

# Have You Heard?

**Have You Heard** – Anyone who owns a wild animal in the City of Geneva must register the animal(s) with the City Clerk’s Office at City Hall.

Pursuant to General Municipal Law §209-cc it is required that anyone who owns a wild animal(s) must file a report with the City Clerk prior to April 1 of each year. There is no cost to do so, and the information is essential to the safety of police, fire, and ambulance personnel in the event they need to respond to the owner’s address for an emergency. The report form and list of possible wild animals can be found on the City Clerk’s page. Any questions may be directed to 315-828-6550.

**Have You Heard** the question what happened to code enforcement?

This is a legacy term used to describe our team members charged with keeping the community’s properties safe and looking good. Today, the old “code enforcement” has transitioned to a couple of different functions:

**Building Permits and Construction:** Projects that include either revitalization of an existing building or development of a new building should be directed to the Development Services Division of the Public Works Department. This Division is headed by Neal Braman ([nlb@geneva.ny.us](mailto:nlb@geneva.ny.us); 789-3101).

**Commercial and Rental Inspections:** Many buildings in Geneva require regular fire and property maintenance inspections in order to receive an operating permit. This function is handled by the Fire Marshal’s Office of the Geneva Fire Department. Calls should be directed to Lauren Brannan ([lbrannan@geneva.ny.us](mailto:lbrannan@geneva.ny.us); 789-6305).

**Problem Properties:** The City also has a cross-functional team, the Problem Properties Task Force, charged with handling property maintenance and other quality of life issues. Customers wishing to report these issues should be asked to submit via the SeeClickFix module on the City’s website ([www.cityofgenevany.com](http://www.cityofgenevany.com)), or can report the issue to Nancy Coluzzi at 789-6104.

**HAVE YOU HEARD** that Loman Field House will be in its demolition phase soon?

The Geneva City School District plans to begin the demolition of Loman Field House and field on Monday, March 13. The work, which was approved in a 2015 Capital Project vote, will allow for the construction of a new stadium behind Geneva High School. During demolition, all walkers should stay on North Street and Carter Road and avoid shortcuts that take them past Loman Field. The area will be fenced off and students and community members should neither enter the fenced area nor remove any materials from the site for their own health and safety.

Weather permitting, work will be completed by Friday, March 24. That said, students should continue to avoid the area for as long as the construction fence is there.

**HAVE YOU HEARD** as of March 1<sup>st</sup>, the Geneva City School tax bills are no longer accepted by the district?

The billing information is transferred to the City of Geneva for collection. It generally takes about three weeks for the information to be accessible by the City, and for the City to begin accepting payments. Overdue school tax bills are assessed a 1% penalty per month to the principal for each installment, and an additional 5% of the total. Payments must be made in the Comptroller's office (47 Castle St) and checks must be made payable to the City of Geneva.

**HAVE YOU HEARD** that the City has a Digital Bid Notification option?

The City is working to expand our reach for eligible bidders on City projects. A new addition to the City website this year has been the Digital Bid Notification Service. All City bids, RFQs, and RFPs are to be posted to the City website. Firms can go to the Public Works Department home page to register for bid/RFQ/RFP notifications and view information. Any department who is soliciting bids, proposals, or qualifications should contact Adam Blowers to be sure the project is listed in our online database, and that eligible bidders have been notified. Any questions? Please contact adam at [acb@geneva.ny.us](mailto:acb@geneva.ny.us).

**HAVE YOU HEARD** that Guardian Glass is seeking a modification to its existing Payment in Lieu of Tax (or PILOT) agreement with the City's Industrial Development Agency (IDA)?

The City IDA has received a request from Guardian to extend its PILOT agreement and modify the payment schedule, which will enable them to complete a significant investment at the Geneva plant, currently located on Forge Avenue in the Geneva Industrial Park. Here are some fast facts on the proposal:

- A Payment in Lieu of Tax agreement is a relationship between an employer and the City's IDA, whereby, in exchange for significant investment and employment, they agree to a modified tax payment structure.
- Guardian Glass is in year 20 of an agreement, which was originally negotiated in 1997. Their original agreement called for taxes to be paid on the value of land only for a period of time, followed by a "ramping up" of tax payments to full taxability at the conclusion of the agreement.
- In exchange for that agreement, Guardian invested \$100 million and employs approximately 300 people at the Geneva location.
- Due to heavy production and natural wear on the equipment, Guardian's main production component, its large furnace, is due to be replaced this year. This replacement requires over \$60 million in new investment.

- Guardian’s corporate ownership made it clear that the Geneva plant would be competing with other plants around the country for this investment. That competition would be based on the cost of doing business at each plant. Without the furnace replacement, the Geneva plant’s future was uncertain.
- Guardian proposes to extend the current agreement by twelve years, to lock in the 2016 tax payment for a period of five years, and to ramp up to full taxability by 2035.
- The net new economic impact of construction is over \$25 million and nearly 140 jobs. The annual operating impact is over \$100 million and nearly 300 jobs.
- The IDA will host a public hearing to take comments on the proposal. When that hearing is scheduled, it will be advertised in the Finger Lakes Times and on the City’s website.
- The IDA will consider approval of the agreement at its March 21<sup>st</sup> regular meeting.

**HAVE YOU HEARD** that City of Geneva water bills are now due in four weeks instead of six?

This is correct. Council decided at their December 2016 meeting to return to the four week schedule for water payments. Bills come out January (due date January 31<sup>st</sup>), April (due date May 1<sup>st</sup>), July (due date July 31<sup>st</sup>), and October (due date October 31<sup>st</sup>). Bills can be paid through the mail at PO Box 313, Geneva, NY 14456 or in person at Lyons National Bank in Geneva for the first two months of each billing cycle. Questions may be directed to the City Comptroller’s Office at 315-789-2114.

**HAVE YOU HEARD** that there is a difference between property tax and assessed value?

In 2016, the City of Geneva, as required by state law, conducted a real property assessment of all properties within our boundaries. Overall, property values increased by 4.13%. This is an aggregate number, as while many properties did increase in value, some stayed the same, and some even decreased. All property owners received a notice of the impact of the reassessment via the U.S. Mail. If you did not receive a notice, please contact the City Assessor’s Office 315-789-0091 for a copy.

The Assessed Value is only part of the equation that goes into calculation of your annual property tax—another being the tax rate. For 2017, City Council held the City’s tax rate even, with no increases. If your property value increased, your City tax payment would increase. If it decreased, your City tax payment would go down.

**HAVE YOU HEARD** that not many properties are “off the tax roll” make payments each year?

In many conversations around Geneva, you may have heard the phrase “60% of our property is off the tax rolls.” This could be interpreted as a true statement, but it offers a very incomplete picture of the financial impact of tax-exempt properties. In terms of number of parcels, 57.35% of our parcels are considered “wholly exempt” from property taxes. However, many of those properties are sites like City Hall, Neider Park, and the Lakefront Playground—the City has over 40 parcels that are for municipal use. Additionally, properties that have entered into agreements with our Industrial Development Agency to help spur development are considered “wholly exempt, while they make

annual payments. Places like the Lakefront Ramada (\$246,000/year), and the Hampton Inn (\$151,000/year) help to support operations. It would be difficult to say that a company like Zotos International (\$129,000/year) is a burden on the taxable status of the City. In total, the City receives over \$1.1 million annually from wholly exempt properties.

**HAVE YOU HEARD** that you can find our code enforcement and other related information on our website?

Please visit:

<http://cityofgenevany.com/development-services/>

**Have you heard something you would like more information on? Please email Rhonda Everdyke at [REverdyke@geneva.ny.us](mailto:REverdyke@geneva.ny.us).**