



New Castle Crier

The official newsletter of New Castle City

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New Castle, Delaware

January 2010

Planning a winter vacation?

Sign up with Police for a "Property Check"

In an effort to foster good community relations and deter potential property crimes, the New Castle City Police, upon request, will check the exterior of residences or businesses when City residents are away on vacation.

To access this service, contact the New Castle City Police. Information can be provided by phone (call 322-9800), fax (322-

9825), in person at 1 Municipal Boulevard, or e-mail to: Patricia.Coulbourn@cj.state.de.us.

Persons requesting property checks should provide the following:

- Name;
- Address where the check is to occur;
- Dates when the property owner/renter will be away

and the property will be vacant;

- Telephone contact information for the property owner/renter;
- A local contact and telephone number;
- Notes about the property such as lights on timers expected to be on and visible from the property exterior, and any other relevant details about the property.

Best wishes to all for a Happy and Safe 2010 from City elected officials and employees!

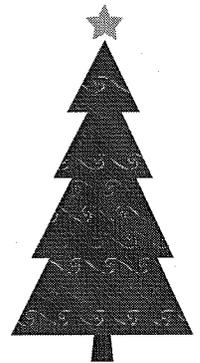
Apply now for property tax exemptions

Beginning in January is the new cycle for citizens to apply for the Over 65 or Disability property tax exemption. To make an appointment, at the convenience of the taxpayer, call Marian Delaney at 322-9811.

The maximum yearly income requirements are \$12,500 for a single person and \$25,000 for a married couple. Social Security income is not counted toward the minimum. The last day to apply is June 15th.

The City provides the service of Christmas Tree recycling.

Place trees curbside for City crews to perform chipping operations.



City Offices Closed with No Trash Pickup on Monday, January 18
Revised Trash Pickup Schedule:

Regular Schedule

Jan. 18

Jan. 19

Revised Schedule

Jan. 19

Jan. 20

The next regular City Council meeting is 7 p.m., Tues., Jan. 12 at Town Hall

New Castle - The First Capital City!

City signs new recycling contract with Delaware Solid Waste Authority; trash tipping fees slated to increase

The City entered into an agreement with the Delaware Solid Waste Authority (DSWA) to provide curbside recycling services from January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2009. Pricing was for \$1 per household, per pickup, which the City realized had been a "sweetheart deal."

There is no charge to individual households for the program, which is funded by tax dollars. The City budget expense for the DSWA contract is partially offset by savings the City realizes in lower landfill tipping fees for trash, as a result of what is diverted to recycling.

Households not currently participating in the curbside recycling program can sign up at any time by calling 322-9801.

In late 2009, the City put out for bid the service of collecting recyclables curbside. Numerous vendors bid on the business, and the low bidder was DSWA, at \$1.58, continuing the every other week pickup schedule.

One way residents can further help the City offset the increased cost in taxes for recycling is for households currently in the program to recycle more, and also for more households to sign up for the program.

This becomes even more important in the near future, as DSWA plans on significantly increasing tipping fees for trash, which would become effective July 1, 2010.

Delaware municipalities brace for increase in landfill rates

Municipal managers and administrators recently met with several high ranking officials from the DSWA. The purpose was to discuss the proposed rate increases for tipping fees at the landfills.

This group was the first to have presented to it the DSWA proposed budget for fiscal year July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. Following are some of the highlights:

- The DSWA has not increased its landfill tipping fee rates in five years.
- Any change in the rates (i.e., an increase) would not take effect until the start of the new DSWA fiscal year (July 1, 2010).
- The current rate is \$61.50 per ton, and at the end of the fiscal year DSWA issues a lump

sum rebate to its customers of \$13.50 per ton, for a net cost of \$48.

- The rate is proposed to increase to \$80 per ton, with a rebate of \$8, for a net cost of \$72. That equates to a percentage increase of 50%.
- DSWA has an annual operating budget of about \$50M. They have reserves, however, of more than \$70M. They also point out that they must maintain at least \$40M in reserves due to debt obligations. Therefore, their available unrestricted reserves are in the \$30M range. Their 2010/11 budget proposes to use about \$3M in reserves.
- DSWA revenues have steadily declined, with one main factor being a decrease in tonnage. Calculations using their numbers show about a 30% tonnage decrease from 2006 through 2011 (projected).
- DSWA projects their combined recycling programs will result in a \$7.7M loss in the 2010/11 budget.
- DSWA projects that their total tipping fee increases will equate to an increase of \$36 per year for the average household.

A sub-group of the original group of managers and administrators is holding a follow-up meeting, with the intention to negotiate with DSWA concerning the increase. This group is made up of municipalities which contract directly with DSWA for tipping services at the landfills, which includes New Castle.

There are numerous fiscal challenges facing the DSWA, not unlike most municipal entities at this time of economic turmoil. Some level of increase may be justified.

To have rates jump 50% in one year, however, is unmanageable for municipalities to absorb. An alternative method would be to phase in more reasonable increases over at least a few years. Otherwise, the result will be an extremely negative impact to municipal budgets throughout the State.

For the City of New Castle, current budget projections are for \$159,000 in landfill costs for the 2009/10 fiscal year. If no changes are made and DSWA implements the original budget proposal, including the rate increases at the landfills, the City would face an increase of about \$80,000 in the City budget for the next fiscal year. That item alone equates to almost \$.04 on the City tax rate.