



Berrien County Road Commission  
P.O. Box 768  
Benton Harbor, MI 490223

## The Berrien County Road Commission

The Berrien County Road Commission is governed by five County Road Commissioners who are appointed to six year terms.

Your current commissioners are:

**Robert Forker, Charles Collins  
Lawrence Merritt, Isadore Dimaggio  
& James Daniel**

Brian Berndt - Engineer-Manager  
Rhonda Hildebrand - Finance Director  
Joseph Margol - Gen. Superintendent  
Kevin Reed - Traffic Services Director

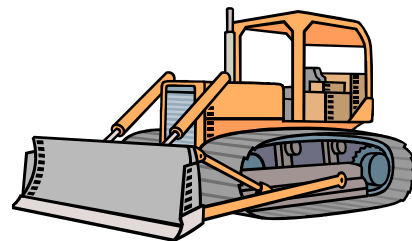
Board meetings are held every other Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. at the Road Commission offices located at 2860 E. Napier Avenue in Benton Harbor. The public is invited.

The Berrien County Road Commission is dedicated to meeting your needs and addressing your concerns. We welcome your calls about road related issues.

(269) 925-1196

or email at [info@bcroad.org](mailto:info@bcroad.org)

Our normal business hours are Monday through Friday,  
7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



### Inside this issue:

<i>Important Safety Tips</i>	1, 2
<i>New Members</i>	2, 3
<i>Danger in the Ditch!</i>	3

## It's Spring Cleanup Time!

Dear Volunteers:

It's Spring now in Berrien County and a good time to get out and do your first road cleanup. The days are getting warmer and longer so you may want to plan your cleanup before your summer activities begin. The grass will be getting long soon and may make trash hard to spot so please plan accordingly. Your efforts as Adopt-A-Road volunteers play a key role in preserving the natural beauty of this area. This program gets you directly involved with your community and demonstrates your

commitment and pride for the area in which you live and work. We hope your efforts will inspire others to become involved and take interest in the preservation of our environment. Your efforts are working! According to recent surveys, Michigan has seen a 30% reduction in litter since the inception of the Adopt-A-Road program in 1990. This is in addition to the 40% reduction due to Michigan's bottle law introduced in 1978. As a spokesman for the Berrien County Road Commission and as a Berrien County resident, I

sincerely appreciate your efforts and want to thank you again for your participation and commitment.

Michael Juengling



hrb060 images.google.com

*Yarrow is a common roadside flower. Its fern-like leaves may help to stop bleeding*

### Special points of interest:

- Plan to do your clean up in the next few months.
- Review Safety Tips.
- Call if bags and vests are needed.
- Call Mike Juengling after cleaning roads to have your trash picked up.
- Call if you no longer wish to participate.

## Important Safety Tips

When you received your original information packets, there was a list of safety tips and guidelines to help your group have a successful cleanup. If you still have this information it would be a good idea to review it with

your group, especially if you have new participants. If you would like another copy of this material, contact me and I will see that you receive a new copy.

Remember to **face on-**

**coming traffic** whenever possible as this will help you anticipate a potential emergency situation. Also, try to park your vehicles out of the way of traffic and be careful not to obstruct the vision of passing motorists

## Important Safety Tips! (Cont'd)



Do NOT handle medical waste!

Bags & Vests are available if needed. Contact Michael now so you'll be ready for your Spring pick up!



Wear your Safety Vest

near intersections and drive-ways. Please car-pool to your destination to limit the number of parked vehicles.

Another problem you may encounter on your cleanup is "road kill". **Please do not handle dead animals.** The Road Commission and other local agencies have personnel to take care of these situations. If you do have concerns over a dead animal or other road concerns, please call us at the Road Commission office during normal business hours.

Also, **avoid any hazardous materials.** Do not pick up discarded syringes, hypodermic needles, or any other medical waste. If you find any of these materials, please contact our office.

Remember to **wear appropriate clothing** during your cleanup. There may be hidden dangers in ditches, brush and with handling debris. Please urge your participants to wear sturdy

footwear (such as boots) and gloves. Cans can be rusty, bottles can be broken and mown brush can be sharp. Also, beware of holes that animals may have dug. You don't want a twisted ankle to end your trash cleanup.

A question we often get concerns the age of participants. While we advise you to keep your minimum age to 16, we have made exceptions down to age 12, providing that there is parental or adult supervision for the children. This does not mean 1 adult for 10 children. We prefer you have 1 adult for every 4 children. This will help to insure safe practices for all involved.

Try to **avoid cleanups in bad weather.** Remember, most accidents occur in bad weather, so there is no reason to expose your members to this increased risk. Also, try to avoid extreme weather conditions such as

intense heat or cold. In hot weather, avoid over exertion and drink plenty of fluids. In cold weather, wear sufficient layers of clothing and protect extremities from direct exposure.

**Do not use headphones** to listen to music! You must be aware of traffic and warnings from other members.

**Wear your safety vests!** Please try to keep track of these vests and save them for your next cleanup. This helps us reduce costs. If you need more vests, please let us know.

**Please stay out of the roadway** and remain on the shoulder area to do your cleanup. Avoid tunnels, bridges and overpasses as these areas are especially dangerous.

Following these simple guidelines will allow you to have a successful and safe cleanup!

## Danger in the Ditch!

Cigarette butts are O.K. Soda cans are not a prob-lem. You shouldn't worry about food wrappers. But don't mess with coffee filters. That's what the Minnesota Department of Transportation is telling people who volunteer to help out with the cleanup of roadside trash. Coffee filters, it turns out, are often used in the illicit production of meth-amphetamines and may remain tainted with deadly chemicals after they're tossed aside.

"With the meth epidemic hitting all of Minnesota, as well as all over the nation, it's something we wanted to create awareness about," says St. Louis County (Duluth) Commissioner Keith Nelson, who ordered some educational brochures. "For every pound of meth produced, there's five or six pounds of waste."

Despite bottle-recycling bills and heavy fines for dumping, roadside litter remains a multimillion-dollar problem in every state. Aside from financial and aesthetic concerns, roadside trash can create environmental damage and poses a safety concern for the state workers, volunteers and inmates who have to walk alongside busy highways to clean it up.

The exponential growth of meth labs poses a particular problem in rural areas. Meth production creates a distinct odor, so its makers prefer remote locations in which to mix their ingredients. In some cases, they use cars as their laboratories, leaving contaminated hulks behind. Nelson and MnDOT are instructing their

crews and volunteers to alert police when they come across meth lab detritus such as ammonia or propane tanks.

Lending an extra set of eyes to law enforcement is becoming a habit for trash pickers. MnDOT spokesman John Bray recalls a case in which a county sheriff wanted Adopt-a-Highway volunteers to search for a tossed murder weapon. "Society's changing," Bray says, "and a lot of stuff is being dumped on the roads nowadays and a lot of things are being dumped nefariously."

Sometimes the law that's being broken pertains to the disposal of garbage itself. Agencies in California, which spends \$29 million a year cleaning up highway litter, have joined forces for regular increased enforcement days during which patrolmen pay extra attention to the matter, issuing \$1,000 fines to litterbugs and truckers hauling unsecured loads.

In South Carolina, illegal landfills are a problem in every county, with owners of sizable properties undercutting legitimate sites by accepting "orphan waste." The Tennessee Department of Transportation is currently expanding a Nashville pilot program to combat similar problems. Tennessee imposed \$234,000 in illegal dumping fines last year, but that hardly made up for the millions the state spent cleaning sites up.

Officials generally know where to look for garbage, but they don't necessarily like what they find. Along the empty stretches of

highways out west, states have a particular problem with truckers and others leaving behind containers of their own body waste. Transportation department workers in Utah wear special clothing and gloves and use large tongs to remove the bottles of urine and plastic bags of excrement they see regularly at a truck brake-test area along Interstate-80. "Anywhere where there's a pull-over spot like that is a bad spot," says Nile Easton of the Utah DOT. "We have about 27 rest stops in Utah, but there's definitely some space between them."

Sorting through the trash is something officials take seriously in Washington State, which is currently engaged in its second statewide sampling of highway litter. The purpose is twofold, says Vicki Colgan, the state's interim litter coordinator. The Department of Ecology wants to know what's being tossed aside, so it can better target litter prevention messages. The state also taxes businesses, such as fast-food chains, that sell products commonly found along the highway, and wants to make sure all such companies are paying their fair share.

Washington is finding lots of cigarettes, beer cans (more east of the Cascades) and car parts. "They actually open the bags and it's individually sorted, each piece," Colgan says, adding with a laugh: "That's why we subcontracted it."

-Alan Greenblatt Governing.com

## Welcome New Members!!

### IN LOVING MEMORY OF VERN, MEL & JOYCE

1 mile of BROWNTOWN ROAD

### REITH RILEY CONSTRUCTION

1 mile of PIPESTONE ROAD

### EDGWATER BEACH CONDOMINIUM ASSOC.

0.7 miles of PAW PAW LAKE ROAD

### IN LOVING MEMORY OF RICK MATTHEWS

0.5 Miles of NILES-BUCHANAN ROAD

### JIM & JENNY WOLFORD & FAMILY

1 mile of THIRD STREET

### MICHIGAN MASON MOTORCYCLE ASSN. CHAPT. 8

1.6 miles of PAW PAW AVENUE

### ST. JOHN & ST. BERNARD (JUST FAITH)

1 mile of GARR ROAD

### CURT & JESSICA SUTTON

1.3 miles of MEAD ROAD

## Welcome New Members!!

### IN LOVING MEMORY OF GORDIE C. NAPIER

0.8 miles of TERRITORIAL ROAD

### IN HONOR OF JASON & MACKENZIE

1 mile of STAFFORD ROAD

### VALLEY VIEW FARMS

1 mile of WAGNER ROAD

### JACK & JUDY DODDS

1 mile of KAISER ROAD