

# 2015 ORDINANCE DIVISION ANNUAL REPORT

“Keeping blight out of your neighborhood!”



*Patricia Voelker, Director  
Planning, Building & Ordinance*

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# Ordinance Division Employee List



From left to right: **Part-Time Ordinance Officer** Mike Klein, **Planning & Ordinance Administrative Assistant** Kelly Jacobson, **Lead Ordinance Officer** Brenda Schlutow, **Ordinance Officer** Jodi Welch, & **Ordinance Officer** Bob Thibeault



**Ordinance Officer & Fire Marshall**  
Pete Vlahos



**Ordinance Officer & Building Official**  
George Kilpatrick



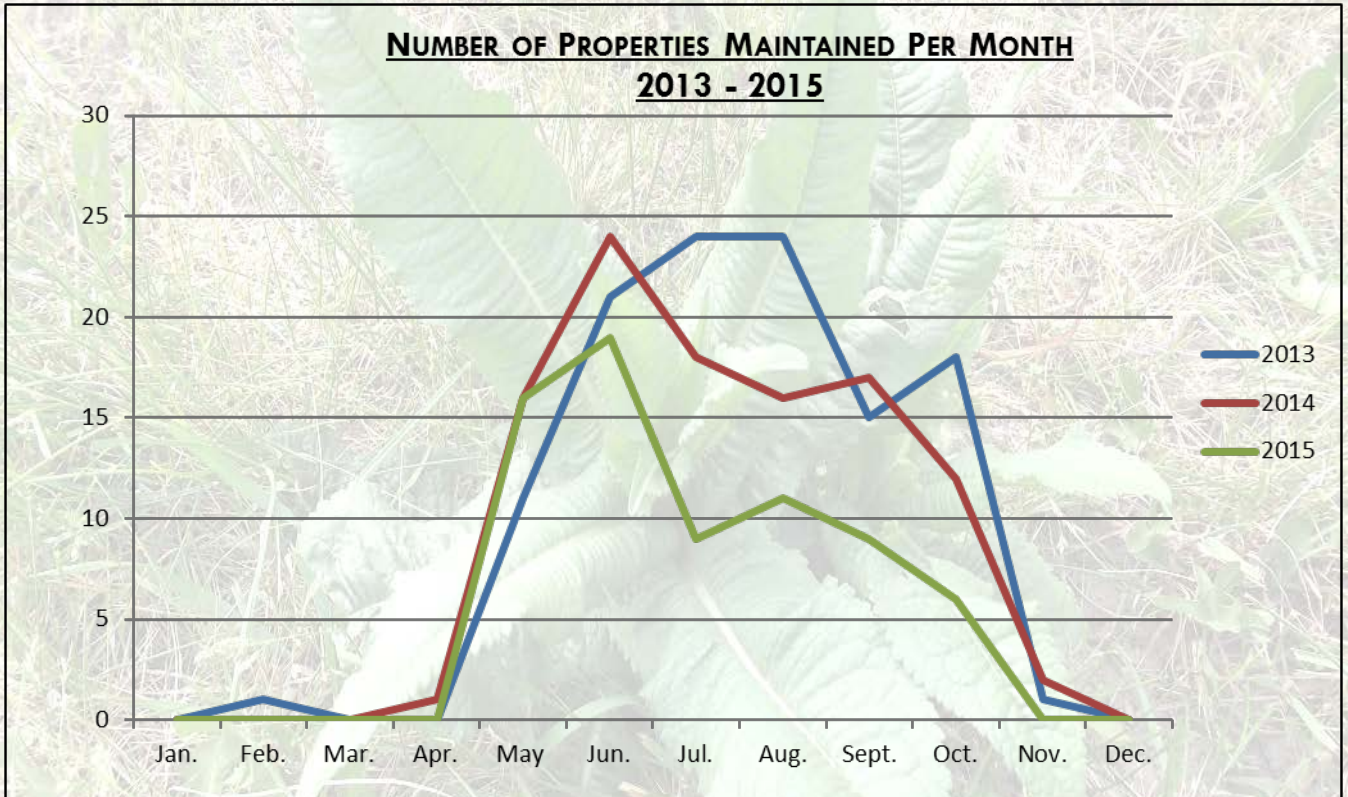
**Ordinance Officer & Building Inspector**  
Chris Fox

# Number of Vacant Properties Maintained by Township 2013 - 2015

**TOTAL NUMBER OF PROPERTIES MAINTAINED IN 2013 = 48**

**TOTAL NUMBER OF PROPERTIES MAINTAINED IN 2014 = 52**

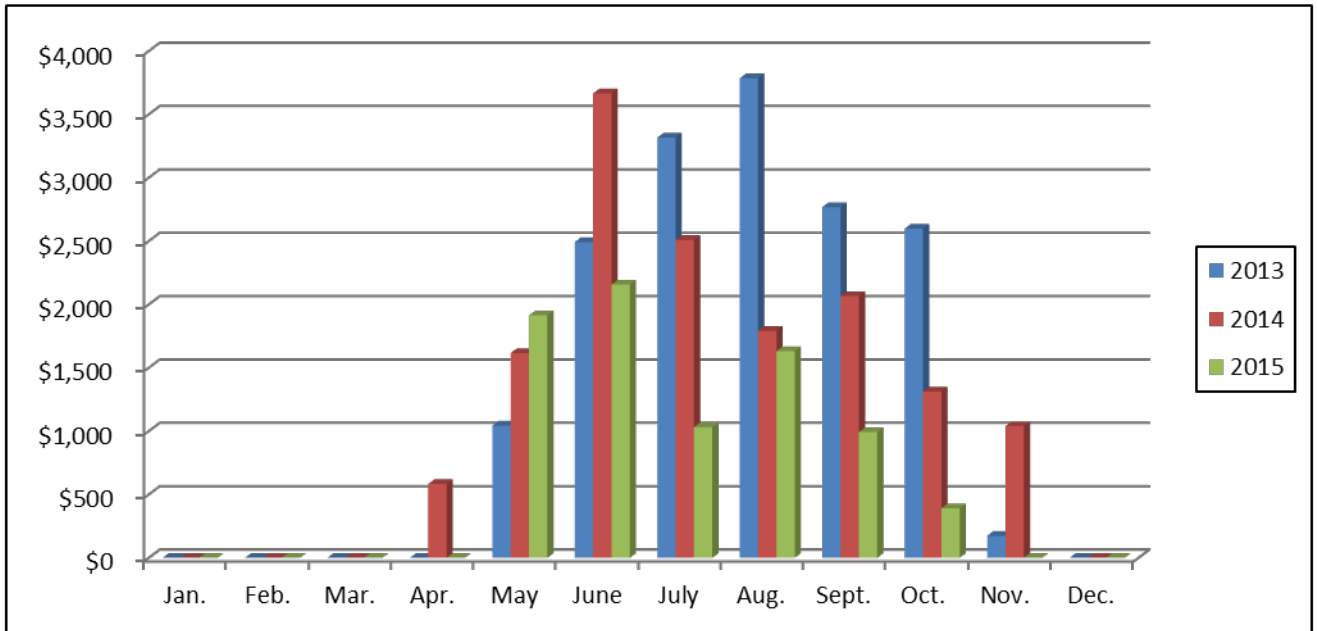
**TOTAL NUMBER OF PROPERTIES MAINTAINED IN 2015 = 44**



**The number of vacant properties maintained by the Township decreased by a small margin in 2015. This number includes properties with vacant homes as well as vacant lots. Property preservation companies are striving to comply with Township Ordinance requirements in recent years, in an effort to avoid vacant properties being assessed costly fines for maintenance violations.**



# Cost to Maintain Vacant Properties 2013 - 2015



**The Township's maintenance costs for vacant properties continued to decline for the 6<sup>th</sup> year in a row, falling more than 44% from last year's total. This is an encouraging movement in the right direction, as these fees have continuously decreased over the last several years.**

**Banks are taking more responsibility to maintain these properties by hiring property preservation companies to ensure that maintenance is carried out and Ordinance requirements are met.**

**Additionally, whereas in the past vacant properties used to sit on the market for months or even years, they appear to be selling at a quicker rate. Upon purchasing these properties, residents frequently contact us and assume the responsibility of addressing maintenance issues.**

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
Jan.	\$0	\$0	\$0
Feb.	\$0	\$0	\$0
March	\$0	\$0	\$0
April	\$0	\$583	\$0
May	\$1,043	\$1,616	\$1,913
June	\$2,492	\$3,665	\$2,156
July	\$3,316	\$2,508	\$1,031
August	\$3,784	\$1,791	\$1,631
Sept.	\$2,767	\$2,065	\$992
Oct.	\$3,533	\$1,313	\$391
Nov.	\$174	\$1,040	\$0
Dec.	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$17,109</b>	<b>\$14,581</b>	<b>\$8,114</b>

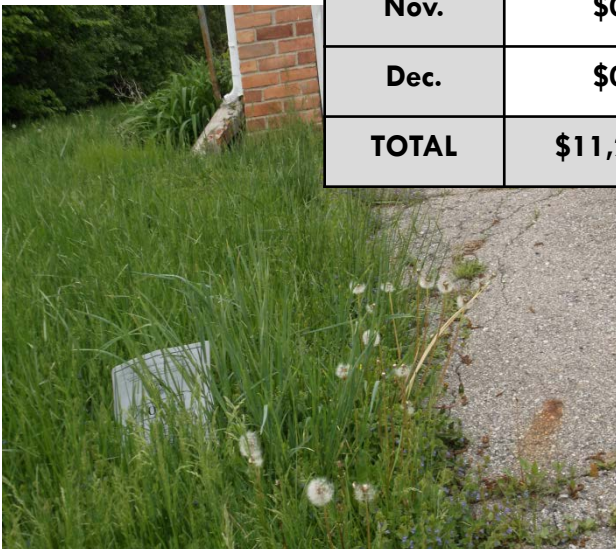
# Noxious Weeds Administrative Fee Totals 2014 - 2015

There was a decrease in the total fees collected for grass/weed cuttings in 2015. These fees have been steadily declining since 2009, when the Ordinance was amended to allow fees to be levied for those properties in violation. In 2009, the total amount of fees collected was \$47,475. Compared to this year's total of \$6,975, that is a decrease of approximately 76% over a 5-year span.



<u>MONTH</u>	<u>2014 MONTHLY TOTAL</u>	<u>2015 MONTHLY TOTAL</u>
April	\$0	\$0
May	\$1,200	\$1,275
June	\$2,625	\$1,650
July	\$2,250	\$1,050
August	\$1,875	\$1,200
Sept.	\$1,875	\$1,050
Oct.	\$1,425	\$750
Nov.	\$0	\$0
Dec.	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,250</b>	<b>\$6,975</b>

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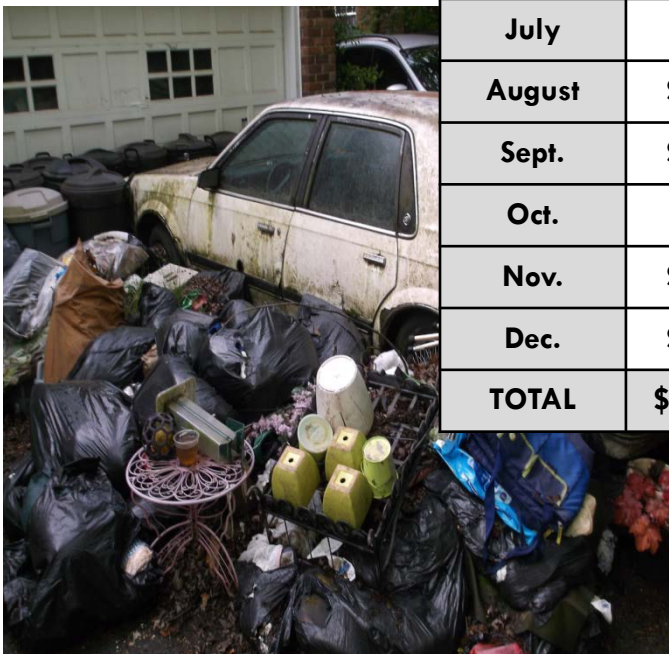


# Property Maintenance Fee Totals 2014 - 2015

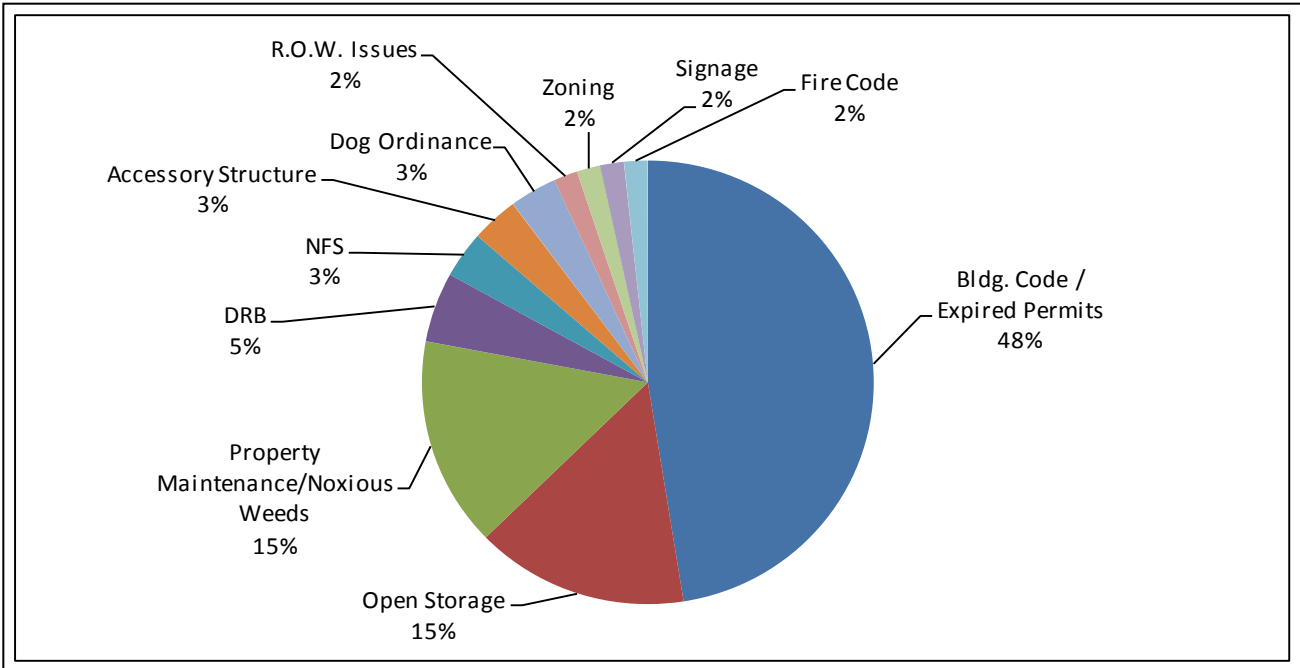
Per the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC), a \$75 Enforcement Recovery Fee may be charged to a property tax roll after the responsible party has been warned and fails to comply with the Code. In most cases, residents comply. In 2015, the Ordinance Division issued a total of 18 Property Maintenance Notices in which the \$75 Enforcement Recovery fee was charged, which is up slightly from last year's total of 14 Notices.



<u>MONTH</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
Jan.	\$0	\$0
Feb.	\$0	\$0
March	\$0	\$75
April	\$75	\$75
May	\$150	\$75
June	\$0	\$75
July	\$75	\$225
August	\$150	\$225
Sept.	\$150	\$450
Oct.	\$0	\$75
Nov.	\$225	\$75
Dec.	\$225	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,050</b>	<b>\$1,350</b>



# Number of Tickets Issued



<u>Violation Categories</u>	<u>Number of Tickets Issued</u>
<b>Building Code / Expired Permits</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Open Storage</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Property Maintenance/ Noxious Weeds</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Accessory Structure</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Dog Ordinance</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>NFS Violation</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Zoning</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2015 TOTAL</b>	<b>67</b>

There were a total of 67 tickets issued in 2015, compared to 59 tickets issued in 2014. As in previous years, violations pertaining to Building Code and/or Expired Permits still comprise the largest number of tickets issued. These 30 citations were issued to contractors for installing mechanical/electrical equipment prior to obtaining the required permits.



# Ordinance Permits

## 2013- 2015

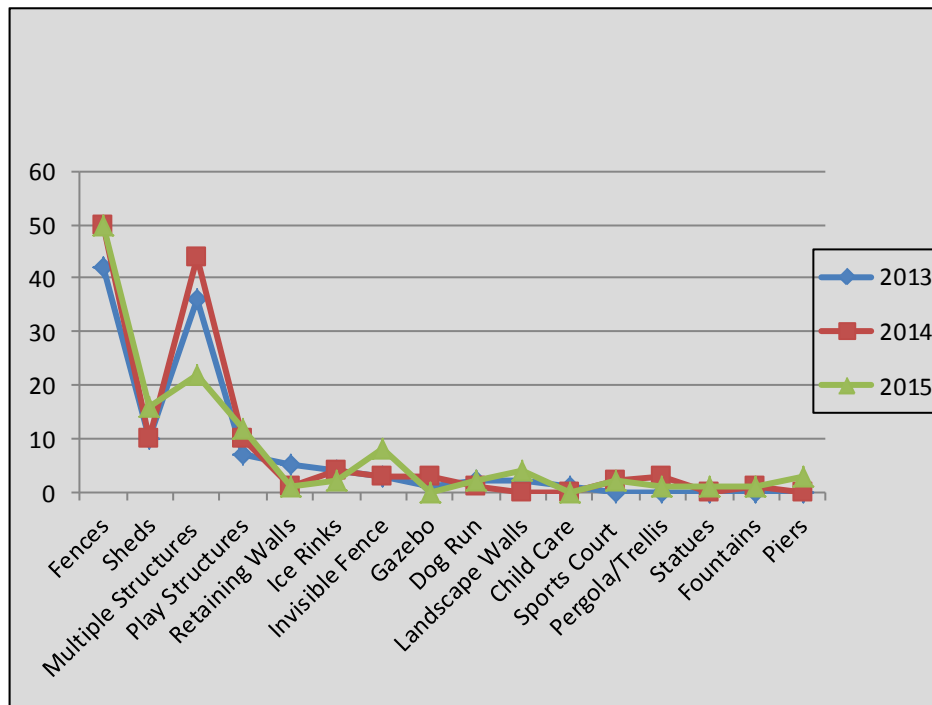
### Number of Permits Issued

Ordinance Permit Type	2013	2014	2015
Fences	42	50	50
Sheds	10	10	16
Multiple Structures	36	44	22
Retaining Walls	5	1	1
Dog Runs	2	1	2
Invisible Fences	3	3	8
Landscape Walls	2	0	4
Sports Courts	0	2	2
Gazebos	1	3	0
Pergola/Trellis	0	3	1
Play Structures	7	10	12
Statues	0	0	1
Ice Rinks	4	4	2
Child Care	1	0	0
Fountains	0	1	1
Satellite Dishes	0	0	0
Piers	0	0	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>125</b>

Ordinance permits are required for many types of accessory structures and uses.

In 2015, the number of permits for these structures decreased by a small margin, approximately 5%. However, the number of sheds and play structures increased from previous years.

Most of the Ordinance permits issued in 2015 were for fencing and multiple structures, which includes seat walls, fire pits, etc.



# Illegal Signs Removed

## 2014 - 2015



Based on the table below, the number of confiscated signs increased by approximately 16% this year. It does not represent the number of calls, letters, email responses, or follow-ups, etc., regarding sign issues. Illegal signage continues to be a problem for the Ordinance Division, especially during election seasons and in the warm weather months when contractors are out in abundance trying to gain more business by placing signs in medians and right-of-way areas throughout the Township.

**TOTAL NUMBER OF SIGNS PULLED IN 2014 = 639**

**TOTAL NUMBER OF SIGNS PULLED IN 2015 = 744**

<u>Number of Signs Removed</u>												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2014	0	0	15	67	46	91	84	70	74	179	13	0
2015	12	47	72	32	67	60	87	166	83	55	56	7



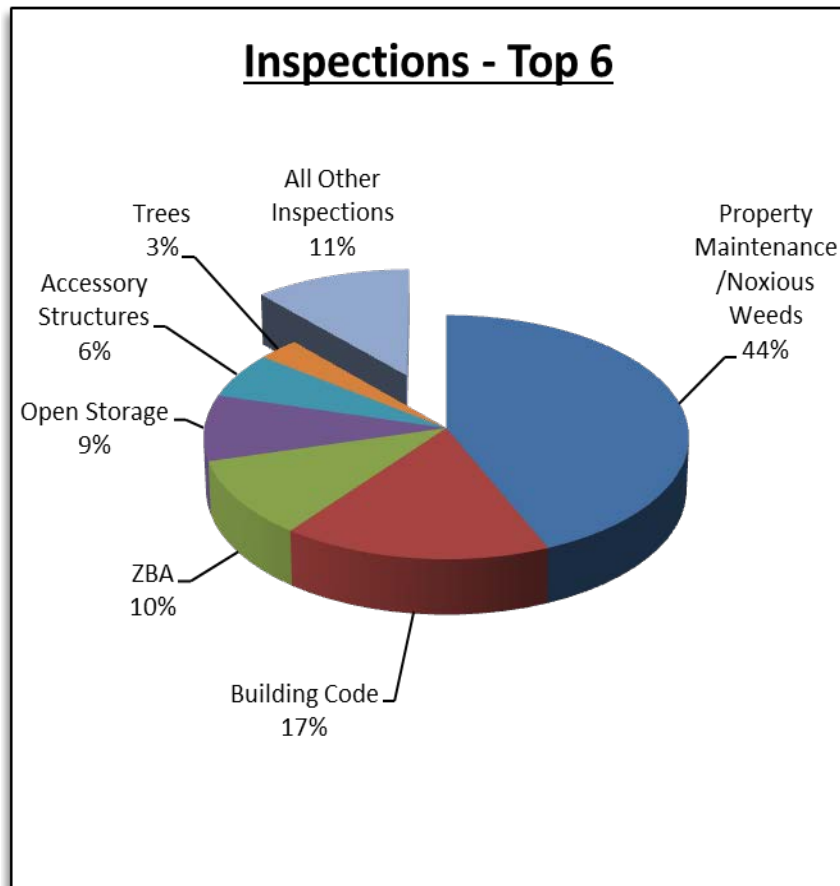
# Ordinance Inspections

<u>Categories</u>	<u>Inspections</u>
Property Maintenance/Noxious Weeds	3,756
Bldg. Code	1,445
ZBA	888
Open Storage	754
Accessory Structures	522
Trees	257
Trash/Yard Waste	153
Fence	135
Drainage	103
Signage	83
Care Facilities	79
Parking Violations	73
R.O.W. Issues	65
Dumping	52
DRB	48
Residential Zoning	38
Fire Code	37
Animal Containment	36
Lighting	31
Noise	23
Wetlands/EESD Permits	21
Litter/Debris	18
<b>2015 TOTAL</b>	<b>8,617</b>

Property Maintenance/Noxious Weeds violations still account for the largest number of inspections. The Ordinance Division is also called upon by other Township Departments to assist in all types of ordinance violations.

There was an increase in the number of Building Code inspections performed in 2015. Many of these inspections are the result of complaints, as residents contact the Ordinance Division to report neighboring construction projects, some without permits, in their neighborhoods.

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) inspections account for a large portion of the Ordinance Division's inspections. After residents go before the Zoning Board, the Ordinance Division sends out permit reminder letters and follows projects through to completion, ensuring that permits are obtained, inspections are scheduled and ZBA requirements are met.



# Goals & Accomplishments



## 2015 Accomplishments

- Continued to move towards paperless files by utilizing updated software. This reduces storage space and saves paper and printer ink costs.
- Utilized New BS&A System with enhanced options for scheduling, tracking violations, running reports, etc., to improve the Ordinance Division's correspondence and inspection procedures.
- Participated, along with the Building and Planning Divisions, in the 2015 Annual Township Open House.
- Updated the Commercial Shopping Center contact file to include current business names and contact information, which is utilized by staff as a quick reference tool.
- Fire Marshal, Peter Vlahos, was sworn in as an Ordinance Officer, which enables him to issue citations for Fire Code violations.



## 2016 Goals

- Purge Ordinance records according to the Michigan Record Retention General Schedule #10. This will allow the Division to continue to better manage records.
- Research available safety and confrontational training classes that our Ordinance Officers can attend. Ordinance Enforcement Officers are often exposed to confrontational situations. Our methods of reaction should be based on proven training in an attempt to defuse those situations before they escalate. Training classes and information sharing on this topic is ongoing in an effort to remain current.
- Review and evaluate current standard Violation Notice and letter communications templates. All Notices and standard letters will be re-evaluated for possible improvement to better inform residents of Township ordinances.

