



September 2026 Newsletter

ACT 537 SEWAGE FACILITIES PLAN

In the Spring of 2018 the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) issued a mandate to Albany Township to create and submit an *Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan*, which identifies and documents sewage disposal needs in the township. This mandate was the direct result of an anonymous complaint made to DEP regarding the lack of a current township Act 537 Plan, specifically addressing the village of Kempton. Township representatives were required to attend a “pre-planning consultation” at the Reading DEP office, submit a Plan Development Implementation Schedule, and commit to preparing the Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan. Consulting engineer bids were solicited and Alfred Benesch and Company was hired to develop the plan.

Although DEP’s primary focus was the village centers of Kempton and Stony Run, DEP required the plan to be township-wide, even though the rural areas of the township were not experiencing widespread sewage disposal issues. An initial Sewage Needs Documentation Survey was performed with many residents completing a voluntary Well and On-Lot Septic System Survey. The results from the survey were then used to justify implementation of the recommended plan alternative.

The draft Act 537 Plan is now complete and ready for review. The recommended plan alternative, which represents the least costly and disruptive option DEP will consider, is summarized as follows:

Implement a township-wide on-lot sewage management program requiring all septic tanks to be pumped at least once every three (3) years.

The plan does not recommend anything other than a septic tank pumping program. No township-wide or village-center public sewage collection, treatment and/or disposal system is recommended. Since there is no public sewer proposed, user rates are not applicable to the selected alternative. The plan considered several public options for the villages however they did not meet the affordability criteria.

On August 31, 2026, the plan was submitted to the Berks County Planning office for a 60-day review and comment period. This also begins a public comment period through September 30, 2026, during which residents are encouraged to review the plan and provide comments. The plan is

available to view on the Albany Township website at www.albanytwpberks.org/sewage-enforcement. Residents may schedule a time to view a physical copy by calling 610-756-6452 and leaving a message. The Plan may also be viewed by appointment at the office of Alfred Benesch & Company, 400 One Norwegian Plaza, Pottsville, PA. Please contact Cheryl Bolich at 570-622-4055 or cbolich@benesch.com to schedule an appointment. **Questions or comments must be submitted in writing by September 30, 2026, to David Horst, PE at Alfred Benesch and Company, 400 One Norwegian Plaza, Pottsville, PA 17901 or dhorst@benesch.com.**

At the close of the review and comment period, the Plan will be adopted by the Township (with public comment documentation) and submitted to DEP for evaluation and approval. This submission is anticipated to occur in November 2026. DEP review is expected to be approximately 180 days. Following DEP approval, the implementation schedule contained in the Plan must be followed.

If the selected alternative of a township-wide on-lot sewage management program is approved by DEP, the Township will be required to adopt and enforce an On-lot Sewage Management Program Ordinance, establishing three (3) pumping districts with rotating schedules. This is anticipated for Summer 2027. Those on-lot systems in the first pumping district will then have one year from adoption to have their tank pumped. Details on the specific pumping districts, schedules and procedures will be communicated when the ordinance is adopted.

Updates will be posted throughout the process at www.albanytwpberks.org/sewage-enforcement.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PUBLIC SURVEY

Albany Township is currently working with Greenwich and Maxatawny Townships, and Lenhartsville and Kutztown Boroughs, to prepare a multi-municipal joint comprehensive plan. This *Northeastern Berks Joint Comprehensive Plan* is being facilitated by the Berks County Planning Commission.

A comprehensive plan defines a long-range vision and policy framework for future land use, development, conservation,

infrastructure, housing, transportation, and community facilities. The plan sets goals and identifies strategies for how these elements should evolve. Albany Township's current comprehensive plan was adopted in 1993. This effort will look to update the existing plan and expand the vision to the broader northeastern Berks region.

Public input helps us understand community interests and guide the creation of a plan that meets the needs of the community. Please consider adding your voice to a survey which is available now through October 29, 2026.

You can access the survey online at <https://bit.ly/nebjcpsurvey> or by scanning the QR Code. →

If you prefer completing a paper copy, please contact the Township Secretary at albtwp@ptd.net or pick up a copy at a township meeting on September 14th or October 5th.



BROADBAND EXPANSION IN ALBANY TOWNSHIP

We are happy to announce that a project has (finally) begun in the township to expand broadband internet access. Comcast was awarded federal funding to extend high-speed broadband infrastructure (primarily through fiber-optic cable) to specific unserved and underserved locations in the township. The first phase, funded through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, will provide broadband access to nearly 200 residences & businesses and is expected to be completed by Spring 2027. The second phase, funded through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, will expand broadband access to the remaining unserved and underserved locations in the township. The details and timing of the second phase are not yet known and may take several years for completion.

You may notice Comcast's contractor, Cable Services Company Inc., in the area. Initial work will be done installing fiber optic cable both underground and aerially on poles. Please note this work is being performed within public road rights-of-way, which are 33-50 feet wide depending on the road (16.5-25 feet measured from the center of the road) and extend beyond the edge of the pavement. The cable will then be extended to individual homes and businesses. Property owners will be contacted by Cable Services for any work on private property. We ask that you please work with them to accommodate the installations. Some disruption is necessary to install the cables however the project agreement requires restoring property to its original condition after the installation.

SEEKING PARK SUPPORT!

The Albany Township Park is a 62-acre township-owned public space in the heart of Kempton, dedicated to restoring native habitats and providing public access to the beautiful outdoors for passive recreation. This includes a ¼-mile asphalt walking path and numerous mowed-grass trails.

The park is managed by an appointed Recreation Board and operates primarily on grant funding and volunteer labor. Past volunteer efforts include planting more than 200 trees and 300 native plant plugs, purple martin banding, and ongoing weeding and pruning. Each volunteer effort includes organizing, planning and executing. The community is so appreciative of these efforts that vastly improve the park for all to enjoy.

The Recreation Board welcomes anyone who would like to get involved. If you would like to be part of this small but mighty community effort—whether by volunteering your time, lending a helping hand, or donating—please send an email to albanytwppark@gmail.com.

Look for the Albany Township Park page on Facebook!

ZONING REMINDERS

The current Albany Township Zoning Ordinance of 2004 defines zoning requirements for the township, including permitting. Zoning permits are required for adding structures such as buildings and outdoor wood-burning furnaces, uses such as short-term rentals, and activities such as timber harvesting. As these are only some examples, it is important that residents contact the Zoning Officer well before any activity to determine what, if any, permits may be required.

Albany Township has “opted out” of enforcing building codes. This means that building permits, inspections and certificates are required to be obtained through a 3rd-party inspection agency for non-commercial structures or PA Department Labor and Industry for commercial structures.

The Albany Township Weed Ordinances of 1978 and 1982 set requirements for a) maintaining safe, healthy, and aesthetic residential areas, and b) reducing weeds and their resultant negative impacts in open fields and woodland ecosystems. Grass and weeds in residential areas must be maintained at less than 6 inches. Noxious weeds in non-residential areas must be mowed by June 15th, August 1st, and within 10 days of the appearance of weed flowers to avoid producing seeds.

The Zoning Ordinance and Weed Ordinances can be accessed at www.albanytwpberks.org/zoning. Any questions should be directed to Robin Royer, Township Zoning Officer, at 610-987-9290 or rroyer@ltlconsultants.com.