



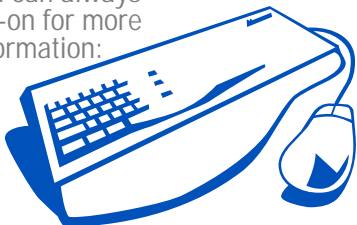
WALKER City News

WINTER 02-03

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You can always log-on for more information:



www.ci.walker.mi.us



Assessor's Office

The Assessment Notices are coming! The Assessment Notices are coming! I know – not exactly good news, right? But every year, it is the job of the local assessor's office to re-assess all the property in their jurisdiction.

...continued on page four



Fire Department News — Can You Hear Your Smoke Detector? —

Recently we in the fire service have learned that the audible alarms associated with the normal smoke detector may not awaken children in the event of fires.

WISN Channel 12 in Milwaukee, with the assistance from the North Shore Fire Department recently conducted an eight-month investigation into this problem and has discovered that test subjects (children) did not awaken to the sound of the smoke detector's audible alarm. The children used in the testing did not awaken despite a detector being placed near their ears. We did not realize the extent in which children are unable to hear audible warnings during normal sleep patterns. Part of the study showed that some kids fall into a much deeper sleep than others and they do not recognize the sound of the smoke detector.

...continued on page seven

— The Walker Fire Department Needs Your Help! —

Winter will soon be here, and we will be faced with the chore of snow removal from driveways and sidewalks.

...continued on page seven



Police Department News — Important Reminders —

Winter is upon us! The Police Department would like to point out some safety tips in order to make this a safer season. Road patrol sergeant, Jason Howe, identified several frequently overlooked State laws and City ordinances:

...continued on page four

— Snow Removal —

Winter season Section #70-64 of our local ordinances states that snow removed from private property is not to be deposited on or plowed across any public street or sidewalk. The plowing of snow into the street and the spreading of snow within the street is prohibited. A violation of this section is a municipal civil infraction.

— In The Road? —

Children and joggers who walk or run in the road — PLEASE, be aware of vehicles. Drivers may not see you and sometimes by the time they see you it may be too late!

:: HAVE A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS 2003! ::



Mayoral Message:

Dear Citizens of Walker,

I am pleased to write a few words on behalf of the City Commission. We hope that each of you had a blessed holiday season. I would like to share one experience that I had over the holidays, which makes me so very grateful to be a part of the Walker community.

On Thanksgiving Day, Akram Karadsheh, the owner of the Big Boy in Standale,

prepared a Thanksgiving Dinner for Walker Seniors. Mr. Karadsheh and his staff opened the restaurant and invited our senior citizens to gather together, give thanks, and enjoy a meal together. Our volunteer committee arranged for transportation for the seniors. It was a wonderful and heart warming event. A similar event was held for young people during the Christmas season. We are so fortunate to live in a community which cares for others.

In this edition of the newsletter is a summary of the survey results. We were very pleased with both the number of surveys that were submitted as well as the results. While we have not yet had an opportunity to evaluate all of the specific comments, I would like to make a few general comments.

Various city services received a very positive rating. While there is always room for improvement, it is good that over 75 percent of our residents responded that the quality of city services was excellent or good. Only 2 percent indicated that the quality was poor.

The City Commission was also grateful to learn that only 4 percent of the respondents indicated that they were not treated with courtesy by city employees and officials. This is an excellent rating when you consider that often a city employee interacts with the public in less than ideal situations (snow storms, fire, accidents, traffic violations, and the like).

The survey results will greatly assist the City Commission in establishing priorities. In these times of limited financial resources, it is critical that we spend your money in a prudent fashion. To this end, it is helpful to know, for example, that there appears to be significant public support for expanding our fire department resources, and investing in open space.

We will continue to report on our evaluation of the survey as we receive additional details from Grand Valley State University. In the meantime, I encourage anyone to contact me or your Commissioners with your thoughts, concerns, and ideas.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank two public servants who are leaving us to serve in a different capacity. After 12 years of service as our magistrate, Dan Zemaitis was installed as a Judge of the Kent County Circuit Court. In addition, Second Ward Commissioner Art Tanis has been installed as a Kent County Commissioner representing the City of Walker, and a portion of Grand Rapids. We deeply appreciate the service that these two men have given to our City and look forward to their continued service as they assume new responsibilities.

A sincere thank you is also owed to Rich Karelse who is retiring after more than 20 years of dedicated service on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

I extend the best wishes of the City Commission and we thank each of you for the opportunity to be of service.

Have a wonderful 2003!

City Commission:

CITY HALL

453-6311

MAYOR

Rob VerHeulen — 784-1936; rverheul@ci.walker.mi.us

FIRST WARD COMMISSIONERS:

Al Parent — 784-2860; aparent@ci.walker.mi.us

Dan Kent — 784-5591; dkent@ci.walker.mi.us

SECOND WARD COMMISSIONERS:

Art Tanis — 453-0392; atanis@ci.walker.mi.us

Barbara Holt — 784-5327; bholt@ci.walker.mi.us

THIRD WARD COMMISSIONERS:

Cynthia Stek — 791-9381; cstek@ci.walker.mi.us

Steven Versluis — 791-9247

City Services:

CLERK'S OFFICE

Hours: M- F — 8:00 am - 5:00 p.m.

Sandra A. Wisniewski, CMC

Phone: 791-6893 — SWisniew@ci.walker.mi.us

TREASURER'S OFFICE

Phone: 791-6861 — DDevries@ci.walker.mi.us

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Phone: (616) 791-6862 — KGibbs@ci.walker.mi.us

BUILDING/ZONING DEPARTMENT

Phone: 791-6858 — JNelson@ci.walker.mi.us

CITY MANAGER

James Hatch

Phone: 791-6860 — JHatch@ci.walker.mi.us

Cathy Vander Meulen

Phone: 791-6859 — CVanderm@ci.walker.mi.us

DISTRICT COURT - 59th

Hours: M- F — 8:00 am - 5:00 p.m..

Judge Peter P. Versluis — 453-5765

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

City Engineer: Scott C. Connors, P.E.

Phone: 791-6792 — sconners@ci.walker.mi.us

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Phone: 791-6799 — CMielke@ci.walker.mi.us

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Chief: William Schmidt

Phone: 791-6840 — BSchmidt@ci.walker.mi.us

INCOME TAX DEPARTMENT

Phone: 791-6880 — jblok@ci.walker.mi.us

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Phone: 791-6890 — MKneibel@ci.walker.mi.us

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Phone: 791-6787 — DSchmalz@ci.walker.mi.us

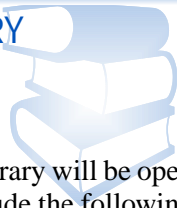
POLICE DEPARTMENT

Phone: 791-6812

PUBLIC WORKS

Phone: 791-6854

MKoning@ci.walker.mi.us or TCritten@ci.walker.mi.us



ADDITIONAL NEW HOURS

For the convenience of our library patrons, the Walker Library will be open an additional 5 hours a week. The new schedule will include the following days and times as of January 2, 2003:

Monday–Thursday	9:30 am – 8:00 pm
Friday – Saturday	9:30 am – 5:00 pm

WINTER PROGRAMS — ADULTS

LET IT SNOW READING CLUB FOR ADULTS

December 1, 2002 thru April 30, 2003

Sign up at any Kent District Library branch. Read 10 books before April 30 and receive a free collectable mug or journal.

READ ALONG THE RIVER

All residents of Kent County are invited to read and discuss the same book at the same time: *Peace Like A River* by Leif Enger. Book discussions will be happening throughout the county and you can meet the author at the March 20th Let It Snow Celebration.

BOOK DISCUSSIONS FOR ADULTS - Tuesdays at 10:00 am.

January 14 – *The Pact* by Jodi Picoult

February 11 – *A Year in Provence* by Peter Mayle

March 11 – *Peace Like A River* by Leif Enger

Drop in for a friendly, informal book discussion – refreshments are served!

VICTORIAN VALENTINES - Saturday, January 25 at 11:00 am

June Murphy will present a history of Valentines and discuss her collection of Victorian valentines. Refreshments will be provided. Registration is encouraged.

LIGHTHOUSES OF THE LAKE MICHIGAN CIRCLE TOUR

Saturday, February 22 at 11:00 am.

Dianna Stampfler from the West Michigan Tourist Association will provide a slide show of Lake Michigan's historic beacons, its keepers and their ghosts. Refreshments will be served and registration will be appreciated.

WINTER PROGRAMS — YOUTH

Winter Storytime Series

Wednesdays at 10:00 am and 11:00 am / January 8-February 26.

Featuring stories, songs, crafts and other book –related fun. Join us for a different theme each week For ages 3-6. Registration required.

Winter Laptime Series

Wednesdays at 10:00 am and 11:00 am / January 8-February 26.

Babies, toddlers and their parents are invited to join us for stories, music and rhymes. Ages 3 and under with an adult. Registration required.

It's a Chocolatey Day – Saturday, February 15 at 11:00 am.

Do you have chocolate fever? Listen to chocolatey stories, play chocolate games, and do plenty of sampling at this delicious program. Bring your sweet tooth! Ages 6 and under. Registration required please.

Please call the library for more information and to make reservations at our new phone number 647-3970. All branches of the Kent District Library will be closed on Monday, February 17 for an All Staff In-service Day.



2002 Returns

Filing date: Your return must be filed by April 30, 2003

Who must file: Every resident or part-year resident of Walker (this includes renters) who had taxable income in 2002 of \$750 or more must file a return. Married persons may file either a joint return or separate returns.

Required attachments: All residents are required to attach a copy of page 1 of their 2002 Federal 1040. If you are taking a credit for tax paid to another city, a copy of the other city's return(s) is required. See page 2 of your Resident 1040 form for a list of additional attachments that may be applicable. Refunds and processing of your return will be delayed if required attachments are missing

2002 Forms

You can download and print 2002 City of Walker income tax forms from our Web site at:

www.ci.walker.mi.us/incometaxforms.

You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader (also available from our website) to view and print forms.

Employer Withholding

A company is required to withhold Walker income tax from an employee's pay if the company has a location in the City of Walker. A company must also withhold Walker tax if they are doing business in the City of Walker even though the company has no location in the city. Companies outside of the City of Walker are not required to withhold Walker tax but may voluntarily do so as a convenience to their employees.

Estimated Payments

If your employer does not withhold Walker Income Tax or you have non-wage income (rental income, capital gains, premature pension distributions, etc.) that is subject to tax and you think you may owe more than \$100 with your 2002 return, contact the Income Tax Department at 791-6880. We will send you 2003 Quarterly Estimated payment vouchers with instructions. (If you sent in estimated payments in 2002, you will automatically be sent the vouchers for 2003.)



Business Owners

Beginning in 2003, the assessor's office must assess all improvements to real property that are real in nature, even if those improvements are owned by, and/or installed by a tenant. So if you lease or rent the space where you are conducting your business and you have tenant or leasehold improvements (dividing walls, special wiring or plumbing, concrete pads – any special construction you needed for your business) you will be receiving a separate assessment notice for these improvements. This being a new law, we ourselves are still grasping with how to handle it. We are using information from the 2002 personal property statements that every business filed last February to get this going. There will also be a section on the new personal property statements coming out for 2003 where these leasehold improvements must be declared. Along with leasehold improvements, we also have to begin assessing buildings on leased land in the same fashion (in which cell towers and billboards fall). This law (P.A. 415 of 2000) was put in place by the legislature and the governor and you can read more about it on the state's Web site at (then search for State Tax Commission Bulletin No. 8 of 2002 or P.A. 415. You can always call us with questions and we will help you as best we can.

For determining the 2003 assessments, we base the assessment on what is on the property on December 31, 2002 (also known as "tax day"). This year Walker has seen a very large amount of new houses being built (the most in the last 3 or 4 years). So if you are one of those new homeowners and your house was only about halfway built at the end of the year, then the assessment that the assessor's office has placed on the property should reflect the incomplete structure (the value of the land + the value of the partially built structure).

With the economy being so unpredictable, you may be expecting that assessments will not be increasing as much as in recent years – but this is not the case. Because of low interest rates at lending institutions and because of the unstable stock market, people are turning more and more to investing their money in property. In return, sales prices on homes (as well as commercial and industrial properties) have not seen any decreases in their value. What the economy has affected is the CPI (Consumers Price Index or rate of inflation), which is about half as much as it has been in the last few years. The CPI is applied to 2002's Taxable Values (TV) to get the 2003 TV. The TV is the figure that is used to calculate your property taxes and it can only increase by CPI (or 5%, which ever is less). There are a couple of circumstances that may occur that would make the TV increase more than the CPI: 1) new construction; or 2) the transfer of ownership the previous year, which causes the TV to "uncap" or increase to the amount of the Assessed Value (AV). Taxable Values and CPI have been around since 1995 when Proposal A was passed. Since its inception the CPI has not got close to the 5% maximum:

Year	CPI %	As you can see, 2003's CPI is the smallest it has ever been. So if you did not just purchase your property last year and you have not done any improvements, your 2003 property taxes will be 1.5% more than your 2002.
1995	2.6%	Now back to the Assessed Value (AV). The AV of your property should represent 50% of market value (estimated). Sales studies are used to determine the increase in each class of property. For 2003, it has been determined that the following increases are warranted:
1996	2.8%	
1997	2.8%	
1998	2.7%	
1999	1.6%	
2000	1.9%	
2001	3.2%	
2002	3.2%	
2003	1.5%	

Property Class	% Increase
Industrial	11.19%
Commercial	5.20%
Residential	5.51%

These figures are very close to last years. What this means is that we need to raise the Industrial class 11.19% and the Commercial class 5.20%. In the past we have simply spread this across the board, meaning that every Industrial property's AV would increase 11.19% and every Commercial property's AV would increase 5.20%. In the past for the Residential class, we would conduct a sales study per neighborhood and apply the same percentage across a neighborhood (ex. Sales in Chesterfield Heights showed a 7% increase - all of Chesterfield Heights would see a 7% increase – paying no attention to age or style of house). For the 2003 AV's for all classes of real property, we are going to apply these increases in a much more fair way, taking into consideration age and style. So you will not necessarily see the same percent increase (or in some cases decreases) as your neighbors.

So when you get your assessment notice (you should receive it sometime in February) you will know what the Taxable Value and Assessed Value represents. And if you feel that the new AV is too high, feel free to make an appointment to appeal the valuation. Check out our Web site www.ci.walker.mi.us; where you can log on and look at your neighbors assessments (*select: City Services, then Assessors*) – just keep in mind that the increase percentages are not the same as everyone in the neighborhood. As always, you are free to call us with any questions or visit our office to look at the assessment roll.

WALKER RECREATION DEPARTMENT

2003 GIRL'S SOFTBALL PROGRAM

The Walker Recreation Department will be offering a Girl's Softball Program for girls 7 through 12 years of age. Cost is \$25.00 per player. Practices will begin the week of April 14 and games will begin on Tuesday, April 29, 2003.

Registration forms will be sent home with the students at area schools and will also be available at the Recreation Department, located at 4243 Remembrance Rd., N.W. during the following dates and times:

Saturday, February 15 10:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

Thursday, February 20 3:00 P.M. - 6:30 P.M.

Saturday, February 22 10:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

For further information, please call 791-6890.

IN-LINE HOCKEY

Youth Learn-to-Skate lessons...

The Walker Recreation Department will be offering in-line hockey lessons for youth ages 6 years to 13 years of age. Classes will be offered on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays beginning April 14, 2003. If interested, please contact the Recreation Department at 791-6890 before March 27, 2003.



TENNIS LESSONS

The Walker Recreation Department will be offering tennis lessons for youth 7-15 years of age and adults 16 years of age and older. Lessons will be offered in May and June.

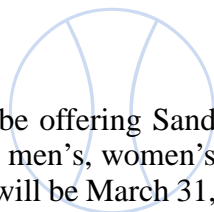
For beginning dates or more information, please contact the Walker Recreation Department at 791-6890.



2003 SAND VOLLEYBALL LEAGUE

The Walker Recreation Department will be offering Sand Volleyball Leagues in June. There will be men's, women's and co-ed leagues available. Registration will be March 31, April 1 & 2, 2003 from 9am-4pm.

Teams interested in joining should contact the Walker Recreation Department at 791-6890 for an information packet or for additional information.





FREE
14 DAY
TRIAL MEMBERSHIP!*

Do You Qualify?*

TRY before you buy!

The BEST fitness facility in the area and we want to prove it!

NO hidden costs. Nothing to pay, just bring in THIS

***QUALIFICATIONS:**

- No previous applications within 1 years time
- Limit of 2 trial memberships per household

- Grand Rapids area resident
- 21 years of age or older
- Show a valid Michigan I.D.

Senior Citizens

The Walker Recreation Department invites all senior citizens to come and join the Walker Senior Citizens. They meet every second and fourth Tuesday of the month at Walker Fire Station 3 on Three Mile Rd. NW. Social hour is from 10:30 am - 11:30 am with a meeting immediately following from 11:30 am to 12:00 noon. There is a potluck lunch at 12:00 noon. There is entertainment such as speakers, cards, bingo and trips planned every month. Come join the fun.

For more information contact the Walker Recreation Department at 791-6890.

City of Walker — Community Survey 2002

Return Method: Marked: 33% Unmarked: 63% City of Walker: 3%
 Return Date: Returned before 28 Aug: 80% Returned post due date: 20%

Background Information:

1. Please select your gender: [48%] Male [52%] Female
2. What is your age? Average age was 51.95 years old.
3. How many years have you lived in the City of Walker? The average citizen has lived in Walker for 20.5 years.
 Almost sixty percent of respondents have lived in the city less than 20 years. Thirty-eight percent have lived in the City for ten or fewer years. The most popular responses were 3, 5 and 10 years.
4. Are you a registered voter? [96%] Yes [4%] No
5. Please select the answer that best identifies your residency status.
 [8%] Rent [88%] Own [5%] Walker Business Owner
6. What is your current employment status: [65%] Employed [3%] Unemployed [32%] Retired
7. How would you identify your racial/ethnic heritage? (Please check all that apply)
 [99%] White [0.5%] Hispanic/Latino [0.5%] American Indian [0.1%] African American [0.2%] Asian/Pacific Islander [0.1%] Other (e.g. "American" or indicated more than one race).

Evaluation of City Services:

How would you assess the quality of the following services in the City of Walker?

8. Police: [40%] Excellent [48%] Good [6%] No Opinion [5%] Fair [1%] Poor
9. Fire: [35%] Excellent [48%] Good [14%] No Opinion [3%] Fair [1%] Poor
10. Public Works: [26%] Excellent [49%] Good [18%] No Opinion [6%] Fair [2%] Poor
11. Park Facilities: [31%] Excellent [46%] Good [17%] No Opinion [5%] Fair [1%] Poor

Use of Public Services:

12. Do you use the City of Walker website? (www.ci.walker.mi.us) [14%] Yes [87%] No
 - a) If yes, what information would you like added or deleted on our city's web site?
 Main Themes:
 - ▶ Keep the content current (e.g. event calendars)
 - ▶ Employment Opportunities with City of Walker
 - ▶ Misc. Requests (historical information, bike trail maps, meeting minutes)
 - b) If no, why do you not use the web site?
 [49%] I did not know Walker had a web site
 [39%] I do not have a computer or access to the Internet
 [13%] Other:
 - ▶ No need/reason to use site
 - ▶ Has no interest in site
 - ▶ Misc. reasons: (no time, no computer experience)
13. Do you use the programs provided by the parks and recreation department? [30%] Yes [70%] No
 - a) If yes, which programs do you use and what additional ones would you like to see provided?

Programs Used	Requested Programs
Soccer	Swimming Pool (water exercise, swimming lessons)
Baseball/Softball	Inline/Roller Skating/Ice Skating (expanded times)
Local Parks	Misc. Requests: more programs for toddlers and seniors

- b) If no, why don't you use the programs provided?
 1. No Time/Busy
 2. Uninformed about programs offered
 3. Not interested in programs offered
 4. Limitations (age, disability)
 5. Cost (Ice and Fitness center too expensive)

14. Are you treated with courtesy by City of Walker employees and city officials?
 [80%] Yes [4%] No [16%] No Opinion

Financial Support Concerns: Are you willing to pay an additional \$16.70 per year based on your property value for these additional services within the City of Walker?

15. Staffing for an expanded, full-time fire department. [68%] Yes [32%] No
16. Expanding the size of our library. [40%] Yes [60%] No
17. Adding a second sheet of ice to the Walker Ice and Fitness Center. [26%] Yes [74%] No
18. Buying land rights to insure open spaces. [52%] Yes [48%] No
19. Building a community swimming pool. [45%] Yes [55%] No

Quality of Life Issues: Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about the quality of life and standards in the City of Walker.

20. I support the extension of sidewalks in our community.
 [32%] Strongly Agree [40%] Agree [15%] Neither [7%] Disagree [5%] Strongly Disagree
21. It is necessary to control the rate of growth and development in our community.
 [38%] Strongly Agree [43%] Agree [12%] Neither [5%] Disagree [2%] Strongly Disagree
22. Environmental concerns such as soil erosion, clean air and water are important considerations for me.
 [43%] Strongly Agree [47%] Agree [7%] Neither [2%] Disagree [1%] Strongly Disagree
23. The reduction of traffic volume is important.
 [41%] Strongly Agree [40%] Agree [13%] Neither [5%] Disagree [1%] Strongly Disagree
24. It is important to provide housing alternatives for senior citizens within our community.
 [23%] Strongly Agree [51%] Agree [17%] Neither [6%] Disagree [2%] Strongly Disagree
25. I would support a ban on the burning of leaves within residential areas of Walker.
 [27%] Strongly Agree [24%] Agree [15%] Neither [20%] Disagree [14%] Strongly Disagree
26. City sponsored events, such as the Walker Festival, that include beer sales are appropriate for our community.
 [16%] Strongly Agree [35%] Agree [14%] Neither [15%] Disagree [20%] Strongly Disagree

Engineering Department Public Meetings

The Engineering Department will be holding two public informational meetings in January. They will be as follows:

Proposed Stormwater Ordinance
 Informational Meeting
 January 13, 2002 @ 6:00 P.M.
 Commission Chambers

Three Mile Road Reconstruction
 Walker Avenue to Bristol Avenue
 January 27, 2002 @ 6:00 P.M.
 Commission Chambers

We are looking for public input on both these issues. We encourage you to attend these meetings and provide comment as we move towards implementation and construction.



Standing Committees

- Building Committee**
 Steve Versluis - Chair; Dan Kent; Al Parent
- Finance Committee**
 Rob VerHeulen - Chair; Art Tanis; Al Parent
- Ordinance Committee**
 Art Tanis - Chair; Cyndy Stek; Barbara Holt
- Personnel Committee**
 Steve Versluis - Chair; Barbara Holt; Cyndy Stek
- Mayor-Pro Tem**
 Barbara Holt



FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS

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Can You Hear Your Smoke Detector?

The common smoke detector has sound levels up to 85 decibels. Studies conducted by sleep experts have indicated that children under the age of fourteen sleep so soundly during the first hours of sleep, that they may not even hear sound levels reaching 100 decibels. Until recently, this information has not been widely known to the fire service. The purpose here is not to direct blame, but to fulfill our mission and be available to educate you, the public, as to new information and we must be diligent in dispensing that information to you.

Smoke detectors are still the number one tool in providing us early warning of smoke or fire in our homes. The importance of planning and practicing an escape plan from your home is crucial. Sleeping with the doors closed to bedrooms is also important to reduce the travel of smoke throughout the house. If you do not have smoke detectors in your bedrooms we strongly recommend that you install them. The residential building code for new homes requires smoke detectors on each level, outside the sleeping area and in each bedroom. The detectors must be hardwired with battery backup, so that if one detector is activated, they all sound.

According to the WISN report, the Consumers Product Safety Commission and Underwriter's Laboratory are beginning the process of conducting sleep studies associated with smoke detector's sound levels to address the issue. These studies may take up to two years to complete and the technical data may not be available prior to the completion of the testing.

This article is by no means intended to create panic. Our intent is to make you aware of potential problems, so that you can use this information to your advantage. We recommend that at least twice a year you practice your escape plan at night while your children are sleeping. This will let you know if the smoke detectors in your home will awaken your children when activated. Practicing at night will also give your children the opportunity to awaken from a sound sleep and practice getting out of bed and staying low, and feeling the door to see if it is hot.

If you have children that do not respond to the sound of a regular smoke detector, the current recommendation is to adjust your escape plan to ensure that someone awakens your children. If you cannot reach your children due to fire and smoke, it will be more effective for you to let the fire department know where they are located in the home so that they can effect a rescue either by entering the house or by accessing their bedroom window. If you live in a two story home with the bedrooms on the second floor we recommend that you purchase an emergency escape ladder or make sure your children know that by hanging a blanket or sheet out of the window it will be easier for the fire department to find them. This is another good reason for sleeping with the doors closed. They will offer a measure of protection from smoke and fire.

We hope this information is helpful to you. Remember that smoke detectors save lives when we respond to them correctly. If you have any questions or you would like any assistance with your home escape planning please feel free to contact the Walker Fire Department at 791-6840.

THE WALKER FIRE DEPARTMENT NEEDS YOUR HELP!

If you are lucky enough to have a fire hydrant in front of your home or business, the Walker Fire Department needs your help in keeping the hydrant clear of snow.



In the event of a fire emergency, an accessible fire hydrant and a water supply is crucial for us to be able to successfully complete our job in a timely manner.

The Walker Fire Department would like to thank the many residents and business owners that currently take the time to clear the fire hydrants in front of their homes and businesses, and we urge all residents and business owners with a fire hydrant near their home or business to please help by keeping it clear of snow.

Sue Kuklewski
City of Walker
Fire Department

POLICE DEPARTMENT NEWS

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The Michigan motor vehicle code #257.655 states (regarding walking in the roadway) states that a pedestrian shall not walk upon the main traveled portion of the highway or road. Where sidewalks are not provided, pedestrians shall, when practicable, walk on the left side of the highway or road facing traffic, which passes nearest. A person who violates this section is responsible for a civil infraction.

The Michigan motor vehicle code also states under #257.676 (Impeding traffic) that a person, without authority, shall not block, obstruct, impede, or otherwise interfere with the normal flow of traffic upon a public street or highway in this state, by means of a barricade, object, or device, or with his or her own person. This section does not apply to person(s) maintaining, rearranging, or constructing public utility facilities in or adjacent to a street or highway. A person who violates this section is responsible for a civil infraction.

OUR SIDEWALKS

Local ordinance Section #70-68 refers to the clearing of sidewalks. The owner or occupants of any property located within the city shall clear any accumulations of ice and snow from the public sidewalks adjoining the property within 24 hours of the accumulation or placement of snow or ice on the sidewalks. A violation of this section is a municipal civil infraction. However, please remember that children, seniors and the handicapped especially are adversely affected when we don't do our part to keep the sidewalks clear!



We, at the Walker Police Department, want to wish all of our citizens a SAFE and healthy new year.

"YOUR" NEWSLETTER!

We value your communication. You may contact us with your comments or suggestions for "Your" newsletter at any time.

CITY OF WALKER
Attn.: Newsletter
4243 Remembrance Road NW, Walker MI 49544
Phone: (616) 791-6860
E-Mail: newsletter@ci.walker.mi.us

Also let us know if you need to correct your mailing address or need to add a new resident to our current list of recipients.

Thank you!

CITY OF WALKER
4243 Remembrance Road NW
Walker MI 49544

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City Central Park Fish Pond

Over the last several months, the City of Walker has converted an on-site stormwater detention area into a pond that can support a fish habitat. With the help of Stoney Creek Fisheries and Equipment, Inc of Grant MI, the City Central Park pond is now home to approximately 400 transplanted fish. Perch, blue gills, catfish, and bass have been placed in the pond in an attempt to create a self-perpetuating fish population.

"A cooperative effort between the Walker Engineering Department and the Department of Public Works has resulted in a beautiful recreational amenity that area children can enjoy," noted Mark Rambo, Engineering Programs Coordinator.

The City created the pond as part of the City Central Park Project in 1998 to filter stormwater runoff from the park. "The pond has been strategically partnered with a wetland area that filters out impurities in the water," stated Scott Connors, City Engineer.

More recently, the City installed a fountain and a diffuser to keep the water aerated year round. The Public Works department will continue to feed and monitor the fish on a regular basis to ensure their acclimation to the pond. "We are encouraging children to come out and test the pond this spring. Being that the pond is so new, we support a catch and release style of fishing until the pond has time to sustain itself," mentioned Del Fend of the Public Works department.

The City of Walker advises extreme caution to children playing around the pond this winter. The diffuser in the pond aerates the water so the fish can survive the winter, however, it often creates thin ice. Please do not allow children to play near the pond. Signs have been placed to identify these areas. For more information regarding the pond, please contact Mark Rambo, 791-6327.

Meeting Dates and Times

City Commission Meetings
8:00 pm: 2nd & 4th Monday of each month.
Walker City Hall/Commission Chambers

Board of Zoning Appeals
7:00 pm: 2nd & 4th Thursday of each month to hear appeals on the city's zoning regulations.
City Commission Chambers

Planning Commission
7:00 pm: 1st & 3rd Wednesday of each month to make recommendations regarding land use planning and zoning concerns.
City Hall, City Commission Chambers

Recreation Committee
Meets one Wednesday of each month.
City Hall Conference Room

Historical Committee
Meets 1st Monday of every month to discuss museum displays and preservation of artifacts.
Walker Museum

Community Relations Committee
Meets 3rd Wednesday of every month to discuss City fairs, festivals and awards to be given for special achievements in the community.

International Relations Committee
7:00 pm: 2nd Wednesday of the month to discuss Sister City school exchange program with Colac, Australia.

Mineral Mining Review Board
Meetings as needed. Reviews applications for mineral extraction in the City.

Traffic Committee
Meetings as needed. Discussion on transportation matters brought by residents.

