

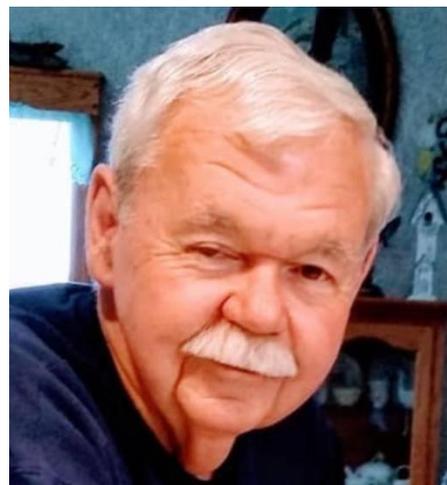
April 2020 Update

By Licking County Commissioner Tim Bubb

My goodness how things have changed in the past month! The rapidly evolving Covid-19 Pandemic has changed the way we live and work. I hope this April Update finds you in good health both physically and mentally! Governor Mike DeWine, a great leader, has requested all Ohioans fly our flags in a sign of unity during this difficult period.



As I begin this Update it is sad to report the passing for two members of our community's safety forces. The longtime Chief of the Newton Township Fire Department, Jim Glover, passed away this past weekend. It is believed his heart failed and Newark Fire Chief Pat Conner says they are seeking state recognition that his death was 'in the line of duty' as he had been on an emergency run. The list of fire and EMS achievements by Chief Glover, that benefitted all of Licking County, is lengthy. He was also a decorated Vietnam Veteran and a friend to many. At this writing memorial service plans are undetermined.



Also, passing away this past weekend was retired Licking County Sheriff's Office Sergeant George Croom. George continued to proudly wear the uniform in a reserve capacity to the Sheriff and as a Department Chaplain. George was a devoted family man and community servant, who was a Navy Vietnam Veteran. He will be missed by the many in our community who he befriended. Area law enforcement will accompany the return of his remains from a Columbus hospital, and further arrangements are pending.



This week the Licking County Commissioners will honor both Chief Glover and Sergeant Croom. We anticipate, in conjunction with others, designating a period of mourning for both with flags at half-staff in the County, and a red, white and blue tribute from the County Courthouse. We will detail our plans in the traditional and social media platforms later this week!

Since things seem to change daily and April is viewed as what could be a challenging month for Ohioans – I am going to keep my comments big picture only.



As far as your County Government is concerned – we are continuing to function. The overall big change is in enforcing limited person to person contact, to protect the health of the public and our

employees. The Court systems, Administrative Offices and Services locations are basically under lock down or restricted entrance. All functions are operating and serving the community – however your contact should be by letter, e-mail or phone call. You can visit the Licking County Government website at www.lcounty.com

On the website front page find detailed summaries of how to work with any of our offices – either in contacting staff or dropping off materials. In response to the 'stay at home' State Health Order we have realigned staff in all locations – either in split shifts or work at home, or some combination based on the functional needs of the office.

As you can imagine – from law enforcement to probation, courts to prosecution, water/wastewater to building services, from building code to fiscal functions, and many more – each function and situation is different and we (Commissioner's departments and other County elected officials) are working to adapt. History will judge how well we adapt to this new 2020 pandemic reality!

Latest Statement from the County Board of Health

The Licking County Health Department has been flooded with complaints about businesses that are continuing to operate under the Stay at Home order or are not protecting the health and safety of their employees or customers.

Under the Stay at Home order issued by the Director of the Ohio Department of Health, effective



March 24, 2020, all persons are to stay at home or their place of residence unless they are engaged in Essential Activities, Essential Governmental Functions, or to operate Essential Businesses and Operations as set forth in the Order. All businesses and operations in the State, except Essential Businesses and Operations, are required to cease all activities within the State except Minimum Basic Operations.

As Governor DeWine recently stated, you should assume that your business is closed and work from there. Essential businesses are exempt from the closure order; however, rules on COVID-19 worker safety still apply. There is an extensive list of "Essential" businesses listed in the order<<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/DirectorsOrderStayAtHome.pdf>> and even more listed in the federal guidance document<<https://www.cisa.gov/publication/guidance-essential-critical-infrastructure-workforce>>.

Lieutenant Governor John Husted suggested businesses create a document justifying why they're considered essential based on the order and document how they're following the safe workplace guidelines.

Non-Essential Businesses may continue Minimum Basic Operations, provided that employees comply with Social Distancing Requirements, to the extent possible, while carrying out such operations. Minimum Basic Operations include the minimum necessary activities to maintain the value of the business's inventory, preserve the condition of the business's physical plant and equipment, ensure security, process payroll and employee benefits, or for related functions and the minimum necessary activities to facilitate employees of the business being able to continue to work remotely from their residences.

The Licking County Health Department has begun sending warning letters and conducting site visits at businesses where multiple complaints have been received or who do not appear to meet the essential business criteria. As part of the investigation, the department will require the business to provide an explanation of how they justified their "Essential" status. They will also ask what steps have been put in place to meet the worker safety requirements.

Essential Businesses and Operations and businesses engaged in Minimum Basic Operations must take proactive measures to ensure compliance with Social Distancing Requirements, including where possible:

"Maintaining at least six-foot social distancing from other individuals, washing hands with soap and water for at least twenty seconds as frequently as possible or using hand sanitizer, covering coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands), regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces, and not shaking hands."

Additionally, the order requires the items below where possible:

- 1. Designate six (6) foot distances. Designating with signage, tape, or by other means six foot spacing for employees and customers in line to maintain appropriate distance;**
- 2. Hand sanitizer and sanitizing products. Having hand sanitizer and sanitizing products readily available for employees and customers;**
- 3. Separate operating hours for vulnerable populations. Implementing separate operating hours for elderly and vulnerable customers; and**

4. Online and remote access. Posting online whether a facility is open and how best to reach the facility and continue services by phone or remotely

The Director's Order may be enforced by the Health Department or State and local law enforcement.

Employers are encouraged to visit www.coronavirus.ohio.gov and read the Stay at Home Order and to consult with their legal counsel or their professional or trade associations for interpretive guidance.

It is important to remember that the intent of this Order is to ensure that the maximum number of people self-isolate in their places of residence to the maximum extent feasible, while enabling essential services to continue, to slow the spread of COVID-19 to the greatest extent possible.

The Ohio Legislative Has Offered Legislative Guidance...

Completion of the March Primary Election

This will be accomplished by Mail-In Ballots only – there will be no in-person voting.

The election will conclude on Tuesday, April 28th at 7:30pm and anyone voting this month by Mail-In Ballot must return them post marked by April 28th.

They directed the Ohio Secretary of State will send out a postcard to all registered voters in Ohio with instructions to request an absentee ballot.

Voters don't have to wait for a postcard to request a ballot. Call the Licking County BOE Office for information at 740-670-5080. Or go on line to the County's Lcounty.com website or the Ohio Secretary of State's website to download and print a 'mail-in ballot request'. Do this soon as you must mail it in – then receive your ballot by mail, complete it, and send it back by return mail by April 28th.

Amending tax code deadline for Ohio 2020 Returns

Authorizes the Ohio tax commissioner to extend state tax filing and payment deadlines for the duration of the governor's COVID-19 emergency declaration, giving the tax department the ability to set Ohio's deadline to match the new federal deadline of July 15, 2020.

Allows employees working from home during the emergency to be considered working at the employer's principal place of business for municipal tax filing purposes.

Public Education in Ohio

By Public Health Order all school buildings are now closed through thru end of April.

Exempts schools and other entities from food processing requirements to allow for continued student meal delivery.

All school work online, so they are waiving the 10-day limit for credit law. Special education can provide service through telehealth.

Eliminating K-12 testing and district report cards for this school year.

Waiving usual requirements to permit high school seniors who were on track before the crisis to graduate.

Freezing EdChoice vouchers to the same list of buildings eligible in the 2019-2020 school year.

Suspends the staff to child ratio requirements and maximum group sizes at child-care centers.

Modifying unemployment compensation

Waives requirement the claimant serve one week waiting period before receiving benefits.

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services may waive work requirement for claimants.

Claimant will not be disqualified for unemployment if unemployed or unable to return to work because of an order of isolation/quarantine.

Prohibit public water disconnections

Public water systems to:

Prohibit disconnection for non payment.

Restore service for disconnection for non payment.

Waive all fees for connection/reconnection.

Coronavirus News Release Licking Park District

In response to the public health situation with COVID-19 and the Ohio Department of Health's guidance on avoiding large gatherings, the Licking Park District has suspended all programming until further notice.

Outdoor facilities will continue to be open for public use. This is an opportunity for families to take advantage of the great outdoors. We encourage visitors to follow the latest directives from public health officials.

For the latest information on the Licking Park District's operations during the Coronavirus outbreak, visit [www.Licking ParkDistrict.com](http://www.LickingParkDistrict.com) and follow them on our Facebook page.

Reply to the U.S. Census This Week – It Is Important

While we are in a challenging time in dealing with the Covid-19 virus and worldwide pandemic – there certainly is ample 'at home' time to take care of other business.



One of those 'must do' items would be the response of each member of the U.S. population to the every 10-year count of everyone in our country. It is easy and safe to do on-line. Visit www.2020Census.gov National Census Day is Wednesday, April 1st.

If you have questions check out the information sheet attached below...

Census 2020

To Be Conducted Online

"An accurate Census count helps bring funding to your community."

The Census 2020 is the first census count to be held entirely online! Each household will receive a card in the mail that contains a password for all census forms, and everyone is encouraged to submit their information through the census website. This allows each household to submit their essential census information with just a few clicks. This website is secure, and only authorized personnel can access information. Data obtained through the Census 2020 count won't be released to the public for 72 years.

Ways the Decennial Census Affects You

1. Budget planning for all levels of government
2. Drawing school district boundaries and even school lunches
3. Planning for hospitals, nursing homes and other health services
4. Directing funds to services for people living in poverty
5. Developing assistance programs for low-income families
6. Designing facilities for the elderly and people with disabilities
7. Attracting new business
8. Investment planning
9. Planning future housing needs
10. Reapportioning seats in the U.S. House of Representatives

United States
Census 2020

How the 2020 Census will invite everyone to respond



Every household will have the option of responding online, by mail, or by phone.

Nearly every household will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census from either a postal worker or a census worker.

95% of households will receive their census invitation in the mail.



Almost 5% of households will receive their census invitation when a census taker drops it off. In these areas, the majority of households may not receive mail at their home's physical location (like households that use PO boxes or areas recently affected by natural disasters).

Less than 1% of households will be counted in person by a census taker, instead of being invited to respond on their own. We do this in very remote areas like parts of northern Maine, remote Alaska, and in select American Indian areas that ask to be counted in person.

Note: We have special procedures to count people who don't live in households, such as students living in university housing or people experiencing homelessness.

General Timeline for 2020 Census

- Now - January 2019: Census job applications open
- January 2019: Ohio regional offices begin opening
- June 2019: Ohio Complete Count Committees are set in place
- July 2019: Census advertising begins
- August 2019: In-field address canvassing begins for mailing lists
- February 2020: Census login cards are mailed to all households
- March 2020: Internet response begins
- April 1, 2020: Official Census Day
- April 2020: Follow-up begins for households that did not complete the Census online

United States
Census 2020

When It Rains – It Pours in Licking County

Seems the March 2020 forecast for Ohio was Pandemic preparation and rain – lots of rain!

Overnight and the morning of Friday, March 20th the skies over Licking County opened up, especially in the Heath region, and saw three to five inches of rain in a 12-hour period. This resulted in major flash flooding in Heath and south Newark, and in low areas throughout the



County. EMA, Fire and EMS, and water rescue crews were on the move in multiple directions. Many rescues happened and there was no loss of life. However for dozens of folks the clean-up and restoration continues.

Licking County Engineer Jared Knerr reports that at one time more than two dozen County roads were water covered and in part closed. Specifically, Butler Road, Brownsville, and Brushy Fork Roads will require some \$567,000 in repairs with sections of shoulder and pavements lost to the rushing water. Damage to Brownsville Road in the photo to the right with major shoulder restoration and new pavement scheduled.



The Flash Flood rush of water caused a complete washout and destruction of a large culvert under State Route 79 or Hebron Road, on the south side of Heath.

ODOT will be contributing \$100,000 to what could be nearly a one million dollar Heath excavation and repair project.



BUDS Inc., out of Nashport, on an emergency basis has contracted for the repair which is underway. They hope to have a new culvert placed and the multi-lane state highway repaved and reopened by the end of April.

Then, on Saturday night March 28th the skies opened up across northern Licking County and in Knox County. Some rain gauges measured two to three inches of rain in the downpour.



Flash flooding occurred along the U.S. Route 62 corridor and the North Fork of the Licking River, with the Village of Utica especially hard hit, as well as surrounding areas. Some county roads were closed again due to high water. Clean-up and restoration continues there as well.

New County 9-1-1 Center On-Line and Successful

It certainly wasn't planned this way but things worked out! After a couple of years of development the new Licking County 9-1-1 Communications Center opened on Wednesday, March 18th on the Port Authority's Heath Campus. 9-1-1 call taking and dispatching is high pressure and highly technical work, and the Center opening came after a month of intense testing to make sure everything was working well.

However, the week was the equivalent of a 'soft opening' to continue real time testing and to iron out any bugs. And on Wednesday and Thursday things were slow.

Then on March 20th came a twelve hour period of intense heavy rains and flash flooding countywide, with thousands of emergency calls.

Needless to say the 'soft opening' was over. It was all hands on deck with all twenty of the new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) units running and all available staff manning the Center. They deserve a medal for making it all happen in real time and making hundreds of initial and mutual aid dispatches in dozens of directions. Indeed – law enforcement, and fire and EMS dispatchers are - The First of the First Responders!



Let me say on behalf of my fellow County Commissioners – thanks and a job well done - to the 9-1-1 staffers, and the dozens of first responders in the community and in the water on both of these March floods saving lives and property. There was no loss of life in the County!

Stay in Touch With Your Local Church Congregations

During this time of "Social Distancing" many of our area churches are being creative with on-line worship services and service to congregations. So check them out in virtual formats. And use your local church affiliations to support community outreach to the elderly and those in need of support.

A church in south Newark on National Drive, Saint John's United Church of Christ, continues to feature an outdoor drive-in service. There may be others. Saint John's reports, they have upgraded with new broadcasting equipment and switching to a better sounding FM signal. Call the church for specific information. Saint John's will continue to feature this Sunday morning 'parking lot' service through October 4th. Visitors come as you are and hear the service by tuning in over your car radio. In addition to being popular, it can be helpful for those who have relatives that have difficulties getting in and out of the car.

Heisey Wind Ensemble's Next Two Events Cancelled

Doug Moran tell me that the Heisey Wind Ensemble's (HWE) 35th Anniversary Concert scheduled for April 25th has been cancelled along with all events at the Reese Center. And as of this week the May 23 'Swing with the HWE Big Band' concert is also cancelled, along with other events at the Campus through the end of June.

The next performance of HWE would be the annual Newark Independence Day Celebration at the Reese Outdoor Amphitheater on July 3rd, and at this time no decision has been made on that major fireworks and music event.

Public Electric Vehicle Charging Station Located in Downtown Newark

The City of Newark has installed (2) new Electric Vehicle-Fast Charging stations in the downtown business district.

The project, a joint effort with American Electric Power (AEP) features fast charging stations are a quicker than traditional Level 1 and Level 2 charging stations. According to AEP these downtown stations can charge approximately eighty percent of battery capacity in about 45 minutes, this compares favorably to lower level chargers which require some 3 times that amount of time.



These two state of the art charging stations are located at the corner of North Second and East Church Streets beside the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel.

Doubletree Manager Kendra Proudfit says, they are excited to have these charging stations near the hotel so patrons can have easy access. She said they are getting requests for vehicle charging capability on a regular basis.

Newark Community Development Director Mark Mauter explains these charging stations will be paid for fully by AEP through a reimbursement grant. They came on line in early March.

New Director for Robbins Hunter Museum

Sarah Straley Hottle has been hired to be the museum's new Executive Director. She comes to the museum with years of experience in leading non-profits around the state, including organizations like Simply Living and Green Energy Ohio. Her strengths are fundraising, membership cultivation and educational programming.

Although Straley Hottle joins the museum at a difficult time, she agrees with Christina Gray, president of the board of trustees who said, "While the museum is currently closed due to the health crisis, we believe this gives Sarah time to become familiar with the collections, the volunteers, the staff, and the board. We are already working to create digital programs via our website and social media to keep the public engaged and continue our mission and Sarah has had some great ideas!" Straley Hottle added that she envisions enhanced community gathering spaces, increased exhibits and events once the museum has reopened. She plans to develop strategic partnerships with local, regional and national arts and humanities groups.



Licking County Transit Information

The Licking County Transit Board (LCTB) buses are still providing essential transportation services to residents. LCTB considers essential services as transportation to routine medical appointments; dialysis, urgent care, the grocery store, and prescription pick up and work. LCTB is taking every precaution possible to ensure the safety of the riders, drivers and all staff. All buses are being disinfected and sanitized before use.



For our drivers' safety, they are wearing gloves and using hand sanitizer frequently. In alignment with the 6-foot social distancing rule, LCTB will only allow a certain number of riders per bus to maintain this space. Additionally, LCTB asks riders to please follow the CDC's current guidelines, such as staying home when sick, and to please only schedule transport if it is a necessity. If you exhibit any of the following signs of respiratory illness, such as fever, cough and/ or difficulty breathing, please refrain from public transit for the safety of our drivers and fellow passengers. Should a rider exhibit any of the above signs during transport, the driver will ask them to wear a mask. The public still needs to play their part in keeping themselves and others healthy.

LCTB offices are currently not open to the public. Ticket purchases and any other necessary business will be pre-scheduled. You may call: (740) 670-5185 to schedule these appointments. LCTB Transit Center: 745 East Main Street, Newark, Ohio 43055 and LCTB Maintenance Facility: 763 East Main Street, Newark, Ohio.

Update from the Licking County Master Gardeners

From Lori Swihart of OSU Extension

Tucked behind the brick facade of the Agricultural Center on East Main Street in Newark, a sleeping garden is awakening to the warmer days of spring and the melodies of bird's overhead.

The Licking County Master Gardener Volunteers have caressed this plot of land with blooms and vegetables for close to two decades. In 2019, the volunteers donated over 1,800 hours in this little-known gem of a garden for the purpose to share their horticultural knowledge with curious visitors. Members expanded the garden last year to develop a huge 30 x 70-foot pantry garden and harvested the bounty to feed the hungry through the Salvation Army Food Pantry and Cook's Kitchen. Their harvest resulted in donating over 2,600 pounds in the pantry garden's very first year.



We hope to be able to hold our popular Learning Garden Open House on Saturday, July 18, where we will have music, free food and activities for the kids. Our goals for 2020 in the garden are to have several garden plots changes which includes redesign of the garden entrance area. Our other goal for this year was to have a new ADA compliant walkway installed that would take the visitor from the parking lot to the garden and shelter house.

Lawn Chair Learning began last year, and we hope to be able to continue this educational program the later part of the summer. Guests will be invited to bring their own lawn chairs and enjoy discussions about different gardening topics. The gardens are open to all visitors from dawn to dusk.

The 68 dedicated volunteers are very active in the community, assisting new gardeners and answering questions of seasoned gardeners at the Hartford Fair, Canal Market, hosting the Veggies & More Series and our Yearly Plant Sale plus our Pollinator Garden at Dawes and our Four Seasons of Gardening Conference.

In celebration of National Volunteer Week, April 19th – 25th, I would like to thank the talented and astounding volunteers that give selflessly to educate others on the benefits and joys of horticulture. You are so appreciated.

***Lori Swihart, Licking County Master Gardener Volunteer
Coordinator, Ohio State University Extension Follow us on Facebook
at Master Gardener Volunteers of Licking County or on our website
at <http://licking.osu.edu> for updates.***

As I wrap-up this April 2020 Update I would again reflect on how the Covid-19 Pandemic has changed our lives, crushed segments of our economy and brought virtually every public event and interaction to a halt!

Similar to the 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic – this will be one for the history books. And hopefully we will learn from the history!

Still essential services and our lives continue – and that is why I have continued to do my monthly Update even with all the distractions.

Recently my friend and former associate at Newark Air Force Base (years ago) Bernie Volpe was airborne above Heath and snapped this photo of the former Rockwell/Meritor Plant.

For over a half century this nearly one million square foot plant



manufactured truck transmissions and axles, and employed hundreds of men and women.

The manufacturing plant was empty and dated, and no longer an asset as they continue to market this industrial site in Heath. It is now a very large concrete pad with just a few remaining piles of materials, and the demolition and recycling continues. This is the one thousand foot view. Let's hope in the years ahead there develops a bright future for this excellent site.

Feel free to forward this e-mail in any direction you would like, and let me know the e-mail address of anyone who would like to be included on my Update Newsletter list.

*** I would also invite you to check Facebook and visit Licking County Commissioners, Elect Commissioner Tim Bubb and Commissioner Tim Bubb.**

I can be e-mailed at tbubb@lcounty.com, and my desk phone number at the Commissioner's Office is 740-670-5118.

Best Regards! Commissioner Tim Bubb

