

## BLIGHT: REPORTS/COMPLAINTS AND THE ENFORCEMENT PROCESS

**Blight, what is it?** The Laketon Township Anti-Blight Ordinance considers a variety of items to be blight if they are stored, kept or accumulate **outdoors**: junk or unlicensed vehicles or junk recreational vehicles (anything inoperable or unlicensed for 30 days or more), miscellaneous equipment such as snow blowers, lawn mowers, tractors, parts &/or attachments etc, household junk, trash, rubbish, remnants of wood, metal, or other cast off materials, parts of machinery or vehicles, including tires & wheels, building materials (unless there is an open/active building permit in place) lack of yard maintenance (mowing, raking etc) or the accumulation of leaves, brush or unsplit/unstacked firewood, the use of semi-trailers or other vehicles for storage, and unsafe/dilapidated/deteriorated or storm damaged structures or partially completed structures (if no building permit in place). Normal seasonal items made for outdoor use would not be considered blight if they are clearly used on a regular basis or are clearly in usable condition: bicycles, kids toys, outdoor play structures (jungle gyms, trampolines etc), outdoor furniture or outdoor cooking appliances like grills, griddles, smokers etc. The full ordinance is available online at [www.laketon.org](http://www.laketon.org) on the "Forms and Ordinances" Page.

**Reports/Complaints.** Laketon Township contracts with a part-time Ordinance Enforcement Officer to investigate reports or complaints received about issues of concern. Complaints can be made to the Laketon Township Hall, in person, by phone, by email or US Postal mail. A good description of the blight that exists on the property and the address of the property is required. It is understood that residents do not want to have conflict with their neighbors, therefore reports & complaints can be made anonymously.

**The process.** Once a report/complaint is received, the Ordinance Enforcement Officer verifies the complaint by visiting the property and taking photos of the blight. The photos are taken from the road or other public property or from a neighboring property, with the owner's permission. The process then proceeds as follows:

- Notify property owner of the issue—asking for compliance with the ordinance within 2 (two) weeks.
- If not in compliance after 2 (two) weeks, Official Notice of Violation is sent requiring compliance within 2 (two) weeks.
- If still not in compliance after the Official Notice is sent, the property owner is sent a letter from the Township Attorney encouraging compliance within 2 (two) weeks to avoid a municipal civil infraction ticket.
- If the property owner still does not comply, then a municipal civil infraction ticket can be issued. A municipal civil infraction ticket involves a court date in front of a judge and then a judgment issued by the court. These judgments typically contain a fine and a requirement to comply with the ordinance within a specified period of time.
- Failure to comply with a court order can result in contempt of court charges which can result in additional fines and an order to allow the township to bring the property into compliance with the ordinance requirements and bill the owner for the cost.
- At any time during the process the owner or occupant of the property can be given additional time to comply if they are actively working on removing the causes of blight or have extenuating circumstances that prevent them from complying in the required timeframe. Sometimes this process can be longer than anyone would like, but the township must address the situation within the confines of the law and legal advice from the township attorney.

Laketon Township has compiled a list of resources for the disposal or recycling of a variety of materials. Feel free to stop in and pick up a copy anytime the office is open.

Examples of blight pictured below (these were not taken in Laketon Township, but are stock photo examples):





## PROPERTY TAX REMINDERS

- Taxable Values increased by 5% for 2024 —as specified by state law. For more information on how taxable values are calculated each year, please visit the State of Michigan’s website: [Michigan.gov/taxes/property](https://Michigan.gov/taxes/property) or call this office.
- Summer Property Taxes are due September 14th each year, unless the 14th is a weekend, then they are due the next business day. **For 2024 summer property taxes are due on 9/16/2024.**
- Tax payments can be made, in person, by mail, online or over the phone. Any credit or debit card payments incur a 3% convenience fee charged by the payment processing company.
- Summer Property Tax Deferrals for seniors and disabled making under \$40,000 must be turned in before September 14 each year. Forms are available at the township hall.
- If you own and occupy your home as your primary residence, but do not have a Principal Residence Exemption, forms are available at the township hall. Please call Treasurer Lori Archer if you have any questions; 231-744-2454.

## HELPFUL VOTING INFORMATION – HOW TO BE PREPARED

**UPCOMING ELECTIONS:** Primary - Tuesday, August 6, 2024 and General - Tuesday, November 5, 2024.

**REGISTERING TO VOTE:** Individuals are encouraged to register to vote as early as possible before an election. Individuals can register to vote at a Michigan SOS office, online at [www.michigan.gov/sos/elections](https://www.michigan.gov/sos/elections), scanning QR code below, by mail, or in person. **Within 14 days of an election**, and on Election Day, individuals may only register by visiting their local clerk’s office to register in person with proof of residency documentation.

**UPDATE YOUR VOTER REGISTRATION: HAVE YOU MOVED?** Updating your voter registration information is extremely important when you have moved. See the information above for locations and deadlines.

**WHERE DO I VOTE? And HOW DO I VIEW MY SAMPLE BALLOT?** You may check your voting location and view your sample ballot on line at [www.michigan.gov/sos/elections](https://www.michigan.gov/sos/elections), scan QR code below or you may visit the township hall.



**WAYS TO VOTE:** Michigan voters have three ways to vote - Early In-Person Voting, Absentee Ballot, and on Election Day.

**1. Early In-Person Voting** – Laketon Township Voters are able to vote early in-person at the **County of Muskegon Early Voting Site, 1903 Marquette Ave (Use Quarterline Rd entrance)**

### 2024 Primary Election Early Voting

Saturday, July 27<sup>th</sup> – 8 am - 4 pm  
 Sunday, July 28<sup>th</sup> – 10 am - 6 pm  
 Monday, July 29<sup>th</sup> – 9 am - 5 pm  
 Tuesday, July 30<sup>th</sup> – 9 am - 5 pm  
 Wednesday, July 31<sup>st</sup> – 9 am - 5 pm  
 Thursday, August 1<sup>st</sup> – 11 am - 7 pm  
 Friday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> – 9 am - 5 pm  
 Saturday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8 am - 4 pm  
 Sunday, August 4<sup>th</sup> – 10 am – 6 pm  
 \*Monday, August 5<sup>th</sup> – No Early In-Person

### 2024 General Election Early Voting

Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup> – 8 am - 4 pm  
 Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup> – 10 am - 6 pm  
 Monday, October 28<sup>th</sup> – 9 am - 5 pm  
 Tuesday, October 29<sup>th</sup> – 9 am - 5 pm  
 Wednesday, October 30<sup>th</sup> – 9 am - 5 pm  
 Thursday, October 31<sup>st</sup> – 11 am - 7 pm  
 Friday, November 1<sup>st</sup> – 9 am - 5 pm  
 Saturday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> – 8 am - 4 pm  
 Sunday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> – 10 am - 6 pm  
 \*Monday, November 4<sup>th</sup> – No Early-In Person

**2. Absentee Voting:** All registered voters in Michigan have the right to vote by mail using an absentee ballot delivered to their home. Voters can request an absentee ballot directly from the clerk’s office or request one online at [www.michigan.gov/sos/elections](https://www.michigan.gov/sos/elections) or by scanning QR code above. Michigan voters can now join the permanent absentee ballot list by checking a box on the application to receive an absentee ballot for every election.

**3. Election Day Voting:** Election Day Polls are open from 7:00 am – 8:00 pm. Voters will vote at their designated local precinct. The upcoming election dates are: Primary - Tuesday, August 6, 2024 and General - Tuesday, November 5, 2024.

**ELECTION RESULTS:** Local election results can be viewed on the Muskegon County Clerk's website.

It is extremely helpful to yourself, township staff, and election inspectors to be prepared before election day. If you have any questions, please contact the clerk’s department at (231) 744-2454. Thank you!

