



# CITY OF LEWES

*The First Town In The First State*

## ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

### APRIL 2021

**Property Taxes:** Tax bills are mailed in April and are due upon receipt. A penalty of 1.5% per month will be assessed on all outstanding taxes if not received by June 30. The tax bill period is April 1 – March 31. Since 2010 the tax rate has remained at \$0.57/\$100 on half the 2000 assessed value.

Tax payments can be mailed, dropped off at City Hall, or made on our website. Forms of payments accepted are cash, check (made payable to **City of Lewes**), or credit card (Visa, Mastercard, & Discover). There is a \$50 returned check fee. If you have questions about your assessment or tax bill, please call the Tax Clerk at (302) 645-7777 ext. 114.

Property owners can search the city's website ([www.ci.lewes.de.us](http://www.ci.lewes.de.us)) for tax information. This feature is found by clicking on the Services tab then from the column on the left, click "Search for Tax Information" (directly from this window you may click on "Make a Payment" to pay taxes online).

**Building Construction in the Floodplain:** The City of Lewes is a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and the Community Rating System. Participation in these programs helps keep flood insurance affordable for our property owners. As a program participant, we adhere to floodplain construction standards to help mitigate flood risk. If you have a property in the floodplain and are considering construction:

- The City has adopted the standard of 18 inches of freeboard above Base Flood Elevation (BFE) for all structures located within the floodplain that are constructed or substantially improved.
- If property owners are considering work on a structure in the floodplain in which the improvement costs are equal to or exceed 50% of the market value of the structure, then the structure must be brought into compliance with the latest floodplain standards.
- The City has a substantial improvement regulation for all construction within the floodplain. This requires that all construction costs to a structure over a 10 year period count towards the 50% rule.
- The City requires a total of 3 elevation certificates be submitted for new construction and any substantially improved structure. The first is submitted at the proposed construction, second is when the first floor is complete, and the final is submitted prior to issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy (CO).

**\*\* Property owners who purchase flood insurance through NFIP should receive a 10% reduction in premiums. \*\***

If you have any questions about construction, in the floodplain or otherwise, please contact the Building Officials by calling (302) 645-7777 ext. 124. To identify if your property is in the floodplain visit our website, click on the "How do I..." tab, look under "Find", click on "Interactive Mapping", and then click on "Delaware Floodplain Mapping".

**Business License:** Any person, firm, and corporation engaged for profit, entities who deliver and/or provide a service to City residents, and businesses along with property owners who rent rooms, cottages, private houses or apartments, including those providing rentals in the City through an online app, must pay an annual license fee to the City. The fee for this license is obtained by calling (302) 645-7777 ext. 124 to reach the Business License Coordinator. The license year is January 1 – December 31.

A 5% gross residential receipt tax is due to the city for rental properties as well as bed and breakfast establishments not subject to the State of Delaware Lodging Tax. This tax may be paid monthly but must be paid in full by February 1 for the preceding year.

**Waste Removal:** Please refer to the calendar included in this mailing for collection dates and days for household trash, bulk trash, recycling, and yardwaste. Yardwaste is not to be raked, swept, or put in gutters, storm drains, or ditches. Your annual property tax bill, also in this envelope, identifies which **Section** applies to your property. Information regarding acceptable material to be left curbside is found on our website under the "Services" heading. Please remember all waste removal cans, material, and/or bags need to be placed at the curb no later than 6 AM on the day of pick-up. **Containers must be removed from the curb within 24 hours after collection.** *The City does not provide trash and recycle collection services to commercial and business establishments.*

Twice a week trash collections will begin July 1<sup>st</sup> and go through September 10<sup>th</sup>. Recycling service will continue once per week.

If you have any questions, please contact City Hall at (302) 645-7777 or go to the City website ([www.ci.lewes.de.us](http://www.ci.lewes.de.us)), click on "How Do I..." in the right-hand corner, then Contact Lewes Government to send us an email.

**Safe Mobility:** The City strongly encourages and promotes a safe pedestrian, bicycle, and skate friendly community.

Pedestrians have the right-of-way in crosswalks; **drivers must stop** if they see someone in a crosswalk. It is strongly recommended **pedestrians make eye contact with the driver of the vehicle** before proceeding in the crosswalk.

Bicyclists must obey all rules of the road, the same as vehicular traffic. This includes travelling in the same direction as vehicles on both two-way streets and one-way streets. Riding on city sidewalks is **only** permissible for bicyclists age 12 and younger. Use of helmets is strongly encouraged.

**Bicycle Parking:** The city has two locations specifically designed for bicyclists. At the corner of Savannah Road and Gills Neck Road is a 60+ bicycle parking lot that has a fix-it station and air compressor.

Additionally, the Lewes – Georgetown Trail runs from Cool Spring to Gills Neck Road. A trailhead at Monroe Avenue has restrooms, a fix-it station, and air compressor. There is also a trail from American Legion Road to Cape Henlopen State Park.

#### **Parking:**

**FREE PARKING** is available at the corner of Schley and Franklin Avenues and at Otis Smith Park located along Savannah Road just past the Canal Bridge. The City also has two free electric charging stations in each of these lots.

Also, there is designated on-street parking in the 100-300 blocks of W. Third Str, between Market Str and Burton Ave, and Park Ave.

**METERS:** The City has parking meters located at Beach #1 (the end of Savannah Road with an additional entrance/exit at Virginia Avenue), Beach #2 (Georgia Avenue), 1812 Park, Canalfront Park, Second Street, Market Street, Bank Street, Front Street, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street lot. The meter fee at Beach #1 and #2 is \$2.00 per hour while all other locations are \$1.00 per hour. Meters are in effect from **9 AM to 8 PM** every day beginning May 1 through October 14, except the meters at Beach #1 & #2 which are in effect May 1 through September 30. Everyone must pay, including vehicles with handicapped plates and placards. In addition to accepting US quarters (and US currency at the station meters) all new meters accept credit cards (Visa, Mastercard & Discover) and ParkMobile. There is a 2-hour minimum charge for customers using a credit card or ParkMobile plus a \$0.50 transaction fee.

**BEACH BONFIRE / WEDDING CEREMONY / EVENT / RACE:** Permits are required from the City for each of these events held in public places within the city. The request form is found on the City's website ([www.ci.lewes.de.us](http://www.ci.lewes.de.us)), Business tab at the top, then "Forms & Applications." Fees are: Beach Bonfire \$25-\$50; Wedding Ceremony \$200-\$400; Event / Race \$50 each; and Recreation Activities Permit \$100. Department of Health approval, other restrictions, and/or fees may apply. Please contact the City's Parks & Marina Administrator at (302) 645-7777 ext. 100 if you have any additional questions.

**BEACH ACCESSIBLE WHEELCHAIRS:** The City has two beach accessible wheelchairs for use getting onto Beach #1 or #2. If you or someone you know wants to use these chairs while visiting the beach from April to October, please contact the Parking Enforcement Supervisor weekdays 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM by calling (302) 645-6264 ext. 112.

**BEACHES ARE GUARDED:** Beaches #1 and #2 in the city will have certified lifeguards Memorial Day through Labor Day.

**SMOKE-FREE AREAS:** ALL City parks, beaches, and public crossings are smoke free and vape free. Please use designated ash stash waste receptacles at the entrance of each park and beach to properly dispose of cigarettes and cigars before entering these areas.

**SUMMER CONCERTS IN THE PARK ARE FREE:** The City, in sponsorship with WSFS Bank and the Delaware Division of the Arts, will hold summer concerts in Stango Park. This park is located adjacent to the Margaret H. Rollins Community Center at the corner of Adams Avenue and Kings Highway. All concerts will be held on Tuesday evening beginning at 7:00 PM. Using lawn chairs and blankets is welcome. In case of inclement weather, please call (302) 645-7777 ext. 100 to confirm the performance will occur as scheduled.

**EMERGENCY EVACUATION / SPECIAL NEEDS:** Should you or a member of your household require special assistance during an emergency evacuation, please complete a "Special Needs Registration Form". This form is found on our website under "Forms/Applications", then scroll to "Special Needs Registration Form". Print this form, complete the information requested, and mail it to the City of Lewes, ATTN: Special Needs Registration, P.O. Box 227, Lewes, Delaware 19958. If you have questions, please contact the Lewes Police Department at (302) 645-6264.

**SMART 911:** This is a high-tech tool designed to give first responders important information during the critical seconds after calling 911. Smart911 enables residents to create a *Safety Profile* for his or her household by logging on to [www.smart911.com](http://www.smart911.com). Personal information put in to this profile allows users to control their information which can then be available to first responders should the need arise wherever you travel in the United States as long as the Smart911 program is provided in that jurisdiction.

**CodeRED** In the event of an emergency situation (e.g., severe weather, utility outages, or other urgent situations, etc.) residents and visitors will be notified of important information by signing up for CodeRED on the City's website. Please go to our website and click on "Government", locate "Emergency Preparedness", then scroll to the CodeRED logo.

**CITY EMAIL ALERTS:** To receive email notifications regarding matters in and around the City, residents may register their name and email address on the City's website. Please go to our website and click on "Services" then "Sign Up for Notifications".

**DISASTER PREPAREDNESS:** The City's Hazard Mitigation Committee has published a "*Disaster Preparedness Starts at Home*" booklet. These booklets, filled with important disaster mitigation information, can be obtained by calling City Hall (302) 645-7777.

**CITY ELECTION / VOTER ELIGIBILITY / VOTER REGISTRATION:** The City will hold an election this year as there are two open Council seats.

Every person who is 18 years old on or before the date of an Annual Election and is a citizen of the United States and a full-time resident of the City of Lewes, shall have one (1) vote provided he/she is registered on the Books of Registered Voters for the City of Lewes.

A citizen of the City of Lewes includes any person who is a qualified voter of the State of Delaware and is a bona fide domiciliary of the City of Lewes.

Persons meeting these qualifications must register to vote at the City Manager's Office by 4:30 PM, Friday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>. A completed form and photo identification showing proof of City of Lewes domicile are required. Business hours of City Hall are Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The walk-up window is closed daily 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM.

The Lewes BPW is also holding an election and voting eligibility requirements with the Lewes BPW are different than the City. Residents should confirm their voting eligibility status directly with the Lewes BPW by calling (302) 645-6268 or stop by their office at 107 Franklin Avenue.

**FIREWORKS:** Due to the pandemic, the free July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks display has not been determined. If held, the fireworks will be launched just off Lewes Beach and be visible from many locations throughout the City. More information is found by visiting [www.gofourthlewes.com](http://www.gofourthlewes.com).

\*\*\*Fireworks of any kind, including sky lanterns, are **illegal** to possess in Delaware without a permit from the State Fire Marshall's Office. The Lewes Police Department will enforce this law to keep residents and visitors safe.

### REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS

All meetings, unless otherwise noted or advertised, begin at 6:30 PM virtually.

Please check our website for the most up-to-date information.

Mayor & City Council	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday
Parks & Recreation Commission	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday
Lewes Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday
	Every other month
Planning Commission at 6:00 PM	3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday
Lewes BPW at 4:00 PM	4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday
Lewes African-American Heritage Commission at 6:00 PM	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday

### ELECTED OFFICIALS

Mayor	Theodore W. Becker Term expires 2022
Deputy Mayor	Bonnie Osler Term expires 2021
Treasurer	Andrew Williams Term expires 2023
Secretary	Rob Morgan Term expires 2021
Councilperson	Tim Ritzert Term expires 2023

### IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Cape May - Lewes Ferry	1-800-643-3779
Delaware Solid Waste Authority	(302) 739-5361
Lewes BPW	(302) 645-6228
Lewes Chamber of Commerce	(302) 645-8073
Lewes Fire Department	(302) 645-6556
Lewes Historical Society	(302) 645-7670
Lewes Public Library	(302) 645-2733
MERR Institute	
Marine Animal Rescue	(302) 228-5029
Sussex County Government Offices	(302) 855-7700
DNREC Emergency Response Team	1-800-662-8802

As the community adjusts to reduced COVID restrictions, please help us all **STAY SAFE** by:

- Wearing a mask while in public,
- Washing your hands thoroughly, and
- Respecting the space of others by maintaining a 6 feet distance

### CITY OF LEWES CONTACT INFORMATION:

Website: [www.ci.lewes.de.us](http://www.ci.lewes.de.us)

Address:

114 East Third Street

P.O. Box 227, Lewes, Delaware 19958

Business Hours: 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Walk-up window is closed daily 1-2pm

Phone: (302) 645-7777