



Preserving the past. Embracing the future.

Winter & Spring 2026 Newsletter | Volume 26 | Issue 1

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

By: Jennifer Herring, Chairman, Doylestown Township Board of Supervisors

Happy 2026, Doylestown Township! The new year promises to be an exciting one for our hometown. In January 2026, we welcomed Dan Wood back to the Board of Supervisors, along with newcomer Christina Maida, and we look forward to the leadership and fresh perspectives they bring.

Several key projects are ahead this year, including important public safety improvements such as new equipment for our police department and enhancements to park safety. We are also thrilled to have our Community Recreation Center open for a full year, available for residents to enjoy.

As we reflect on 2025, there is much to be proud of. The opening of our beautiful Community Center marked a major milestone, quickly becoming a hub for recreation, programming, and community connection. We continued our commitment to maintaining safe, well-kept roads by paving eight township-owned roads and advancing long-term infrastructure planning.

The Township also made meaningful investments in public safety, including strengthening leadership within our police department with the promotion of Lieutenant Jessica Whiteside and continuing to support officer training and equipment needs. Our Parks and Recreation Department expanded programs and events for residents of all ages, while ongoing park maintenance and improvements enhanced the quality and safety of our shared spaces.

In addition, the Township maintained strong fiscal responsibility, carefully managing resources while delivering essential services, supporting local partnerships, and engaging residents through open communication and community outreach.

Thank you to our dedicated staff, volunteers, and residents who make Doylestown Township such a special place to live. I wish you all a safe, healthy, and peaceful 2026.



Doylestown Township E-News

Stay Informed – Sign-up for E-News!

Are you signed up for E-News? It is a great way to stay on top of any recent news, events, and more! E-News will hit your inbox every Friday at 4PM (please note it may end up in your junk/spam folder so please check there if you do not receive it). Signing up for E-News is easy, just visit our website at doylestownpa.org and click the link in the top menu to sign up for E-News.

Stay connected and be informed!

Reorganization Highlights from the 2026 Reorganization Meeting

Doylestown Township is pleased to welcome its newly elected members of the Board of Supervisors. In the 2025 General Election, residents elected Christina Maida and reelected Dan Wood to serve on the Township's Board of Supervisors.

Both supervisors were sworn into office on January 5, 2026, during the Board of Supervisors' annual Reorganization Meeting. Family members and loved ones were in attendance as the oath of office was administered by Judge Jordan B. Yeager.

Dan Wood, who has served on the Board since 2019, begins his second term and will continue his work on community service initiatives, park improvement efforts, and long-range planning. Christina Maida begins her first term on the Board, bringing a new perspective and a strong interest in supporting community engagement.

The Township looks forward to their contributions as they work with staff, volunteers, and fellow board members to support the health, safety, and welfare of everyone who lives and works in Doylestown Township.



Swearing-In of Tax Collector and Auditor

At the January 5, 2026, Reorganization Meeting, Doylestown Township swore in Sara Frister as our new Tax Collector and Philip Coggschall as our new Auditor for the 2026 term.

Residents are advised that tax questions for the years 2022–2025 should continue to be directed to the former Tax Collector, Sarah Tomlinson. Although her term has ended, Ms. Tomlinson will continue to provide tax certifications and receipts for these years upon request.

For current Tax Collector contact information, office location, and hours for the 2026 tax year, please visit the Township website.

Swearing in of Lieutenant Jessica Whiteside

At the October 2025 Board of Supervisors meeting, the Township proudly recognized the promotion of Jessica Whiteside to the rank of Lieutenant. This milestone marks a historic achievement, as Lt. Whiteside became the first female Lieutenant in the history of the Doylestown Township Police Department. Her promotion reflects the Department's continued commitment to excellence, leadership, and community service.



Advancing Sustainability & Fleet Efficiency

Doylestown Township continued progress toward its Ready For 100 and Climate Action Plan goals by adding three energy-efficient vehicles to the municipal fleet — one fully electric administrative vehicle and two hybrid police vehicles. These additions demonstrate the Township's ongoing commitment to sustainability and support for the Ready for 100 initiative to transition to renewable energy.



A Notice of Water Rate Increase from DTMA

Doylestown Township Municipal Authority (DTMA) is deeply committed to providing clean, safe drinking water and maintaining a prominent level of service while planning for a sustainable future. As you are probably aware, prices for most utilities, products, and materials have continued to rise across the country. The same can be said for Authority's operating expenses including the equipment and materials needed to keep our water system running properly and efficiently.

Water rate increases have been relatively modest over the past 20 years with the most recent adjustment being an 11.8% increase in 2017. Ensuring that rate increases remain modest and justifiably necessary is an ongoing objective for the Authority. As a result of the increased costs of providing services, future infrastructure improvements, and maintaining compliance with Federal, State, and Local drinking water regulations, DTMA has authorized a 20.5% adjustment to the current water rate effective January 1, 2026.

The decision to implement this increase was not made without careful consideration of the Authority's eligibility for various grants, operating expenses, and extensive future infrastructure needs including pump station upgrades, replacement of aging infrastructure, and treatment-related improvements throughout the system.

The approved rate adjustment will be as follows:

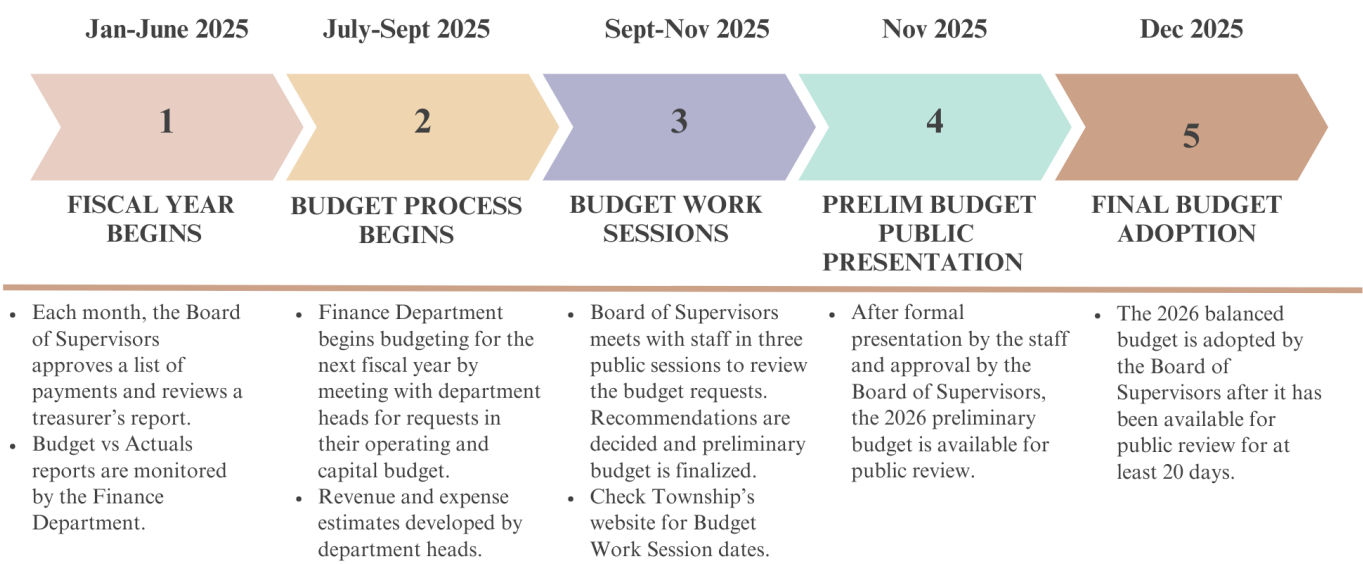
- The minimum quarterly meter charge will increase by \$10.00 for all meter sizes with the water use rate increasing from \$5.85 to \$7.05 per 1,000 gallons used.

DTMA understands that any increase in your water bill can be a hardship. We believe the investments we are making will help support public safety and continue to make this community an attractive place to live and work.

2026 Budget Adopted

On December 16, 2025, the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the 2026 Budget. Their approval capped off the annual eight-month collaborative review process we’ve established between the Supervisors, Finance Committee, and Township Staff shown in the diagram below. The 2026 Budget addresses the current needs of the Township, enabling us to provide our community with efficient and effective services for the year, while addressing some major projects for 2026.

2026 BUDGET PROCESS

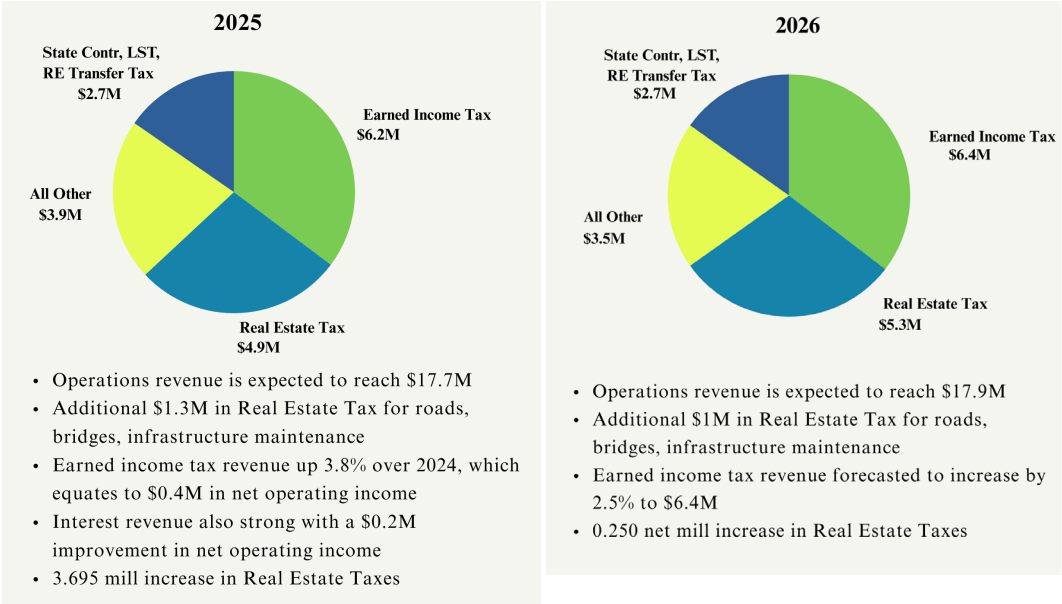


Highlights of the 2026 Budget:

The operational results for 2025 are expected to reach \$17.7M in revenue, \$16.1M in operational expenses, producing \$1.5M in net income, \$1.2M better than budgeted.

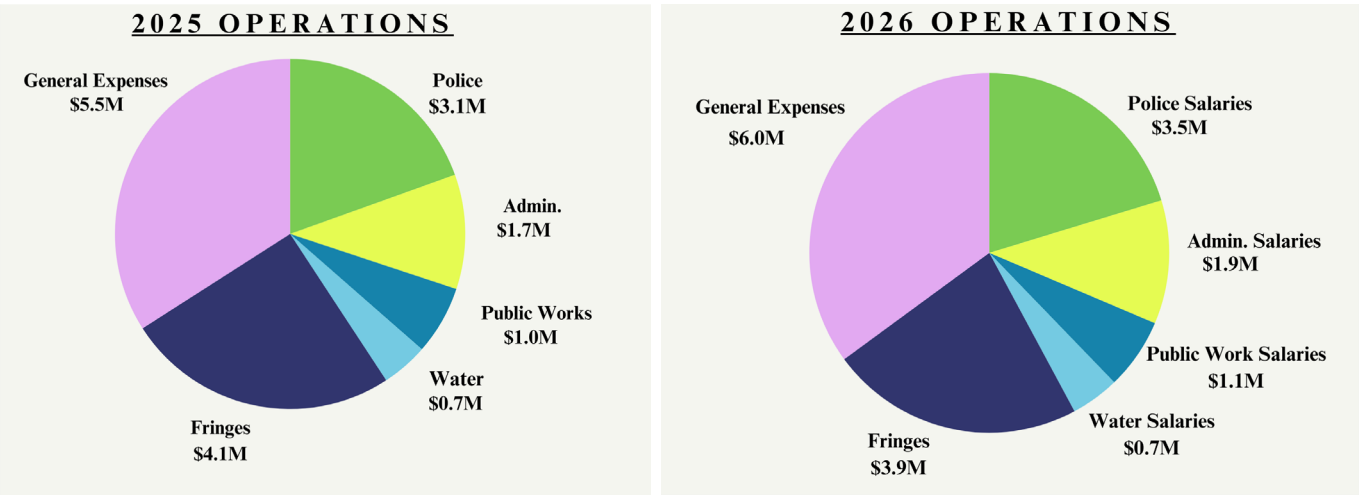
The proposed 2026 operational budget includes \$17.8M in revenues, \$17.1M in operational expenses, and \$0.7M in net revenue.

A 0.25mill real estate tax increase for the general fund is proposed for 2026. A reallocation from roads and bridges will provide increased tax support for park operations.



Doylestown Township’s major expenses include personnel costs and the annual maintenance to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community.

Below is a breakdown of expenditures showing salaries by departments. Fringes cover all departments. General expenses include the following: operations and related expenses for all departments, engineering, and solicitor fees. The general expenses also include debt service, leasing costs, and pass-through expenses for fire and emergency services.



Please Note: Water Wages and Fringes are reimbursed to the Township by the Water Authority (DTMA).

Capital Projects

The 2026 Budget includes \$7.6M of capital spending with \$3.7M to finish CRC park improvements project.

The 2026 Capital plan includes 24 capital projects: the major ones being three trail projects—Pebble Hill Road, Easton Road, and Doylestown Country Club. Additional projects include: three Green-Light-Go Improvements, police and public works radio repeaters, Kids Castle Poured in Place replacement, the annual road maintenance, bridge maintenance program, public works building fit out, and bike and hike trail maintenance.

Doylestown Township begins 2026 from a position of financial strength, brought on by ongoing strength in Earned Income tax receipts and anticipated future savings in Township pension payments. These changes have given us the financial strength to fund anticipated operational expenditure and to provide a funding source for future capital projects. This budget proposes a modest ¼ mill increase in real estate taxes for 2026 and small increases in future years to offset inflation. This plan will allow us to continue to provide all expected services.

Category	2026 Capital (Dollars in thousands)
CRC Projects Completion	\$3,748
Roads Maintenance	\$835
Traffic Projects	\$838
Bridges Maintenance	\$592
New Trails	\$448
Basin Maintenance	\$201
Trails Maintenance	\$132
All Other	\$849
Total	\$7,643

Community Recreation Center & Comfort Cottage – Now Open

Doylestown Township is proud to welcome the community to the new Community Recreation Center (CRC), officially open to the public as of September 2025. As a major component of the Township's Park Improvement Project, the CRC is now fully operational and serving as the central hub for Parks and Recreation programs, events, and community gatherings.

The CRC provides a modern, inclusive space designed to support recreation, learning, and connection. Amenities include three flexible multipurpose rooms for classes, meetings, and special events; a warming kitchen to support programs and rentals; a full-size gymnasium for sports, open play, and community activities; and an outdoor patio that allows programming to flow seamlessly between indoor and outdoor spaces. These features enable the CRC to accommodate a wide range of recreational, educational, and social opportunities for residents of all ages.

Also completed in 2025, the Comfort Cottage is a permanent, ADA-accessible restroom facility located near the Amphitheater and Kids Castle, enhancing accessibility and convenience for Central Park visitors and event attendees.

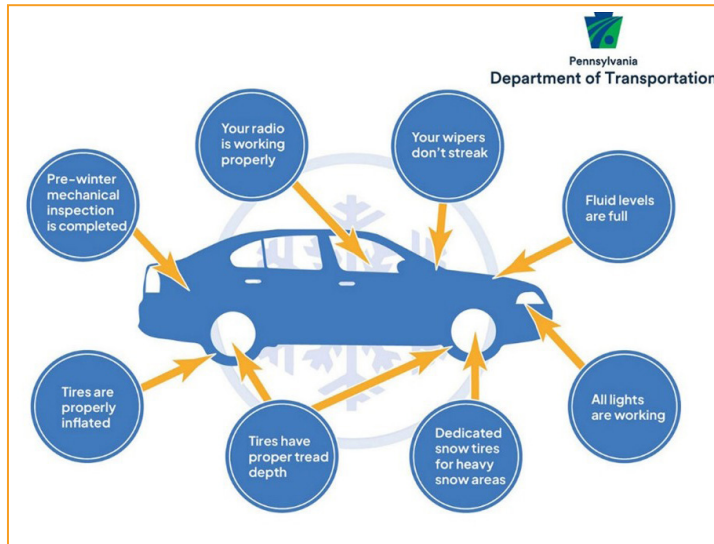
We're excited to expand programming, introduce new activities, and continue serving the community through recreation, learning, and connection. Outdoor sport courts are anticipated to open in spring 2026, adding even more opportunities for play and engagement. Support for Parks and Recreation operations will continue through programs, events, open play, drop-ins, and field rentals—helping ensure these facilities remain vibrant and accessible for years to come.



Winter Operations & Safety Tips

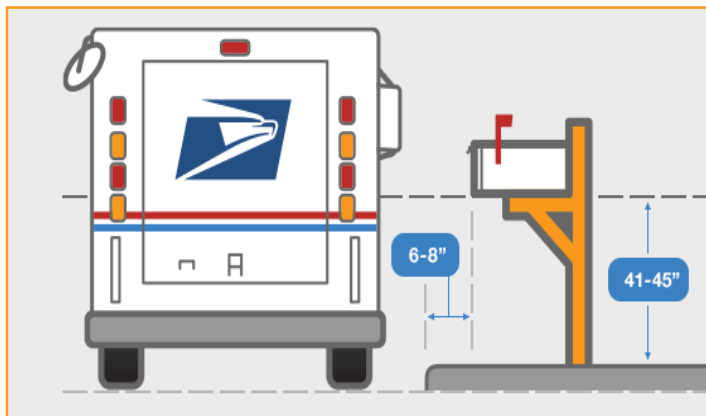
Get Your Vehicle Ready for Winter

Preparation is the key to navigating winter roads safely. Make sure your vehicle is ready for ice and snow.



Get Your Mailbox Ready for Winter

- Be sure your mailbox has a strong support. You may also wish to use reflective tape or other material to make it easier to see during storms or dark hours.
- Prepare for snow plowing! Mailboxes are damaged by the force of the snow thrown from the roadway, not the actual plow. So, make sure your mailbox is sturdy and receives proper routine maintenance.
- According to the United States Postal Service, mailboxes are to be 6 – 8 inches from the curb face.



Winter Weather: Before, During & After the Storm

As we gear up for a season of snow, we want to remind residents of the Township's winter weather tips.

BEFORE THE STORM

- Brush up on our snow removal guidelines by viewing the online code book.
- Make sure you can receive emergency updates and storm information. This includes alerts from the Township's social media pages and Bucks County's Ready Bucks text message alert system.
- Test all smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.
- Create a pre-storm checklist and make sure you have important items like fuel for vehicles, generators and snow blowers.

DURING THE STORM

- Stay off the road if possible. If you must travel, get traffic information from 511pa.com.
- Check the Township's website and social media to learn about closures, snow emergency declarations, meeting cancellations, and more at doylestownpa.org.
- Check Central Bucks School District's website for information about school delays, early dismissal, and closures at CBSD.org.
- Do not call 9-1-1 to ask about school closings/early dismissals or to report power outages. If you experience an outage, contact PECO at 1-800-841-4141 or www.peco.com.
- If you have an emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

AFTER THE STORM

- Review the Township's snow removal guidelines. Within 24 hours after each snowfall or sleet it is the duty and obligation of the homeowner to clear and remove ice, snow or sleet from the sidewalk.
- Shovel safely! Take it slow and remember to push snow instead of lifting. If you experience any heart attack symptoms, stop immediately and call 9-1-1.

Did you capture a nice photo of our township in the snow? Share it with us on social media by tagging @doylestowntwp

Bicycle Safety and Trail Etiquette Program

On November 6th, Doylestown Township held a Bicycle Safety and Trail Etiquette Program led by Sergeant Jared Courts, with support from the Bike & Hike Committee and Township Manager, Stephanie Mason.

The primary focus of the program was e-bike use, including how e-bikes are classified, where they are permitted, and the laws and safety practices that apply to their use in Pennsylvania. The session was well attended and provided residents with clear guidance on navigating e-bike regulations within the community.



Additional topics included general bicycle safety, helmet guidelines, trail etiquette, and updates on the Township's 30+ miles of bike and hike trails, including planned future connections and expansions.

For residents who were unable to attend, the Telecommunications Advisory Board (TAB) is preparing a recorded video of the presentation, which will be shared with the public once completed.

Looking Forward to Spring Events!

Warmer days are on the way, and our Parks & Recreation Department is gearing up for a fun spring season filled with community favorites!

TOUCH-A-TRUCK **Saturday, May 16, 2026**

All Ages | Central Park

A family favorite returns! Kids can climb on trucks, explore equipment, and meet the people who operate them. It's a great hands-on event for all ages.

GATHER FOR GOOD - COMMUNITY EVENT **Thursday, April 16, 2026**

Join the Doylestown Township's Human Relations Commission for an evening of connection and community-building. The event will take place at the Doylestown Township Community Recreation Center and is free to attend. Pizza will be provided. Registration is required. Register today at doylestownrec.org.

For more information about these events, along with other upcoming spring programs, visit our Parks & Recreation webpage. Get ready for warmer weather and a fun season ahead!

Longtime Director of Parks and Recreation Retires May 1, 2026

Karen Sweeney joined the Doylestown Township staff in 1995 as the Township's first Director of Parks & Recreation which also coincided with the opening of the then "new" Central Park. Her assignment, to take what was relatively a blank canvas and cultivate a comprehensive and engaging park and recreation department. She has seen many projects and park expansions come to life over the years - From the Oktoberfest fall festival, the building of kids' castle, Central Park bandshell and the sought out summer concert series, comprehensive recreation park & open space plans, Dog Park, environmental education area, sensory trail, numerous programs/events to the newly dedicated Community Recreation Center (CRC) and sport court complex featuring tennis, basketball, pickleball and bocce... all under lights.

Karen grew up just down the road in Richboro and graduated from Council Rock High School. Following graduation, she headed to East Stroudsburg University (ESU) whereby happenstance she was introduced to the professional field of Park and Recreation Management. Having grown up in a service oriented family and summer vacations camping across the country and Canada including visits to a majority the National Parks and landmarks. A career path in Parks & Recreation was a natural fit.



Following graduation with a degree in Park and Recreation Management, Karen worked briefly as a recreation director in the Pocono resort/timeshare industry followed by 10-years as Director for the Monroe County Recreation Commission before "coming home" to Bucks County and joining the Doylestown Township team and serving the community for 31 years.

To this day, Karen maintains as much passion and enthusiasm for the park and recreation profession and service to community as when she entered the field nearly 45 years ago. She credits the unique bond within the profession, mentors, colleagues and peers that "keep us current and relative in our service". Karen stands strong on her philosophy that relationships carry us forward and will always be grateful for the professional and personal relationship developed throughout the Doylestown community. Her long-time mantra: "Stay humble, Work Hard, Be Kind."

2025 into 2026 is proving a bitter bittersweet time as she works with Township administration and the park and recreation team in transition as her planned retirement approaches in May 2026. Karen enthusiastically recognizes the Doylestown Township leaders, administrative team, co-workers, volunteers and community who have been instrumental in bringing so much to fruition throughout the park system. She's excited for the current P&R team, who has so much to offer and is ready to take the reins and lead the Park and Recreation Department forward with many new and exciting things to come.

Karen is actively engaged with the Pennsylvania Recreation Park and Recreation Society (PRPS) and National Recreation and Park Society (NRPA) and has received certifications through the NRPA as a Certified Park and Recreation Professional and Certified Playground Safety Inspector. Locally, she's a member of Bucks County Recreation Council.

She currently resides in Hilltown Township and is an avid user of the local/county parks. Realizing the countless hours of professional service are concluding with a "hard stop" Karen is looking forward to staying involved in the P&R profession part-time spending time with her three dogs (Todd, Caiden, Bohdi) engaging in canine activities, exploring parks and engaging in recreational activities with a goal of visiting all PA state parks and hopefully visiting the five remaining states she's yet to see, developing new friendships and undertaking new adventures.

Gravel Gardening - A Climate Resilient Approach to Landscaping in the Mid-Atlantic

By Chad Clem, EAC Chairman

Many Doylestown Township residents looking to reduce lawn, conserve water, and support pollinators may already have a successful model close to home. Near the Native Plant Demonstration Garden in Central Park, the Lenape Recognition Garden showcases a modified gravel garden that demonstrates how thoughtful soil preparation and plant selection can create resilient, low-maintenance landscapes well suited to our region.

Gravel gardening is a planting approach that relies on mineral-based soils rather than organic mulch, frequent watering, or fertilizer. This gardening method is growing in popularity due to its low maintenance needs and ability to withstand climate change. Influential gardeners and researchers in the US and Europe have shown that when plants are matched to well-drained conditions, gardens become more stable, more ecological, and easier to maintain over time.

Traditional Gravel Garden

In a classic gravel garden, construction is intentional and precise. Existing topsoil is often removed and replaced with a free-draining stone growing medium to a minimum depth of 3 inches. Alternatively, a 4-5 inch layer of gravel (3/8" pea gravel works well) can be placed directly onto the existing lawn/soil, but it must be bordered with something to ensure it stays in the defined bed. Plants are installed directly into this gravel with care not to pull native soil onto the surface. This gravel acts as a permanent mulch, suppressing weeds, reducing evaporation, and minimizing soil splash during heavy rains.

Traditional gravel gardens favor perennials and grasses adapted to open, dry habitats. Once established, they require little irrigation, no fertilizer, and only basic seasonal maintenance.

Why Gravel Gardening Works in Doylestown

For residential properties, gravel gardening offers several clear advantages:

- **Water efficiency:** Deep-rooted plants require minimal supplemental watering once established.
- **Better drainage:** Gravel-amended soils reduce standing water and help manage heavy rain events.
- **Pollinator value:** Diverse flowering plants provide nectar, pollen, and seed throughout the growing season.
- **Lower maintenance:** No mowing, less weeding, and reduced need for mulch replacement.

These benefits make gravel gardens particularly well suited for sunny front yards, slopes, driveway edges, and areas where turf struggles.

Native Plants for Residential Gravel Gardens

Many Eastern and Mid-Atlantic native plants thrive in gravel-amended soils:

- Grasses and sedges such as little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*), prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*) and Sprengel's sedge (*Carex sprengelii*) provide structure and year-round interest.
- Flowering perennials including purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), bee balm (*Monarda bradburiana*), blue star (*Amsonia hubrichtii*), rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*) and aromatic aster (*Symphotrichum oblongifolium*) support pollinators from spring through fall.

Getting Started at Home

Homeowners can begin small. Choose a sunny area on the south or west side of your property, and create a retaining edge with Belgian blocks, stones or landscape edging. Fill the bed with 4-5 inches of 3/8" pea gravel spread evenly across the space. Layout the plants on top of the gravel to determine your design prior to digging. When you install the plants, gently pull away the gravel to create a planting hole that allows the roots to just make contact with the native soil and try not to bring the soil to the surface. Backfill the hole using only gravel and water well for the first few weeks to ensure good establishment. After this initial period, no supplemental water should be needed. Within a season or two, a gravel garden can become a durable, attractive alternative to a traditional lawn or mulched beds.

By applying lessons from the Lenape Recognition Garden, residents can create landscapes that are both beautiful and environmentally responsible, right in their own backyards.

Further Reading and Inspiration

Visit or Google the following for more information on gravel gardens:

- Chanticleer Garden, Wayne, PA - Gravel Garden
- Scott Arboretum, Swarthmore, PA - Swarthmore College Gravel Garden
- Olbrich Botanical Garden, Madison, WI - Jeff Epping
- Northwind Perennial Farm, Burlington WI - Roy Diblik
- Beth Chatto Gravel Gardens, Essex, England, UK



Carbon monoxide: Are you winter ready?

By Christian Fetzer, Doylestown Township intern

Carbon monoxide, sometimes known by its chemical name CO, is a poisonous, colorless, odorless gas which is produced by incomplete combustion. Because of this, it is often referred to as "the invisible killer." This gas replaces oxygen in the bloodstream when inhaled and can reach deadly levels in unventilated indoor spaces. Mitigation and know-how are key to avoiding negative health effects and danger from this common indoor pollutant.

Wintertime is a key part of the year to keep carbon monoxide symptoms and sources in mind, as most of us are spending more time indoors, the spaces where the risk of contact with this dangerous gas is highest.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide exposure vary with the amount of the gas present, and the duration of exposure. Low levels can cause flu-like symptoms and headaches after a few hours. Increasing concentrations lead to dizziness, high heart rate, nausea, convulsions, and in severe cases, death. As concentration increases, a shorter exposure time will cause more severe symptoms. Sources of CO include vehicular exhaust, gas ranges, grills, gas furnaces, fireplaces, and generators.



Below is a list of recommendations to help reduce the risk of contact with this gas:

- Ensure that your furnace is inspected yearly, this will prevent leaks which could introduce CO into your home
- Do not heat your living space with a gas range or similar appliance, and ensure that all gas appliances are properly ventilated to the outside
- Clean out chimneys yearly
- Do not run your vehicle in the garage, even with the door open, dangerous levels of CO buildup can even occur with the door open
- Ensure that a certified mechanic checks your vehicle's exhaust each year
- Install a carbon monoxide detector in your home, preferably on every level
- Replace the detector's batteries twice a year, and replace the detector itself every three to five years
- Create and practice a home escape plan, paying special attention to areas where people sleep

Most detectors produce the same set of tones. Multiple beeps in a row indicate a dangerous level of CO. If you hear this alarm tone, vacate the home immediately. Battery powered detectors will chirp a single time every 30 to 60 seconds to indicate the batteries need to be changed. Additionally, detectors will have a "replacement tone," which will indicate that the device has reached the end of its service life, this tone will differ from brand to brand.

As winter sets in and we spend more time indoors, consider carbon monoxide safety. With care and vigilance, this "invisible killer" can be effectively avoided.

Preserving the past. Embracing the future.



Doylestown Township
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Doylestown, PA 18901

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Doylestown Township was founded in 1818 after the inhabitants of Doylestown and its vicinity petitioned the Judges of the Court of Quarter Sessions for the establishment of the Township of Doylestown. According to the US Census Bureau, there are 17,971 people residing in Doylestown Township.

PHONE: 215-348-9915

FAX: 215-348-8729

DOYLESTOWNPA.ORG

HOURS: Monday-Friday: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

DOYLESTOWN TOWNSHIP STAFF & COMMITTEES

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Agriculture Security Advisory Council
Bike & Hike Committee
Board of Auditors
Board of Supervisors
Doylestown Township Municipal Authority (DTMA)
Environmental Advisory Council/
Shade Tree Commission
Finance Committee
Friends of Kids' Castle
Historical Architectural Review Board
Human Relations Commission
Local Traffic Advisory Committee

Park & Recreation Board
Pension Advisory Committee
Planning Commission
Public Water & Sewer Advisory Board
Telecommunications Advisory Board
UCC Board of Appeals
Vacancy Board
Veterans Advisory Committee
Zoning Hearing Board

Would you like to volunteer?
Please send us an email at
info@doylestownpa.org.

Please visit us at doylestownpa.org



Check us out on social media!

