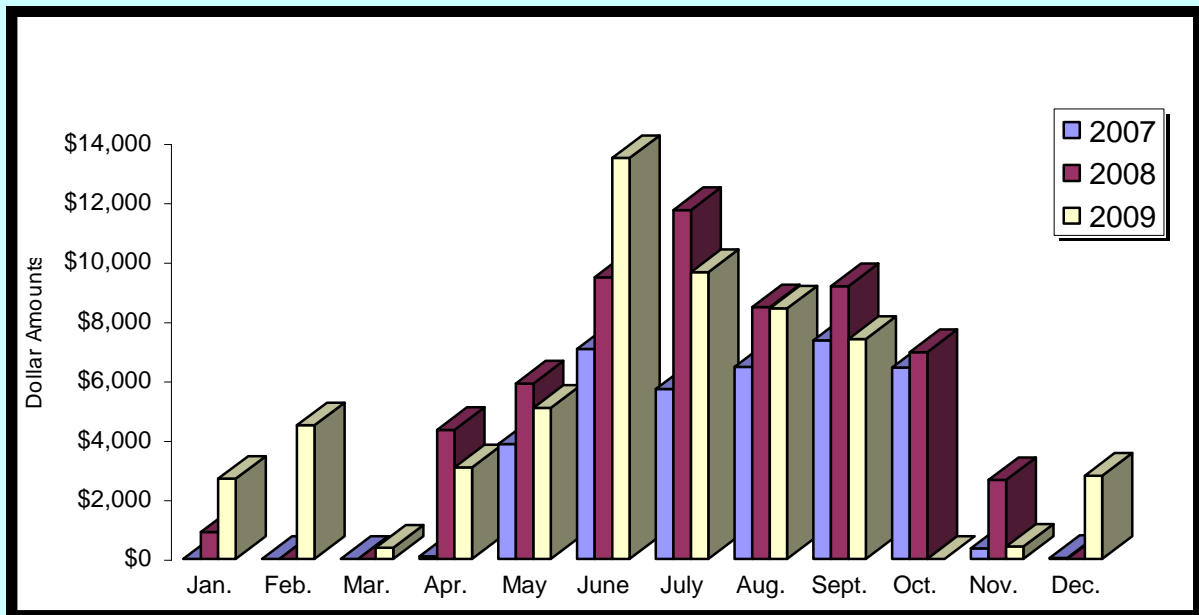


<u>MONTH</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
Jan.	0	1	1
Feb.	0	0	1
March	0	0	1
April	2	2	4
May	6	6	43
June	23	44	77
July	27	49	60
August	32	46	67
Sept.	32	50	55
Oct.	34	46	46
Nov.	1	7	1
Dec.	1	0	1
TOTAL:	42	84	108

Cost to Maintain Vacant Properties 2007 - 2009

As shown below, the cost of maintaining vacant properties by Bloomfield Township has increased again this year. In addition to grass cuttings, some of the necessary maintenance in 2009 included tree removal, roof repairs, pool drainage and covering, and the grading and seeding for soil erosion prevention. All costs incurred for maintenance are posted as a lien on the tax rolls, with full reimbursement by Oakland County at the end of the tax year.

It is important to note that a number of banks began releasing money in 2009 to hire maintenance crews to take care of vacant and/or foreclosed properties.



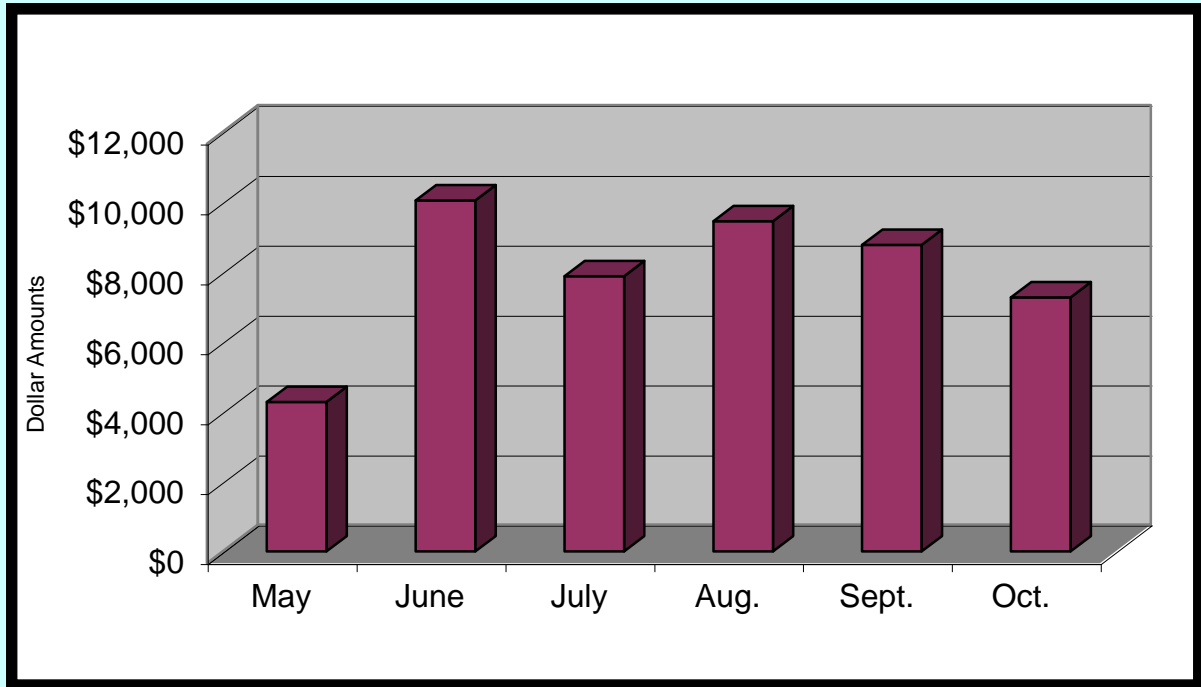
(All amounts in the table below have been rounded off to the nearest dollar).

<u>Month</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
Jan.	\$0	\$900	\$2,700
Feb.	\$0	\$0	\$4,500
March	\$0	\$0	\$375
April	\$83	\$4,340	\$3,082
May	\$3,865	\$5,903	\$5,090
June	\$7,068	\$9,486	\$13,498
July	\$5,718	\$11,747	\$9,657
August	\$6,467	\$8,477	\$8,433
Sept.	\$7,360	\$9,181	\$7,404
Oct.	\$6,447	\$6,960	\$8,503
Nov.	\$356	\$2,656	\$416
Dec.	\$30	\$0	\$2,800
TOTAL:	\$37,395	\$59,650	\$66,459

Noxious Weeds Administrative Fee Totals

By a resolution passed by the Township Board in July 2008, the Township began charging a \$75 administrative fee per each grass/weed cutting in May 2009. This not only allows for reimbursement for Township expenses, but also works as a deterrent to homeowners and banks who were previously negligent in maintaining their properties. With a total of 636 grass/weed cuttings over a six month period, this averaged 106 cuttings per month.

Month	Monthly Total	Number of Cuts
May	\$4,275	57
June	\$10,050	134
July	\$7,875	105
August	\$9,300	126
September	\$8,775	117
October	\$7,200	97
2009 TOTAL:	\$47,475	636



Property Maintenance Notice Fee Totals

In July 2009, Bloomfield Township adopted the International Property Maintenance Code, which expanded the definition of “property maintenance,” allowing us to address issues that were not covered or as definitive in the previous ordinance (such as inoperative/unlicensed vehicles and drainage problems). In addition, this Code allows the Township to attach a \$75.00 Enforcement Recovery Fee for non-compliance with a Violation Notice. These fees offset the costs incurred by the Township to schedule, inspect and follow-up on these violations.



<u>Month</u>	<u>Monthly Total</u>	<u>Number of Notices</u>
August	\$525	7
September	\$1,050	14
October	\$75	1
November	\$75	1
December	\$0	0
2009 TOTAL:	\$1,725	23

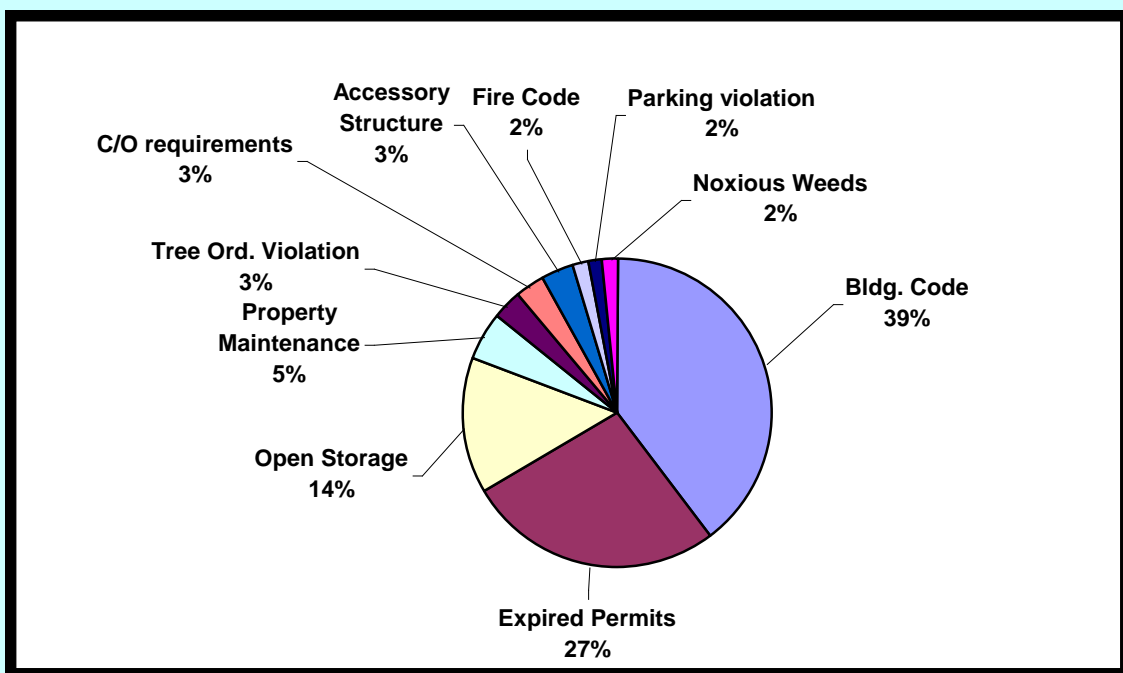


Number of Tickets Issued

While a large amount of time and effort by the Ordinance staff went into the maintenance and monitoring of vacant homes in the Township, tickets could not be issued unless a responsible party was located. Despite this challenge, there was an increase in tickets issued in 2009 for building code violations and expired permits.

In 2009, a new Department policy was enacted in an effort to prevent contractors from installing mechanical units without first obtaining a permit, which is a building code violation. A contractor was allowed one warning. If a contractor violated the building code a second time, a ticket was issued. Once contractors became familiar with this policy, the number of tickets for this violation began to decline.

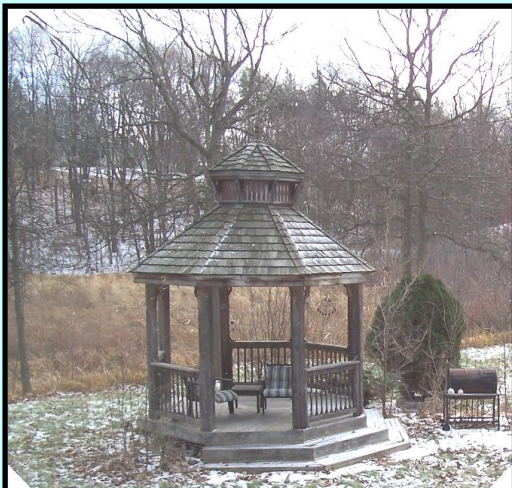
The Building Inspectors have also worked to resolve expired permits that had not been closed out for several years. A total of 17 tickets were issued in 2009 for non-compliance of this building code requirement.



<u>Violation Categories</u>	<u>Number of Tickets Issued</u>
Building Code	25
Expired Permits	17
Open Storage	9
Property Maintenance	3
Tree Ordinance Violation	2
C/O Requirements	2
Accessory Structure Violation	2
Fire Code	1
Parking Violation	1
Noxious Weeds	1
2009 TOTAL:	63

Ordinance Permits

<u>Ordinance Permit Type</u>	<u>Number of Permits Issued</u>		
	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
Fences	17	26	29
Sheds	5	13	4
Accessory Structures	4	7	4
Retaining Walls	1	2	3
Dog Runs	0	2	2
Invisible Fences	1	2	2
Landscape Walls	4	2	3
Sports Courts	1	1	1
Gazebos	3	2	1
Mobil Unit	0	1	1
Pergola/Trellis	2	2	0
Play Structures	3	8	8
Statues	3	1	0
Ice Rinks	0	1	2
Child Care	0	3	1
TOTAL	44	70	61

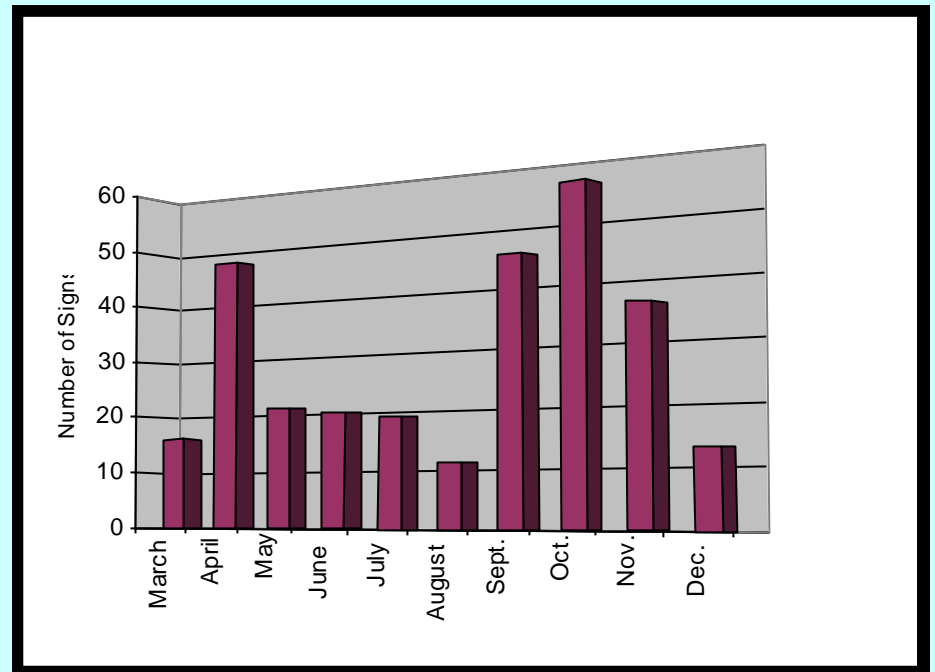


<u>Ordinance Permit Type</u>	<u>Fees Collected</u>		
	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>
Fences	\$2,040	\$3,120	\$3,480
Sheds	\$600	\$1,560	\$480
Accessory Structures	\$480	\$800	\$480
Retaining Walls	\$120	\$240	\$360
Dog Runs	\$0	\$240	\$240
Invisible Fences	\$120	\$240	\$240
Landscape Walls	\$480	\$240	\$240
Sports Courts	\$120	\$120	\$120
Gazebos	\$360	\$240	\$120
Mobil Unit	\$0	\$120	\$120
Pergola/Trellis	\$240	\$240	\$0
Play Structures	N/A	N/A	N/A
Statues	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ice Rinks	N/A	N/A	N/A
Child Care	N/A	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	\$4,560	\$7,160	\$5,880

Illegal Signs Removed



In 2009, the Ordinance Division began tracking the number of signs that were removed from illegal locations. This chart reflects not only the number of illegal signs that were confiscated, but is also an indication of the amount of time the officers spend removing signs throughout the year. Without this effort, streets become littered with signs, leaving a negative impact on the appearance of Bloomfield Township properties.

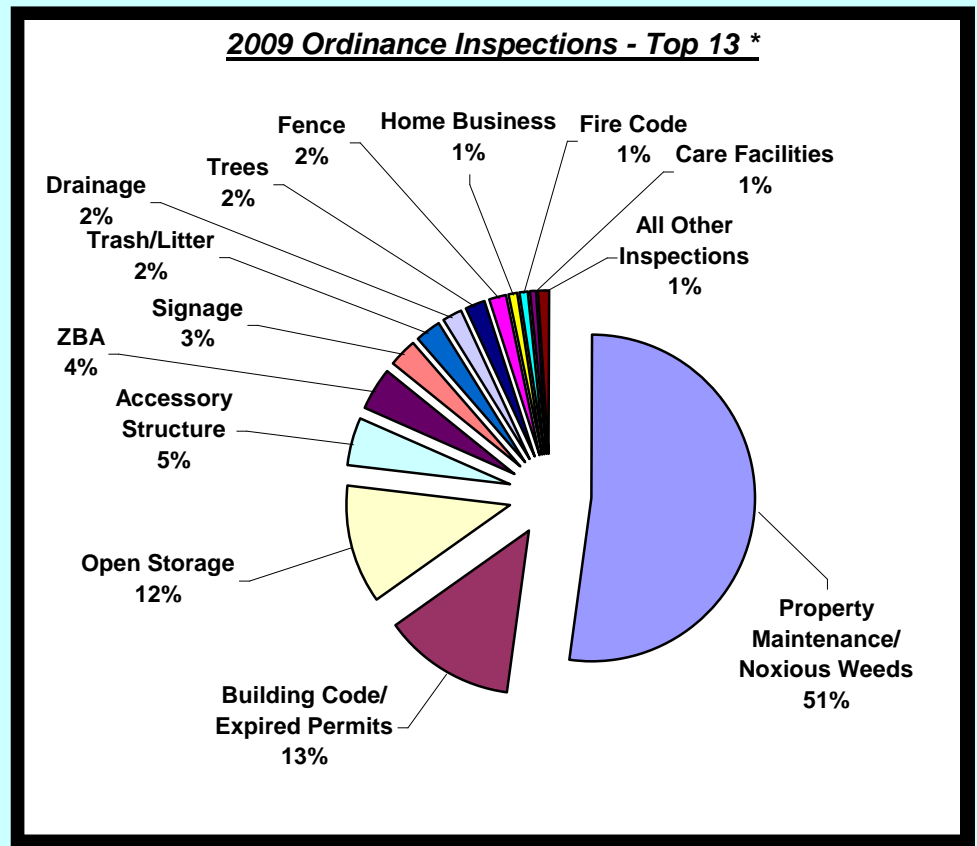


Month	Number of Signs Removed
March	16
April	47
May	21
June	20
July	19
August	11
September	45
October	56
November	36
December	13
2009 TOTAL:	284

Ordinance Inspections

Categories	Number of Inspections
Property Maintenance/ Noxious Weeds	2,390
Building Code/ Expired Permits	588
Open Storage	533
Accessory Structure	223
ZBA	181
Signage	131
Trash/Litter	112
Drainage	93
Trees	82
Fences	79
Home Business	45
Fire Code	29
Care Facilities	28
DRB	16
Parking violations	12
Dumping	10
Lighting	8
Noise	2
R.O.W. Issues	2
Wetlands	1
2009 TOTAL:	4,565

In 2008, Ordinance Officers conducted a total of 1,719 inspections. In comparison to 2008, the number of inspections increased by 166% in 2009. This is largely due to the high volume of foreclosed homes and the Ordinance Division's increased efforts to monitor these sites and provide maintenance when necessary. It is anticipated that the number of foreclosures and/or abandoned homes will increase in 2010. In an effort to be proactive, all previous "problem sites" will be re-inspected this year to check for any changes that must be addressed. The goal is to find the homes that need maintenance *before* they become a blight to the community.



Goals & Accomplishments

2009 Accomplishments

- ✓ Through training provided by the Police Department, the Ordinance Division has implemented an electronic citation system, thereby eliminating the carbon paper process. This allows the citations to be recorded at the 48th District Court immediately, making it a much more streamlined and efficient system.
- ✓ To track illegal signs that were removed, a sign removal log sheet was developed.
- ✓ In July 2009, Bloomfield Township adopted the International Property Maintenance Code, which broadened our definition of property maintenance violations and allowed the Township to charge an Enforcement Recovery fee to those who fail to comply with this Ordinance. This fee serves as reimbursement for staffing costs incurred during inspections.
- ✓ As part of our continuing efforts to improve customer service, "thank you" letters were mailed to residents who obtained compliance.
- ✓ To eliminate the use of a separate program, a new Notice file was integrated into current BS&A software, which made tracking more efficient and expanded the use of the system.
- ✓ Three additional Township employees were sworn in as Ordinance Officers in an effort to address and gain compliance within their specific area of expertise in the Building, Environmental and Fire Departments. This allowed the Ordinance Division to focus on, and respond faster to, the growing concerns and complaints about vacant homes and property maintenance issues.

2010 Goals

- ✓ Evaluate the process for employing maintenance companies to address vacant property violations. This will ensure that whenever possible, we improve response time and lessen the Township's initial costs.
- ✓ Work more closely with the Building, Fire and Environmental Divisions in an effort to become more familiar with their area of expertise. This will allow the Ordinance team to work more comprehensively in their enforcement of Township ordinances.
- ✓ Purge Ordinance records according to the Michigan Record Retention General Schedule #10. This will allow us to better manage our stored records.