

**Supervisor Comments**  
**August 2020**  
**www.simstownship.org**

**Proposed millage increases ...** On November's ballot, Sims Township is asking for an increase for both 1) roads and 2) mosquito & gypsy moth. Two years ago, the Sims Board reduced the mosquito and gypsy moth millage to .5000 as we had a sizable account balance for that expense and thought it only fair to reduce the taxpayer burden. Since then, there has been, what can only be described as, a tremendous gypsy moth infestation in our area and that once healthy account is now not that healthy. We have had to expend those resources for a significant increase in gypsy moth treatment and are asking the voters to re-instate the 1.000 mill so we can continue with the aggressive treatment required.

In regard to the roads, in the last 3.5 years, Sims Township has converted four gravel roads to paved roads. In addition, Mclean Rd required the removal of over 100 huge trees that had grown in the ditches. That required re-ditching three-quarters of a mile on both sides of the road and add steel drainage tubes to control flooding. When that was completed, the Road Commission rebuilt the entire road. A road that was virtually impassable in the spring, is now high and dry. All this to state, Sims has been very aggressive in the last 3.8 years and we have more to do and for that to happen, need greater financial resources as costs continue to climb. We are asking the voters to approve a millage increase from .4916 to 1.000 so we can continue to make the roads in Sims Township the best they can be.

**From Michigan Township Insights 8/7/20 ... Action needed: 2020 Census count deadline moved up ...** As of Sept. 30, the U.S. Census Bureau is ending all counting efforts for the 2020 census—a month sooner than previously announced. The latest state population counts must then be reported by the Dec. 31, 2020, statutory deadline. The new counting deadline applies to all efforts to identify individuals by door-knocking, phone, mail and online. Township officials should do what they can to encourage all residents to be counted by Sept. 30. Michigan's overall response rate stands at 68.9%. The census count was originally supposed to be completed by the end of July but was extended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

---

**MI Township Insights continued ... New PFAS rule now in effect ...** As of Aug. 3, municipal drinking water supplies must comply with the new per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) rule establishing maximum contaminant levels for seven different PFAS chemicals. The new drinking water standards also update Michigan's existing groundwater clean-up criteria to 8 parts per trillion (ppt) for PFOA and 16 ppt for PFOS—resulting in 38 new sites being added into Michigan PFAS Action Response Team portfolio of ongoing PFAS investigations. Most of these sites are landfills or former manufacturing facilities already the subject of ongoing state investigations into other forms of contamination.

On August 13, 2020, FEMA In Arenac County offers us the following on Flood Risk Communication and the entire document can be found on our website, [www.simstowndship.org](http://www.simstowndship.org) ... This information is particularly significant in light of the extensive flooding we experienced a few months ago.

“Following the CCO meetings for Arenac and Iosco Counties, held on July 8 and 9, FEMA is scheduling two combined virtual open house events for county residents. These virtual public open house events provide an opportunity for you to review flood hazards with the public. Research shows that residents look to local officials for information about risk in their community. We are asking you to help us get the word out about these upcoming virtual open house events scheduled for **September 16 from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. ET** and **September 17 from 5 p.m. – 8 p.m. ET**. We would also ask that you attend the events to speak with local residents who may have questions only you may be able to answer.

Attached you will find an Open House Toolkit and meeting flyer, which contains community-specific messages and information. These can be used to help spread awareness of the upcoming events. Additionally, we have included a description of FEMA's Flood Risk Communication Toolkit and Videos. These resources can be very helpful when communication flood map changes to non-technical audiences.

**FEMA's Flood Risk Communication Toolkit and Videos** ... An invitation from public officials to residents to participate in discussions about how to protect the people and things they value most will increase the likelihood for public support of flood mitigation solutions. The resources listed below include leading practices and examples that can be tailored to fit your needs and support you in your communications when engaging the public in discussions about flood risk. We recommend that you jump into these resources by reading the Start Guide and watching a video or two from the attached Flood Risk Communication video guide.

Start Guide - This Guide introduces the Toolkit's components and tips for discussing complex risk topics in a meaningful way. Communication Plan Guide - Developing a Communication Plan to share information about natural hazards is a strategic step community officials can take to protect the people and things most valued in their community. This guide helps community officials organize messages and desired outcomes by laying out a seven-step process. Designing Effective Public Meetings Guide - This Guide shares information on how to design more effective meetings, from planning to setting clear goals and objectives, to the steps to take when the meeting is over. This component also includes tips for conducting early, effective, and comprehensive engagement. Social Media Guide - Social media is an important tactic to consider when designing your Communication Plan. Local governments have a front-row seat in their community and are ideally positioned to create timely, pertinent posts that spur clicks, likes, comments, shares, and views. This guide includes how, when, and why to consider using social media, as well as best practices. Flood Risk Communication videos - The video series helps to visually communicate the objectives of updating the community's flood risk data and maps and include stories from community members. The attached guide includes links to the videos and suggestions on how and when to use these videos to communicate on a variety of topics such as changing flood risk, coastal flood risk, the process to update flood risk data and maps, community support, and mitigation. If you have any questions about the messaging or the open house events themselves, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly. Thank you in advance for helping us get the word out to local residents.” **Edgar Patino**, PMP *Community Engagement & Risk Communications - FEMA Region V333 N, Green St. Chicago, IL 60607 T: 312.856.8372*

Final Thought ... “My religion is very simple. My religion is kindness.” Dalai Lama XIV

---