



Mayor Sam Morris
Mine Hill Township
10 Baker Street
Mine Hill, NJ 07803

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Mine Hill's New Municipal Communication Program

Our new town-wide system is designed to reach residents.

The system will call and/or text message you in the event of an emergency.

It will email you for community updates that are non-emergencies.

Please go to this website to sign up:

<http://swift911.swiftreach.com/public/200960/>

If you don't have internet, please call Mary Williams @ Town Hall

973-366-9031, x 41. She will assist you in signing up.

Please see inside this newsletter for important information regarding our water system and water meter installation program.

What's going on with our water system?

Mine Hill has lost a small fortune in water over the last 10 years or so. In 2011, between water leaks in our system and aging water meters, we lost \$175,000.00 in the water department. We could not account for 81 Million gallons of water last year. The cost of lost water in 2012 would have been over \$200,000.00. Our water utility is bankrupt and we have to correct it. We have probably lost 750,000,000 gallons of water in the last 10 years at a cost of approximately \$1.4M. (Yes, those figures are correct and they do take a minute to soak in.)

We have begun fixing this problem.

Phase 1 - Leak Repairs -

Since January we have been repairing underground water-main leaks and leaking fire hydrants. We have reduced the water loss by 37% as of April 1st. I want to thank the DPW guys, John, Dave and Bob for all their hard work getting these leaks fixed and saving the taxpayers significant cost. We budgeted \$50,000.00 for leak repairs and the guys were able to complete them for just under \$4,000.00. *They really deserve a thank you!*

Phase 2 - Water Meter Replacement -

We have to install new water meters in every house and business in town. Water meters have a life of 15-20 years. Each year thereafter they gradually decline in their ability to measure water. Most of the water meters in Mine Hill are 25-40 years old.

Water theft is also a big problem in our water system. Some residents are stealing water. They unhook their meters or use other methods. This adds to the losses. When someone steals water from the town, they are stealing water from YOU. YOU pay for it. We are taking steps to stop it. We have strengthened the fines for water theft. *It's \$1000.00 fine for the first offense and jail time for any additional convictions.*

The new meters have theft technology built into them to stop water theft.

Project Costs-

Water meters are the property of the town. Residents will not pay for or be billed for your new meter. The cost of this new meter project is going to be approximately \$435,000.00. The meters and their software etc. will cost \$315,000.00. The installation will cost *approximately* \$120,000.00. We are borrowing temporary municipal bonds for this project. We expect to recoup \$150,000.00 per year in water savings which means we will be able to pay off these bonds in 3 years or less.

New Meter Technology

The new meters we are installing are radio water meters that can be read through a reading device from the street. The DPW won't need to come to your house to read the meters anymore. They can drive by and special technology will read the meters automatically via radio signal. This will save 30 days a year in reading meters. This is about \$7000.00 per year in savings.

How is the meter installation going to work and what do you need to do?

The town is going to use a combination of DPW staff and temporary installers to get the meters installed. You will be contacted to arrange a time to have your new meter installed. Our goal is to have all the new meters installed by Labor Day.

What do you need to do?

Once we contact you to install your new meter we will need your help in getting it done.

You will need to:

1. Allow access to your home and meter. ***It's a legal requirement.***
2. Clear any furniture or storage items such as boxes etc. away from the water meter.
3. Secure any animals such as dogs etc. for the installer to work safely.
4. Be prepared for about 30 minutes of access to your home. It will take about 30 minutes to install the meter without any significant complications.
5. If we encounter any plumbing related problems, we will notify you and ask you to contact a plumber for repairs.

When the installer comes he will have a township-issued ID card with a photo. We are being very careful about who we hire to come to install meters and access your home.

Make sure and ask for their ID.

Installation of new meters begins in early May. We are starting on the following streets:

Bassett, Hillside, Oakwood, Green, Janet, Edith, Dickerson Mine, Frank, George, Zucker, Lake Shore, S. 1st, S. 2nd & S. 3rd. These streets have the oldest meters.

Will your bill go up after the new meter is installed? We don't know if your meter is one of the ones that is inaccurate. *Most likely, your water bill will go up some because the new meter is accurately metering the water you are using.* If your bill does go up, it indicates your old meter was inaccurate and you were receiving a lot of free water.

Will you be billed for any unbilled water showing on your old water meter? NO. We are legally allowed to bill for any unbilled water showing on your old meter. But we are not going to do that. It would just be unfair to ask for money this long after the fact.

If you would like to email us so we can email u back to install your meter, please email:

MineHillWater@Gmail.com or Call 973-366-9031, x 31.

2012 Municipal Budget

The Public Hearing on the 2012 Municipal Budget is **May 3rd, @7:30 PM @ Town Hall.**

If you have questions about the budget please come to the meeting and we can answer them.

Mine Hill was facing a \$220.00 dollar per house municipal tax increase in 2012 based on the projections from last year's budget. We made cuts of \$147,000.00 and were able to minimize the tax increase to \$7.43/month or \$89/house per average assessed home. *Within the Governor's 2% cap, we decreased spending -2.89%.* **We came in almost 5% less than the Governor's cap.** Our police contract increased \$72,000; our employee benefits increased \$34,000; *municipal debt payments* increased \$77,000.00. Unfortunately these are all mandated items and fall outside the cap. If not for our police contract increase and our increase in municipal debt payments, we would be seeing a REAL tax reduction.

Other News:

Our **new town website** is up and running. Go to www.MineHill.com. It's much easier to use. We still have some information to add, but it's looking pretty good. You're suggestions are welcomed.

JCP&L has done all the repairs and upgrades we have asked them to do. The Canfield Ave. circuit has been repaired and upgraded and should be more reliable. The pole at Dickerson Mine Road that caused the outage around has been repaired. The circuit in and around town hall and the school are repaired. *If you are aware of any other issues, please let us know.*

Recycling cans are being distributed to some areas of town. A first round of cans was already distributed last year. The cans were ordered last year through a grant and did not cost the town any money. They are decent size cans but maybe not be big enough for all of your recycling. The grant did not include lids. We priced lids and they would have cost \$4 per can, or about \$7000.00. We decided **not** to spend that money.

Property Maintenance is being more rigorously enforced. We have a nice town and we want to make sure everyone enjoys the full value of their property. We are also starting the clean-up of some of the properties along Rt 46. *It'll take a little time, but you will see a difference soon.*

We received an \$80,000.00 grant on April 19th for repairing an abandoned mine and the walking path by Canfield School and Dolores Place. We will be starting the work this summer. We have also received grants for \$170,000.00 so far for new sidewalks on Randolph Avenue. We are waiting for another grant for \$300,000.00 which we will hear about soon. This will make \$550,000.00 for sidewalks. *Keep your fingers crossed.* ☺

The Community Committee is a new committee we formed to work with community based programs in town such as the food pantry, Mine Hill Day, and various other events to build community involvement and spirit. If you'd like to volunteer please email or call town hall.

Mulch Site – The Mulch site will reopen May 5th, 9-12 AM. If you are interested in a part time job to open and supervise the mulch site, please contact Mary Williams @ 973-366-9031, x 41.

Recycling is now on Mondays, not Wednesdays. ☺ Please have items out by 6:30 AM.

The **Mine Hill Beach** season passes are on sale and available now. Please call the Town Clerk @ 973-366-9031, x 0.

Calling All Volunteers

Would you like to get involved but aren't sure what to do? We can always use volunteers for various organizations in town. Contact Town Clerk Amanda Macchia and she will help guide you to a volunteer group that needs some extra hands. 973-366-9031, x 0.

Don't forget to sign up for Swiftreach.



<http://swift911.swiftreach.com/public/200960/>

That's all for now!