



# WALKER

## City News

### Summer 2005

### City of Walker Fire Department

#### Even "Legal" Fireworks are Dangerous

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Summer is here and the Fourth of July holiday is right around the corner. Along with family get-togethers and picnics, a big part of the holiday celebration is the use and viewing of fireworks.

Michigan law allows the use of what are now referred to as "consumer fireworks" (formerly known as "common" or Class C fireworks). As a promotional technique, their advocates have labeled the fireworks allowed under this classification as "safe and sane" fireworks. "Safe and sane" fireworks include devices such as sparklers, fountains, snakes, party poppers, and ground spinners. Laws based on this approach allow considerable private use of fireworks, but exclude any explosive type devices that lift off the ground and / or produce a loud bang. When things go wrong with fireworks, they typically go very wrong very fast - far faster than any fire protection provisions can reliably respond. And fireworks are a classic attractive nuisance for children. If children are present to watch, they will be tempted to touch. Children can move too fast and be badly hurt too quickly if they are close to fireworks, as they typically are at home fireworks displays.

In 1999, there were 24,200 reported fires started by fireworks. These fires resulted in 12 civilian deaths, 55 injuries, and \$17.2 million in direct property damage. Most of the fires were outdoor brush or refuse fires, but most of the loss occurred in fires with structures involved. These fires can start with outdoor use of fireworks, as when a bottle rocket, launched outside lands on a roof or other location not easily accessed where it can ignite combustibles before anyone can retrieve it.

The risk of fire death relative to exposure shows fireworks as one of the most risky consumer products. Recent figures indicate 120-130 million pounds of fireworks are used per year. In recent years, fires started by fireworks have averaged seven deaths a year.

Since at least 1910, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has crusaded to stop the dangerous private use of fireworks, which accounts for nearly all of the injuries and deaths from fireworks in most recent years. Many states still permit untrained citizens to purchase and use fireworks designed to explode, throw off showers of hot sparks, or reach surface temperatures as high as 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit. The thousands of serious injuries and extensive property loss nearly all arise from this misguided activity. The only acceptable, safe way to enjoy fireworks is to view them in public fireworks displays conducted by professionals in accordance with applicable codes and standards.

The Walker Fire Department urges everyone to have a safe July 4th. Do not allow children to use fireworks. If you feel a need to use "legal" fireworks, be sure that an adult uses them, and that children are kept at a safe distance and there is a water source nearby.

If you have any questions about the use of fireworks or what is legal or not legal feel free to call the Fire Department at 791-6840. A good rule of thumb to determine the difference is if it makes a loud bang or leaves the ground, spins or twirls, it is illegal.

#### Fire Pits: What's Acceptable and What's Not

Recreational fires in your back yard are allowed in the City of Walker provided the fire is contained within an outdoor fireplace purchased from a retailer. A homemade fire pit in the back yard is not acceptable by our ordinance.

A recreational fire is allowed in an outdoor fireplace without a permit using only solid fuels such as firewood. Using an outdoor fireplace to burn yard waste is not allowed by our ordinance.

If you are having a recreational fire and we receive a complaint, the duty officer from the Fire Department has the authority to require you to extinguish the fire if he determines your fire is creating a nuisance for your neighbors because of noxious odors or excessive smoke. This is strictly left to the judgment of the responding officer.

Please be considerate of your neighbors when having a recreational fire and make sure you are not creating a nuisance for them.



## Dear Citizens of Walker:

Best wishes from your City Commission. Many things are happening in our City and I wish to use this article to mention just a few.

As I write these lines, we are just completing the work on our 2005-2006 fiscal year budget. The budget process is becoming an increasingly difficult task as state revenue sharing funds are being reduced each year. In many of our neighboring cities, fire and police staffing is being reduced and many other programs are being eliminated. Walker is not immune from these economic challenges.

We are fortunate, however, that we have been able to reduce spending in a number of areas over the past few years to insure adequate resources for essential services such as police and fire protection. We have been able to increase our general fund balance in previous years thereby allowing us to maintain essential services, and continue to invest in necessary equipment and staffing to protect our community, such as the purchase of a new tanker truck to service the areas of our City that do not have public water.

In the budget for the 2005-2006 fiscal year we intend to purchase an additional fire truck and increase our police force by two officers. We also intend to continue the enhanced hours of full time fire protection during the weekdays and will complete construction on the Standale fire station.

Our City Manager, Fire Chief, and Police Chief are working together to identify ways in which our police and fire departments can work collaboratively to enhance services at the most effective cost. We recently brought our fire dispatch service in house, thereby reducing both cost and response time.

Much of our work relates to budgets this time of year. However, we have a number of other initiatives underway.

First, we worked with the Michigan Municipal League to complete the development of a comprehensive salary system to insure that pay ranges for City employees are appropriate. That is, we wanted to make certain that our pay scales are neither excessive nor below market value. The MML consultants were very impressed with the dedication and commitment to public service of our outstanding team of employees.

Second, on the technology front, we are participating with Grand Rapids in testing free wireless Internet service. Walker City Hall is one of several locations where the system will be tested this summer.

Third, the finance committee is working on a new purchasing policy. We want to be certain that all expenditures are necessary, and that competitive bidding is used whenever possible.

Thank you for your continuing support of our City. On behalf of the entire City Commission, I extend our hope that you have a safe and enjoyable summer. We welcome any suggestions, comments, or thoughts you may have.

Best Regards,

Rob VerHeulen, Mayor

## City Commission:

### CITY HALL

453-6311

### MAYOR

Rob VerHeulen - 791-6860 Office; 453-2201 Home  
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:

Barbara Holt - 784-5327; bholt@ci.walker.mi.us  
Chuck Deschaine - 435-4032; cdeschai@ci.walker.mi.us

### THIRD WARD COMMISSIONERS:

Cynthia Stek - 791-9381; cstek@ci.walker.mi.us  
Steven Versluis - 791-9247; sverslui@ci.walker.mi.us

## City Services:

### CLERK'S OFFICE

Hours: M-F -- 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Sandra A. Wisniewski, CMC  
Phone: 791-6865 -- swisniew@ci.walker.mi.us

### TREASURER'S OFFICE

Dan DeVries, Treasurer  
Phone: 791-6861 -- ddvries@ci.walker.mi.us

### ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Kelly Gibbs, Assessor  
Phone: 791-6862 -- kgibbs@ci.walker.mi.us

### BUILDING/ZONING DEPARTMENT

Jeff Nelson, Building Official  
Phone: 791-6858 -- jnelson@ci.walker.mi.us

### CITY MANAGER

Cathy VanderMeulen  
Phone: 791-6859 -- cvanderm@ci.walker.mi.us

### DISTRICT COURT - 59TH

Hours: M-F -- 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Judge Peter P. Versluis -- Phone: 453-5765

### ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

Scott C. Conners, P.E., City Engineer  
Phone: 791-6792 -- sconners@ci.walker.mi.us

### FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Cindy Mielke, Finance Manager  
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

Julie Blok, Income Tax Director  
Phone: 791-6880 -- jblok@ci.walker.mi.us

### RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Marcy Kneibel, Recreation Director  
Phone: 791-6890 -- mkneibel@ci.walker.mi.us

### PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Frank Wash, Planning Director  
Phone: 791-6787 -- fwash@ci.walker.mi.us

### POLICE DEPARTMENT

Catherine Garcia-Lindstrom, Police Chief  
Phone: 791-6812

### PUBLIC WORKS OFFICE

Mark Koning, DPW Director  
Phone: 791-6854 -- mkoning@ci.walker.mi.us: or  
TCritten@ci.walker.mi.us

## City of Walker Recreation Department

### “ONCE UPON A MATTRESS” DINNER THEATRE TRIP

The Walker Recreation Department is offering a bus trip to the fantastic Drury Lane Dinner Theatre in Chicago. The show is the lighthearted musical comedy “Once Upon a Mattress.” The dinner will be at 4:00 p.m., followed by the show at 5:30 p.m., on December 3, 2005 at Drury Lane. When arriving in Chicago the bus will go to Oakbrook Shopping Center for a few hours of shopping before the dinner show. The bus will leave from Walker City Hall at 4243 Remembrance Road N.W. at 9:00 a.m., loading will begin at 8:45 A.m. The cost for the trip is \$85.00 per person.

Seating is limited and reservations will be taken on a first come first served basis. Deadline for registration is Tuesday, November 1, 2005. To register for the trip, send your name, address, business and home phone numbers, along with your check or money order made payable to:

WALKER RECREATION DEPARTMENT  
4243 REMEMBRANCE ROAD, N.W.  
WALKER, MICHIGAN 49534

### AEROBICS CLASSES

The Walker Recreation Department will be offering cardio combo classes for men and women. The next 10-week session of classes will begin the week of September 12, 2005.

Classes will be held at the Community Building/Fire Station #3, located at 1470 Three Mile Rd., N.W.

Cardio combo, which includes hi/lo, kickboxing, step, toning, and pilates will be offered on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings.

Monday and Wednesday classes will be from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Tuesday and Thursday classes will be from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Cost for a 10-week session once a week is \$27.00, twice a week is \$43.00, three times a week is \$59.00 and four times a week is \$75.00.

Pre-registration is required for the classes. The deadline for registration is Friday, September 2, 2005. To register, send your name, address, business and home phone numbers, choice of class, along with your check or money order payable to:

WALKER RECREATION DEPARTMENT  
4243 REMEMBRANCE ROAD, N.W.  
WALKER, MICHIGAN 49534

### SHOPPING BUS TRIP TO BIRCH RUN OUTLET MALL & BRONNER'S CHRISTMAS STORE

The Walker Recreation Department is offering a bus trip to Birch Run Outlet Mall & Bronner's Christmas Store.

The trip will be on Saturday, October 15, 2005. The bus will leave from Walker City Hall at 9:00 a.m. The cost for the bus trip is \$30.00 per person. This will include donuts and juice to be served on the bus. Lunch and dinner will be on your own.

Seating is limited and reservations will be taken on a first come first served basis. The deadline for registration is September 23, 2005. To register for the trip, send your name, address, business and home phone numbers, along with your check or money order made payable to:

WALKER RECREATION DEPARTMENT  
4243 REMEMBRANCE RD., N.W.  
WALKER, MICHIGAN 49544

### FALL ARTS & CRAFTS SHOW

The Walker Recreation Department will be having its 15th Annual Fall Arts & Crafts show on Saturday, October 29, 2005 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The show will be at Kenowa Hills Intermediate School, located at 4252 Three Mile Road, N.W. Entry fee is \$30.00 per space and \$5.00 additional for each table. Registration deadline is September 30, 2005. If you are interested in participating, please call the Walker Recreation Department at 791-6890 for an application.

### 2005 CO-ED FALL YOUTH SOCCER PROGRAM

The Walker Recreation Department will be offering a Co-Ed Fall Soccer Program for boys and girls 7 through 12 years of age. Cost is \$23.00 per player. Practices will begin the week of September 12 and games will begin on Saturday, September 24. Registration forms will be available at the Recreation Department, located at 4243 Remembrance Rd., N.W. during the following registration dates and times:

Monday, July 11	3:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.
Wednesday, July 13	3:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.
Tuesday, July 19	3:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.

## City of Walker Clerk's Department

The Clerk's Department would like to let you know that due to annual conferences and various training courses, we will, at times be required to close our offices. The education obtained by attending the conferences helps to meet the educational requirements that are necessary to maintain the accreditations received by the Clerk and Deputy Clerk. Both positions are certified to conduct elections and it is of vital importance to remain current with changing elections laws, and to stay informed concerning new ways to provide services to our community.

It is uncommon for both the Clerk and Deputy Clerk to be out of the office. However, if the office is closed and a passport application is needed, please contact your local Post Office. For other services, please check with the Receptionists (in City Hall) to see if they can assist you. You are also welcome to leave a message on voice mail and your call will be returned as soon as possible. Thank you for your cooperation.

## City of Walker Police Department

Summer has finally arrived and we are able to throw the windows open and get outside to enjoy the warm weather. We want to remind residents to drive carefully on our City streets. The most common complaint we hear is traffic related. We will be aggressively enforcing the traffic laws on our City streets this summer. You may see numerous patrol vehicles lined up and making traffic stops. We refer to these as wolf pack enforcement. We station an officer on a street running radar or observing for seatbelts and other violations. The officer is generally very inconspicuous. He/she radios the 'wolf pack' and violators are stopped and ticketed. We started utilizing this method of aggressive traffic enforcement with the "Click It or Ticket" and "You Drink, You Drive, You Lose" campaigns. We have decided to incorporate this aggressive enforcement technique with traffic complaints you bring to our department. It is much more effective than assigning one officer to an area and trying to address violators. If you call with a traffic concern be mindful to be part of the solution and not part of the problem. Many times some of the people caught speeding and ticketed are the same persons that made the original complaint!

Don't forget to keep the volume under control on car stereos. Our ordinance prohibits playing amplified sounds from a vehicle: "in such a manner as to be plainly audible from the vehicle as follows:

1. At a distance of 50 feet from the vehicle...between the hours of 7 a.m. and 10 p.m.
2. At a distance of 25 feet...between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m."

The ordinance applies to all vehicles, including mopeds and bicycles whether parked or moving on a public road, public right of way, private road, or other place open to the general public or generally accessible to motor vehicles, including an area designated for parking of motor vehicles. In other words, please be mindful of the volume of your stereos. You may enjoy your music but others may not.

The other common summer complaint involves barking dogs. Please be respectful of your neighbors and keep your pets quiet. During the summer months in particular people have their house windows open to enjoy the fresh air. This also makes noises more evident. Please be mindful that your pet may need to be brought indoors or in severe cases a bark collar may be helpful to train the animal not to bark incessantly.

## City of Walker Treasury Department

### Property Tax Shift

The 2005 summer property tax bills will be mailed on July 1, 2005 and will be due on September 14, 2005. Property owners will find that the 2005 summer tax bill is noticeably higher than the 2004 summer tax bill. The main reason for this increase is the implementation of Michigan Public Act 357 of 2004, which changes the collection schedule for the County General Operating Property Tax from a winter to a summer collection over a three-year time frame. For this reason, the 2005 summer property tax bill will include one-third of the annual County operating property tax levy. The remaining two-thirds of the annual County operating property tax will be collected on the 2005 winter bill. In 2006, two-thirds of the annual County operating property tax levy will be collected as a summer tax and the remaining one-third will be collected as a winter tax. Finally, in 2007 and each year thereafter, the annual County operating property tax levy will be completely billed as a summer tax. Therefore, the implementation of PA 357 of 2004 will result in an increase to the summer property tax bill and a decrease to the winter property tax bill. This property tax shift is the result of a change by the State of Michigan Legislature to the state law and is not the outcome of action taken by the Kent County Board of Commissioners or the Walker City Commission. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please feel free to contact the Walker Treasurer's Office at (616) 791-6861.

### Summer Property Tax Deferments

Summer property tax deferments are available to senior citizens (62 years of age or older), certain veterans, and handicapped individuals who have an annual household income of less than \$25,000. If deferred, the due date of the summer tax bill is extended to February 14, which is the due date of the winter tax bill. The purpose of the deferment is to allow the taxpayer to file for a Homestead Credit from the State of Michigan and use the refund to help pay for the taxes. Completed deferment forms must be received by the Walker Treasurer's office on or before September 15. Please contact the Walker Treasurer's Office (616-791-6861) for more information and the necessary form.

## Be Stormwater Savvy

One of the most significant, yet unrecognized groups of water contaminants is storm water pollutants. When it rains, storm water runs over yards, streets, roads, highways, parking lots, parks, and playgrounds, carrying with it everything in its path, including debris and pollutants. Eventually, the water will travel to a stream, either over land or via a storm drain. Storm drains are frequently located alongside streets and parking lots. Unlike sanitary sewers that divert water to a treatment plant directly from your home, storm drains lead directly to surrounding lakes and rivers without any type of treatment. All the debris and pollutants that were picked up by storm water runoff, end up in your lakes and streams!

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Program

The Clean Water Act of 1972 set up the NPDES. The NPDES program required communities around the country with urbanized areas to begin tackling the issue of storm water pollution. In recent years, several communities in Kent and Ottawa Counties were required to develop an illicit discharge elimination program (IDEP). The IDEP was required to include an investigation of the waters of the state to identify, and eventually eliminate, illicit discharges and connections to the storm sewer.

### What is an Illicit Discharge or Connection?

An illicit discharge is any discharge to the storm sewer system that is not composed entirely of rain water or groundwater. Examples include dumping of motor vehicle fluids, household hazardous wastes, grass clippings, leaf litter, industrial waste, restaurant wastes, or any other non-storm water waste into a storm water system. An illicit connection is the discharge of pollutants or non-storm water materials into a storm sewer system via a pipe or other direct connection. Sources of illicit connections may include sanitary sewer taps, wash water for laundromats or carwashes, and other similar sources.

### How Do I Spot an Illicit Discharge or Connection?

Look for makeshift pipes or hoses that lead to a storm drain or body of water.

Watch for stains, unusual odors, structural damage to streets or gutters, and abnormal vegetative growth in nearby lakes and streams.

If you see an illicit discharge or connection, REPORT IT to your community. The Illicit Discharge and Connection Ordinance, adopted by your community, gives them legal authority to inspect and sample discharge, as well as enforce sanctions for violations.

\* Text for this article was obtained from the MDOT Storm Water Management Brochure Together...Better Roads, Cleaner Streams.

## Pointers for Pesticide Use.

Correct watering, mowing and fertilizing habits can reduce many pest problems. but if you do choose to treat for insects, it is essential that you know your enemy before you apply pesticides! If possible, hand pick the little buggers off the plants and identify the pest. The important part is to identify and treat only for the pests you have, at their most vulnerable stage. For help identifying the bug that's been bugging you, call the Michigan State University Master Gardener Hotline. A general spraying of insecticide is ineffective, costly and may do more harm than good.

## Fertilizer Tips.

True or False: "More is better" when applying lawn fertilizer.

False! Over-fertilizing is a problem contributing to stormwater pollution in Oakland and Macomb counties. Without realizing it, many landowners are applying herbicides and pesticides when their lawns don't even need them! While applying an appropriate amount of fertilizer is usually okay, it's important to take care when adding chemicals to your lawn so that we can keep our rivers, lakes and wildlife healthy.

Don't assume your plants need fertilizer. Perform a soil test. You'll save money and reduce the chance of over-applying by only replacing the nutrients your soil is actually missing. Michigan State University Extension offers easy-to-use soil nutrient testing boxes, and recommends a soil test every two or three years. To find out more, call the extension office in your area.

Use slow-release fertilizers that provide a slow, steady source of nutrients for plants. This also prevents the big spurt of growth common with synthetic fertilizers. Slow-release fertilizers come in a variety of types: organic, timed-release and coated. You may want to talk to a lawn care professional to find out what's best for your yard.

Avoid "weed-and-feed" mixtures. These contain herbicides to control weed growth and are often applied where they aren't needed. If healthy lawn care practices (correct mowing height and watering) are followed, weed control shouldn't be necessary.

Be sure your mower is set to three inches to help shade out unwanted weeds.

Unless you're maintaining a golf course, you can have a beautiful lawn by fertilizing only two or three times a year:

- Either apply twice a year, in late spring (late April or early May) and fall (September or October)
- Or apply three times a year, in late spring (Memorial Day), early fall (Labor Day) and late fall (Thanksgiving)

\* Text for this article was obtained from the DEQ brochure "A Citizen's Guide to Lawn Fertilizer".

## It's too late to wait.

1 woman dies every minute from heart disease. Every 45 seconds someone has a stroke. Don't let it be you. Start taking steps now to clean up your diet and eat healthier so that you can live life fully and enjoy yourself to the end. There is no reason to wait – you can take charge of your health by eating right. Here are some steps to help that you can start today:

## Eat Right– right now. A heart health guide.

Eat more—carbs??? Unrefined ones that is, like whole grains, and fiber rich veggies like beans. Rich in antioxidants, they do not promote a big spike in blood sugar, but more of a gradual release of energy. This keeps your blood sugar more stable—as well as your appetite. Eating these types of foods also automatically protect you from diabetes, which is a major risk factor for heart diseases.

Stay away from red and yellow. Eat less red meat and less egg yolks. Egg whites are great, and lean meats are fine. Keep red meat limited to one (deck of cards sized) 3 oz. serving weekly and 2 servings weekly for egg yolks.

Be fishy. Oily fish like mackerel and Atlantic salmon and light tuna have the omega 3 fatty acids your heart really loves.

## Dairy daily.

Low fat dairy is the kind you need; it is also a good food to eat if you are looking to lose weight, especially in the belly area. Low fat is key. A healthy diet has less than 20g of saturated fat daily.

Live with Olive. And canola—these are the oils of choice for cooking and baking. They contain heart healthy monounsaturated fats that won't hurt cholesterol levels.

By the way, each of the above recommendations also helps you lose weight!

## FREE

### 14 Day Trial Membership! \*

**We're Proud of Our Facility...**  
and we stand behind it by letting you try the Walker Ice & Fitness Center for 14 days FREE.

**Try Before You Buy.**  
This is the best fitness facility in the area and you can prove it with no obligation.

**No Risk, No Cost, No Excuses.**  
No hidden costs. Nothing to pay.  
Simply bring in this coupon with your workout clothes.



- \* To Qualify You Must:
- Live in the Grand Rapids Area.
- Be at least 21 years of age.
- Show a valid Michigan I.D.
- Not have applied for this offer within a 1 year period.
- Not have previously had a membership with W.I.F.C.
- Limit 2 trial memberships per household

## City of Walker Building Department

The Building and Zoning Department would like to remind residents of the need for proper storage and parking of all major recreational vehicles.

Also, your cooperation in keeping your yard free of debris and maintaining proper grass height would be greatly appreciated. The City of Walker Ordinance No. 94-436 states: "No person shall maintain or allow to be maintained the growth of grasses, weeds, brush, underbrush or other vegetation to a height more than 12 inches upon any lot within the City which is owned, leased, rented or occupied".

Please contact our office if you have any questions at (616) 791-6858.

## City of Walker Planning Commission

### MASTER PLAN UPDATE

The Walker City and Planning Commissions have selected LSL Planning as our master plan consultant. One of the LSL Planning executives, Steve Langworthy, was the project manager during the 1998 Walker Master Plan process.

LSL Planning is a very experienced firm. Their staff includes planners, landscape architects and computer mapping specialists. They are a creative and motivated team of professionals.

Your officials have developed an extensive list of work for LSL Planning to complete. Many of the work items originated from recent public comments and citizen input.

Please watch the City of Walker website for master plan meeting information. Please also watch the Grand Rapids Press Community Edition and The Advance Newspaper for meeting notices.

The master planning process involves a blending of public comments and concerns, a careful analysis of existing and predicted city conditions, education and information and private sector market trends.

The final master plan will act as the business plan for the entire City of Walker. It will contain a great deal of information. Walker officials and citizens will be able to use the updated master plan to guide future land use and public investment decisions.

We are excited to begin this important process. Please attend at least one meeting in your area. We can achieve great things by working together.

# City of Walker Income Tax Department

## Reminder from the Income Tax Department

2004 INDIVIDUAL INCOME TAX RETURNS WERE DUE APRIL 30, 2005

Even if you filed your Federal and/or state of Michigan return electronically, you must mail a paper return to the City of Walker. We are not able to accept e-filed returns, but are working on the technology so that taxpayers will eventually be able to e-file their Walker return.

### New for 2005

Estimated Payment forms were included in the 2004 Resident Forms and Instructions booklet. They will no longer be mailed out separately. You may also go to our web site at [www.ci.walker.mi.us](http://www.ci.walker.mi.us) to download the 2005 W-1040ES forms.

#### Estimated Payments

Tax Year 2004: If you owed more than \$100 with your 2004 return due April 30, 2005 and you did not pay in at least 70% of your current or prior year liability through estimates, credits or withholding, you will be receiving a bill for penalty and interest.

Tax Year 2005: 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 2005 return, you must make quarterly estimated payments. The 2005 Quarterly Estimated payment vouchers with instructions can be found:

- In the 2004 Resident Forms and Instructions booklet
- On our web site at [www.ci.walker.mi.us/incometaxforms](http://www.ci.walker.mi.us/incometaxforms)
- By mail--call us at 616-791-6880

The second quarter estimated payment for 2005 Walker Income Tax is due June 30, 2005.

#### Who must file

Every resident or part-year resident of Walker (this includes renters) who had taxable income in 2004 of \$750 or more must file a return. Married persons may file either a joint return or separate returns. There seems to be quite a bit of confusion, especially among renters, over whether or not they are Walker residents. All Walker addresses have Grand Rapids mailing addresses. Visit the following link on the Walker website to check whether your address is within the city limits of Walker.

Walker street directory: <http://www.ci.walker.mi.us/Services/Assessor/StreetDirectory.html>

Need help? We will be happy to prepare your Walker income tax return free of charge at City Hall. Please call 791-6880 for an appointment. Return preparation hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please bring your completed 2004 Federal return, all W-2 forms and any other city returns that you are required to file.

#### Required attachments

During the 2003 and 2004 filing seasons, a large number of returns that were completed using tax preparation software designed for home use (TurboTax, Tax Cut, etc.) were missing required attachments. Please read the face of the form carefully--frequently the requirement to attach a federal form, schedule or other City form is shown on the return itself and not listed in the instructions. The required attachments may not automatically print.

Please see page two of the Walker resident return for a list of required attachments. Missing attachments are delaying the processing of many 2004 returns. If the missing attachment related to credits or deductions, we have disallowed the credit or deduction and sent a notice of proposed assessment. For example, if you took a credit for tax paid to another City and failed to attach a copy of the other city's return, we have disallowed the credit and sent a notice of proposed assessment. After receiving a notice of proposed assessment, you have 30 days to file a written protest with the income tax administrator. If you do not file a written protest, the assessment will become final 30 days after you receive it. You will not have another opportunity to provide the missing information or to reduce the assessment after this time period has elapsed. Please respond promptly to all correspondence from the Income Tax Department.

#### 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. Call Nancy at 791-6869 or visit the following link on the Walker website to request a New Employer Package.

#### New employer package request:

<http://www.ci.walker.mi.us/Services/IncomeTax/DepartmentOverview.htm>

#### Business Taxes

In addition to filing and paying withholding taxes on employees working in Walker, businesses are also subject to Walker income tax. Sole proprietors that file a Schedule C for Federal income tax purposes must also report this income on their individual Walker returns if the business is located in Walker or has activity within the City limits. Corporations located in or doing business in Walker must file form W-1120 to calculate tax due on the income apportioned to Walker. Partnerships located in or doing business in Walker must file form W-1065 to report the amount of partnership income apportioned to each resident or non-resident owner. Partnerships have the option to pay the Walker income tax on behalf of all owners as well. If you have any questions regarding filing requirements for businesses, please call Julie Blok at 791-6866 or e-mail for more information.

## "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

PRSR STD  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
GRAND RAPIDS, MI  
PERMIT #1

## Walker Library News

### Attention Parents and Kids:

It's not too late to sign up for the Summer Reading Club! We still have a variety of creative and imaginative programs left – from Farm Animals on the Go to the "Library Idol" Talent Show. There are lots of prizes, lots of activities, and lots of fun to be had with your friends at the Walker Library!

Drop by the library to pick up your own summer events calendar today!

For more information, please call us at 647-3975.

## Notice to Residents

The City has been advised of a survey that will be conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics. Kent County has been selected as one of the survey locations. The survey will be used to gather information to assess the health and nutrition status of children and adults and their needs for health care. A sample of 361 people will be asked to participate in the survey.

Department of Health and Human Services personnel will be conducting the survey in Kent County from July 16, 2005 through September 13, 2005. Interviewers will be calling on designated households to obtain demographic information that will be used to identify and select people for the health examination.

The City expects to receive additional information regarding addresses and telephone numbers of the field office and mobile examination center prior to the start of the survey. This information will be made available on the City's website, or by calling City Hall at 453-6311.

## City of Walker Board Appointments

The City of Walker is looking for citizens interested in volunteering their time by serving on various boards and commissions. Most groups meet only once per month in the evening. If you would like to be considered for an appointed position on one of these boards, please stop by the City Clerks office and fill out an application or you may find an application on our website.

## Meeting Dates & Times

### City Commission Meetings:

8:00 p.m. - 2nd and 4th Monday of each month.  
Walker City Hall/Commission Chambers

### Board of Zoning Appeals

7:00 p.m. - 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month to hear appeals on the City's zoning regulations.  
Walker City Hall/Commission Chambers

### Planning Commission

7:00 p.m. - 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month to make recommendations regarding land use planning and zoning concerns.  
Walker City Hall/Commission Chambers

### Recreation Committee

Meets one Wednesday of each month.  
Walker City Hall Conference Room

### Historical Committee

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

### Community Relations / Volunteer Committee

Meets 3rd Thursday of every month to identify individual & community needs. (Veterans, seniors, etc.) Also recognizes and awards special achievements in the community.

### International Relations Committee

7:00 p.m. - 2nd Wednesday of each 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 and traffic related matters.