



7900 South Westnedge Avenue  
Portage, Michigan 49002  
www.portagemi.gov  
(269) 329-4400

## Curbside Single-Stream Recycling in Full Swing!

On October 1, 2015, the City of Portage Curbside Recycling Program was converted to a **SINGLE-STREAM** collection program. Beginning October 1, recycling will only be collected from a wheeled cart rather than the 18-gallon bin.

### WHAT'S CHANGED?

- ◆ No sorting of recyclable materials! Mix any acceptable recyclable items into a single container.
- ◆ A wheeled cart replaced the 18-gallon bin.
- ◆ Collection occurs every other week (not every week).

Please visit [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov) for complete details.

### WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

If you wish to recycle, you must select a 96-gallon or 64-gallon wheeled cart by choosing one of the following options:

- ◆ Visit [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov) > Departments > Public Services > Curbside Recycling Program to complete and submit an online selection form.
- ◆ Call the City of Portage Recycling Hotline at 329-4416.
- ◆ Call Best Way Disposal at 388-3300.



After you select a wheeled cart size, Best Way Disposal will deliver the cart, along with a calendar of your collection dates and a recycling brochure.

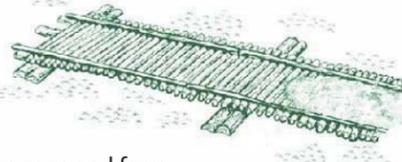
Stop using the 18-gallon recycling bin. Residents may keep the 18-gallon bin or return it to the City of Portage Department of Public Services at 7719 South Westnedge Avenue from October 1 through October 16, 2015.

Please call the City of Portage Recycling Hotline at 329-4416 with any questions.

## Osterhout Avenue Road Work Unearths Early Road Construction

In August, the work to install sanitary sewer on West Osterhout Avenue uncovered the roadway construction of early Portage settlers. During the sanitary sewer excavation east of Lloy Street, the contractor, Peters Construction, unearthed a 250-foot-long section of wooden roadbed known as "corduroy road."

Corduroy road was constructed by the earlier settlers as a way to provide a stable roadway for wagons and carriages. Trees alongside the road route would be cut down and laid side by side crosswise in the new roadbed and then covered with dirt, field stones and gravel. The wood logs help distribute the load of the heavier wagons and farm equipment and made travel easier than on the previous dirt paths. "The resourcefulness of the early settlers always impresses me," said Chris Barnes, Director of Transportation & Utilities. "The construction of the corduroy road demonstrates the ingenuity the settlers used to improve their lives."



Early records show that sections of Shaver Road, Portage Road and Lovers Lane were constructed of both corduroy and wooden planks. The installation date of the corduroy road uncovered on West Osterhout Avenue is not exactly known, however, it was likely installed in the 1870 to 1880 era, as farming prospered along the southern sections of the city. Early Portage Township records indicate that farmers could reduce or eliminate their taxes by maintaining the condition of the road in front of their property. Perhaps this section of West Osterhout Road was constructed and maintained to take advantage of this tax break!

The current construction on West Osterhout Avenue is scheduled to be complete by October 31, 2015 ... minus the corduroy road! More information about early roadway systems in Portage is available in *Portage and Its Past* by Grace J. Potts, which can be viewed online at [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov) > Boards & Commissions > Historic District Commission and at the Portage District Library.



Construction on West Osterhout Avenue this summer revealed the remnants of a "corduroy road" constructed by early settlers to provide a stable roadway for wagons and carriages.

## Railroad Crossing Safety

Isn't your safety worth a few extra minutes of your time?

Railroad crossings present a constant potential danger to drivers, pedestrians and trains. In 2014, more than 1,100 people were killed or injured nationwide in railroad crossing accidents. In Kalamazoo County, three fatalities and five accidents were reported. In Portage, from 2012 to 2014, ten motorists were either injured or killed at railroad crossings.

In Portage, there are ten railroad crossings on municipal streets, which are all operated by the Grand Elk Railroad. The railroad was originally built in 1867 from Three Rivers to Kalamazoo and was partially paid for by Portage Township and the City of Kalamazoo. Railroad crossings are protected with warning flashing lights, bells and where physically possible, crossing gates.

Many train / vehicle accidents occur where the railroad crossing is located very close to a parallel roadway. Two such crossings exist in Portage at East Centre Avenue / Shaver Road and South Westnedge Avenue / Shaver Road. To compensate for the inability to install crossing gates at these locations, the intersections are equipped with two sets of traffic signals – one at the near side (before the railroad tracks) and one on the far side. These two sets of signals are phased such that the near signal turns yellow then red, while the far side signal remains green



The railroad crossing at the intersection of South Westnedge Avenue and Shaver Road does not have the physical space to install crossing gates, so it is equipped with two sets of traffic signals to allow traffic to clear the tracks.

allowing traffic to clear the railroad tracks. This type of signal phasing is used throughout the country to keep vehicles from becoming "stuck" on the tracks between the two traffic signals.

It is important for railroads and city officials to ensure that drivers and pedestrians are adequately warned of the potential dangers of railroad crossings. By understanding and obeying these warning devices and following common sense rules, drivers can reduce the chance of being injured or killed in a train / vehicle crash.

- ◆ Don't get trapped on the tracks; before beginning to cross a railroad crossing, always be sure that there is plenty of room to proceed all the way across the tracks before having to stop again.
- ◆ If your vehicle stalls on the tracks, get out immediately, move as far away as possible and call 9-1-1.
- ◆ When approaching a railroad crossing, watch for vehicles that must always stop at railroad crossings – like busses or certain trucks.
- ◆ Freight trains traveling through Portage do not follow a set schedule as passenger trains do, so always approach every crossing as if a train may be approaching too.
- ◆ Be aware of the optical illusion; it is impossible for a driver to accurately judge the distance and speed of an approaching train. Better to spend the extra few minutes waiting for a train than take the risk to beat the train and be injured or killed.
- ◆ Remember that it is unlikely for a train to be able to stop if you get in its way. A train traveling at 55 mph may take as much as a mile and a half to stop after it first applies its brakes.



**EVERY BEDROOM NEEDS A WORKING SMOKE ALARM.**  
 FIRE PREVENTION WEEK OCT 4-10, 2015  
 firepreventionweek.org

Fire Prevention Week is October 4 - 10, 2015. The theme of 2015 Fire Prevention Week is "Hear the beep where you sleep." The majority of residential fire fatalities occur in homes without working smoke alarms and half of all deaths occur between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. Ensuring your smoke alarms work is an easy process and may save your life.

Smoke alarms should be tested once a month. This is as simple as pressing the test button on the unit. If the beep does not immediately sound, or does not sound at all, the battery or the smoke detector itself should be replaced. If the smoke detector more than ten years old, it should be replaced as the sensors wear out over time.

Replace the batteries in smoke detectors every six months, even if the detectors are hard wired into

the electrical system. This practice ensures the detectors will operate in the event of a power failure. New detectors are available with a Lithium battery that lasts 10 years and is not replaceable. These detectors are simply replaced when the batteries are spent. The semi-annual battery change is also a good time to vacuum off any dust that may be on the detector.

The City of Portage Department of Public Safety – Fire Division will install smoke detectors for Portage residents who do not currently have working smoke detectors. This program is offered through a grant from MiSAFE (Michigan Smoke Alarms For Everyone). For information on this program and to see if you may qualify, please contact the Fire Division at 329-4487.

## Public Safety Open House

Visit the Portage Department of Public Safety Open House on Saturday, October 10, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Fire Station #1 (7830 Shaver Road). The open house will feature a burn cell demonstration showing the benefits of a residential sprinkler system, games, crafts and puppet shows. And don't miss the chance to sit in a police cruiser, a fire engine and many other public safety vehicles!

### Schedule of Activities

- 10:00 Doors Open
- 10:30 Fire Prevention Puppet Show (Fire Training Room)
- 11:30 Fire Prevention Puppet Show (Fire Training Room)
- 12:15 Burn Cell Demonstration (Parking lot behind Fire Station #1)
- 1:15 Fire Prevention Puppet Show (Fire Training Room)



## City Looking for On-Call Firefighters



The City of Portage is seeking qualified candidates for the paid position of On-Call Firefighter. Successful candidates must hold State of Michigan certifications of Firefighter I, Firefighter II and EMT-Basic. Successful candidates will

also pass a written test, physical agility test, background investigation and post offer physical examination. Some residency requirements apply. Training rate of pay is \$12 per hour; entry rate of pay is \$16 per hour.

Qualified candidates are asked to submit an application to the Department of Human Resources, City of Portage, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI 49002. Or apply online at [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov). Please call the Department of Human Resources for further information at 329-4533.

## Environmental Board Releases Deer Survey Results

In August, the Portage Environmental Board conducted a study on deer activity in Portage and sends out a big "Thank You!" to all those who completed the online survey. The results show that nearly 76% of the respondents say that they see deer in their yard several times a week, sometimes as many as ten at a time. These tend to be small, suburban yards in central and southeast Portage, not necessarily bordering on any natural areas. Unfortunately, while lovely to watch, deer can destroy shrubs and gardens and pose a significant risk to Portage drivers.

Residents are encouraged not to feed deer or other wildlife, which leads animals to congregate and lose their fear of humans. Food handouts from people can disrupt a deer's digestion causing acidosis, which can lead to the deer's death. In addition, germs and bacteria can be spread through public feeding by bringing animals together and sharing the same food source, increasing the risk of the transmission of diseases.

As the late fall and winter seasons approach, please respect the health, safety and welfare of animals and Portage residents by not feeding wildlife.



## Quarterly Curbside Brush Collection

The next Quarterly Curbside Brush Collection will begin October 5, 2015. To ensure the collection of items, residents are asked to have brush placed at the curb by 7 a.m. on the Monday of the designated collection week. Materials may be placed at curbside up to, but not more than, 72 hours prior to the designated Monday. Please note that a small amount of debris may remain after the brush is removed. Citizens are asked to assist with clean up of the leftover debris. The map indicates the pickup schedule of each brush collection zone.

- ◆ Brush and branches may be any length.
- ◆ Branches must be less than 3 inches in diameter.
- ◆ Please stack brush/branches in neat piles at curbside by 7 a.m. on the designated Monday; each zone will be cleared of materials by the end of the week.



Complete details regarding the Quarterly Curbside Brush Collection Program can be located on the city website at [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov) or by contacting the Department of Public Services at 329-4444.

Note: The Quarterly Curbside Brush Collection Program is not performed for commercial establishments, churches or schools. Collection takes place on private streets where every property owner has signed an indemnification form. Contact the Department of Public Services at 329-4444 regarding collection on private streets.

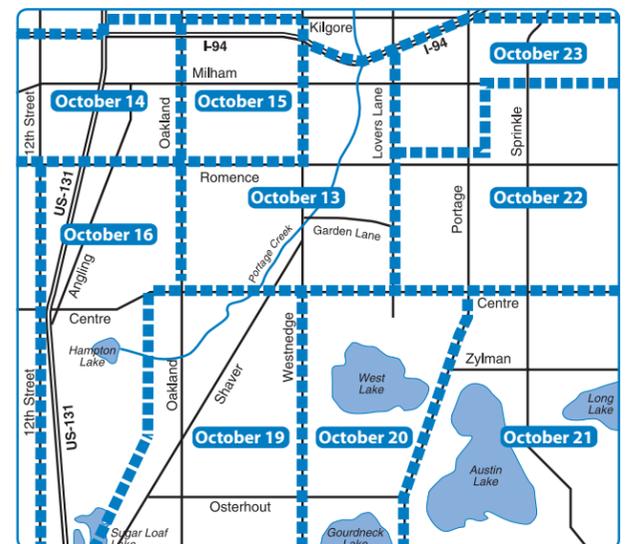
## Fall Hydrant Flushing Schedule

The City of Portage utility contractor United Water will conduct fire hydrant flushing from Tuesday, October 13 through Friday, October 23. The map indicates dates hydrant flushing will take place in each area of the city. Most hydrants will be flushed between the hours of 11 p.m.

and 7:30 a.m. so as to avoid high traffic hours. This schedule may be changed or adjusted based on weather conditions.

Hydrant flushing improves water quality by removing sediment that accumulates in the water system between flushings and provides the opportunity to test proper operation of the fire hydrants and the water pumping system.

Some water discoloration will occur during the flushing process. Residents are reminded to check for discoloration prior to using water for laundry or cleaning during this period of flushing. Even though water may be somewhat discolored, it is safe to drink. During the flushing process, large quantities of water are discharged from the hydrants. Motorists are urged to watch for vehicles and workers engaged in this work and reduce speeds accordingly. Please call United Water with any questions or concerns at 324-9235.



# 2015 Neighborhood Fall Leaf Pickup Schedule

## October 26 through December 3, 2015

Please review the program requirements carefully.

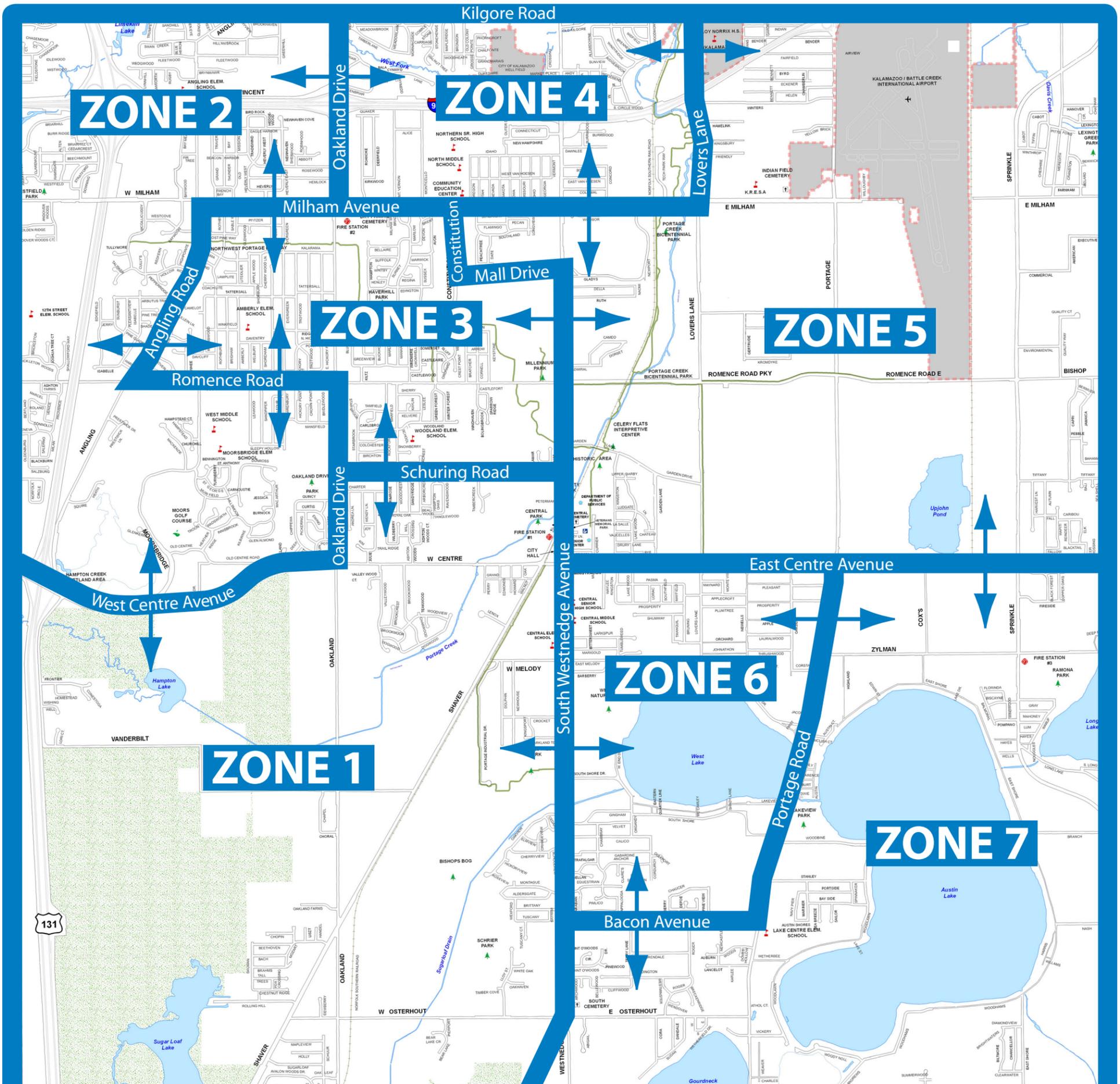
Information is also available on the city website at [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov) – click on the fall leaf pickup icon.

**ONLY** loose leaves or leaves bagged in biodegradable paper yard waste bags will be collected.

- ◆ Leaf collection will occur three times in each neighborhood zone until prohibited by weather. Residents are asked to place leaves at the curb by 7 a.m. on each of the three collection dates shown to the right.
- ◆ **For the safety of the public, please do not put leaves in the street more than three days prior to your scheduled collection.**
- ◆ Leaves should be raked off the grass and into the street or bagged in biodegradable paper yard waste bags and placed next to the curb as close to the street edge as possible so as to not obstruct traffic. Equipment may damage lawns if leaves are left in grass areas or ditches.
- ◆ The Fall Leaf Pickup Program is **separate** from the Quarterly Curbside Brush Collection Program (details on page 2). Please ensure that brush and leaf piles are placed in separate locations at the curb.
- ◆ Leaves in plastic bags (including biodegradable plastic bags) **will not** be collected.
- ◆ Streets will be swept following each neighborhood collection, weather permitting.
- ◆ The Fall Leaf Pickup Program is not performed for commercial establishments, churches or schools or on private streets (unless every property owner on a private street has signed an indemnification form. Please contact the Department of Public Services at 329-4444 with any questions).

- ◆ The Portage Code of Ordinances (Chapter 66, Article 1, Section 66-2) prohibits residents from having basketball stands in the city right-of-way. Likewise, during trash and recycling removal days, citizens are requested to keep their containers on the curb versus on the actual roadway. These items impede safe leaf collection operations and can result in damage to city equipment and personal property.
- ◆ If weather prohibits raking of leaves, the city offers a spring bagged leaf pickup in April 2016, along with the scheduled brush pickup.

Zone	1st Collection	2nd Collection	3rd Collection
1	Monday, October 26	Monday, November 9	Monday, November 23
2	Tuesday, October 27	Tuesday, November 10	Tuesday, November 24
3	Wednesday, October 28	Wednesday, November 11	Wednesday, November 25
4	Thursday, October 29	Thursday, November 12	Monday, November 30
5	Friday, October 30	Friday, November 13	Tuesday, December 1
6	Monday, November 2	Monday, November 16	Wednesday, December 2
7	Tuesday, November 3	Tuesday, November 17	Thursday, December 3



**Burning of leaves and brush is banned in the City of Portage! There is NO burn period.**  
 Questions? Call the Department of Public Services at 329-4444 or go online at [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov).

## Don't Forget to Vote! November 3, 2015



The Office of the City Clerk is preparing for the election to be held on November 3, 2015. On the ballot will be the two-year Mayoral term and three four-year City Council terms, along with several local proposals. Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Election Day.

Absentee voter ballots can be obtained by contacting the Office of the City Clerk at 329-4511, by visiting the Office of the City Clerk during normal business hours or on Saturday, October 31 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Absentee ballots for this election will be available only until 4 p.m. on Monday, November 2.

### Precinct Information

The City of Portage is divided into 19 voting precincts. Where you vote depends on where you live. All precinct locations will be open. If you are unsure of your polling location, either review your voter identification card, visit the Michigan Voter Information Center at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote) or contact the Office of the City Clerk at 329-4511.

## What's Happening at the Portage Senior Center?

### Holiday Bazaar and Bake Sale

**Saturday, November 7, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

This is the perfect event to find that unique, handmade gift for someone who has everything, pick up some delicious homemade baked goods, or just enjoy the chance to view a nice variety of arts and crafts items. The bake sale at the Portage Senior Center will feature breads, cookies, muffins, brownies and more. Lunch concessions will be available from the *Soup Café* from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

### Evening Meals at the PSC

**Tuesday, October 20, 5 to 6:30 p.m.**

October's meal will be Chicken Casserole. Cost is \$10 and will include entrée, sides, dessert & beverage. This event is open to the public and meals can be requested "to go." Call 329-4555 to make a reservation no later than October 19. The event will also feature musical entertainment by Bob Rowe and The Green Valley Boys, widely known for their fine blend of traditional country, folk and gospel music. Bob is well-known for his original music and wide variety in his repertoire. The Green Valley Boys are famous for having a long-running country music television show on Channel 3 for over 34 years, the longest in any market. Thanks to the Portage Area Charities Fund for sponsorship of this event.

### Kalamazoo Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition

**Tuesday, October 13, 7 to 8:30 p.m.**

**Presenter: Sara Morley-LaCroix**  
Human trafficking is a local concern. The presenting coalition brings awareness to our community regarding the growing issue of human trafficking through awareness, advocacy, training and victim assistance. This presentation will help educate the community about the true nature of human trafficking, how to recognize it and what to do about it. Call 329-4555 to register.

### History of the Underground Railroad in Southwest Michigan

**Thursday, October 22, 1 to 3 p.m.**

**Presenter: Donna Odom**  
An overview of the origin and development of the resistance movement that came to be known as the Underground Railroad will highlight some of the stories of enslaved people who passed through safe houses in southwest Michigan, and tell the stories of some of those who stayed and settled in the area. Call 329-4555 to register.

All proceeds from these events go toward the support of older adult programs at the PSC. The PSC is located at 320 Library Lane. For more information, please call 329-4555.

## A Farmer's Market in Portage!



The City of Portage is excited to partner with the People's Co-op of Kalamazoo to offer a farmer's market this fall! The farmer's market will be held outside at the Portage Senior Center in the parking lot. The market will serve as a means to measure the community's interest in supporting a seasonal or year-round program. Visit the farmer's market on Sunday, October 18 from 12 noon to 4 p.m. For more information, please contact the City of Portage Parks & Recreation division via email at [milbecka@portagemi.gov](mailto:milbecka@portagemi.gov) or at 329-4522. Vendors interested in participating may contact the People's Food Co-op via email at [market@peoplesfoodco-op.org](mailto:market@peoplesfoodco-op.org) or at 359-8309.



7900 South Westnedge Avenue  
Portage, Michigan 49002-5160

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**The City of Portage does not set a specific date or time for trick-or-treating. Please check with your neighbors or neighborhood association and use your best judgement.**

## Portage City Council

Portage City Council meetings are held on Tuesday evenings at Portage City Hall (7900 South Westnedge Avenue) in Council Chambers at 7:30 p.m. and are always open to the public.

The City Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the city. Citizens are encouraged to contact the City Administration with concerns or complaints about city services by calling Complaint Resolution at (269) 329-4404 or by visiting [www.portagemi.gov](http://www.portagemi.gov) > Report It!



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**Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson**  
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**Laurence Shaffer, City Manager**  
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[shafferl@portagemi.gov](mailto:shafferl@portagemi.gov)

## Televised City Meetings

All City of Portage City Council, Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals meetings can be viewed live on channel 190 and via live streaming at <http://www.publicmedianet.org/watch-live>. AT&T U-Verse customers can access the City of Portage government meetings on channel 99 and then follow the prompts to access the various meetings.



### October

- 1 7:00 p.m. Planning Commission Meeting
- 6 7:30 p.m. City Council Meeting
- 12 7:00 p.m. Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting
- 15 7:00 p.m. Planning Commission Meeting
- 20 7:30 p.m. City Council Meeting

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