

# BROWN TOWNSHIP

ESTABLISHED 1830

Winter 2025

## What is a Working Fire?

**Provided by David Baird, Fire Chief**

What happens when you dial 911 to report a fire? The obvious answer is that the closest fire station is dispatched and that fire truck will respond. Would you be shocked to learn that a typical reported fire in a home has three fire engines, a ladder truck, a medic unit, and a battalion chief dispatched? These resources come from not only the closest station, but other nearby stations and jurisdictions. In a rural setting like Brown Township, even more resources (tanker trucks) are dispatched to ensure that our firefighters have enough water to fight a fire.

If the home is indeed on fire when the first firefighters arrive, the person in charge of that truck will request "a working fire assignment" over the radio. This is an indicator for our 911 call center to dispatch additional fire equipment and other support agencies like the electric and gas companies. The dispatchers on the other end of the radio aren't blindly calling other resources, but instead using pre-established protocols to make these decisions.

When a "working fire" is declared, it signifies that the fire department has determined the fire is actively threatening life, property, or both. This term is used to indicate that the fire is not under control, and requires a more intense response. The declaration of a working fire also means that emergency responders are working in conditions where they must prioritize both extinguishing the flames and ensuring the safety of any potential victims. These

types of fires can often be large or complex, involving multiple structures or dangerous materials.

The announcement of a working fire is crucial for coordinating efforts among the various emergency responders. The incident commander, most often a battalion chief, assumes this role. Their primary responsibility is to direct the on scene and in coming units of specific tactics to contain the situation, all while ensuring that operations are being conducted safely. At a typical house fire in Norwich or Brown Township, you can expect to see 30-40 firefighters working or getting prepared to go to work. If it is a commercial fire, that number could easily double.

On October 18, 2024, at 10:38 p.m., our crews were dispatched to a reported house fire on Morris Road. The first fire truck arrived in under 5 minutes from station 82, followed by fire trucks from station 81 in the Franklin County Fair-

grounds, crews from Prairie Township, the City of Columbus, Pleasant Valley Joint Fire District, and the Jefferson Township Fire Department. In total there were 14 fire department vehicles, including investigators, and 38 firefighters on the scene within 12 minutes of the initial 911 call.

Rest assured, should you have a fire or emergency in your home or business, the Norwich Township Fire Department is prepared to respond. With the addition of Station 84 on Alton & Darby Creek Road, the residents of Brown Township will have another resource immediately available to respond at a moment's notice making the community much safer.

***Brown Township has a long standing agreement with neighboring Norwich Township to provide Fire and EMS services to it's residents.***



*Multiple jurisdictions responding to a house fire on Morris Rd.*

# Recycling in Brown Township

## Provided by SWCO

Did you know that more than 80% of what we recycle goes on to have new life in a new product right here in Ohio? It's true. We're fortunate to be in a state with a strong circular recycling economy that supports almost 400 recycling-reliant businesses employing more than 5,000 of our Ohio neighbors.

Virtually all the residential recycling collected in Franklin County is processed at the new, \$100 million Rumpke Recycling facility in Columbus. It's the largest in North America and captures 99% of the recyclables that come into the facility. This state-of-the-art facility employs 60 people to process up to 250,000 tons of recycling each year from nearly 50 Ohio counties. You can even sign up to take a tour of the new facility and see it for yourself.

Rumpke made that investment in central Ohio because our region is committed to sustainability, and our recycling rate is higher than the national average

and rising. Rumpke is even expanding the list of items that can be recycled at its new facility, including clear clamshell containers like the ones that berries or pastries might come in.

Many Franklin County residents have curbside recycling and SWACO has more than 50 free drop-off recycling sites for those who don't. SWACO also opened a Recycling Convenience Center in 2023 that accepts many hard-to-recycle items such as electronics, batteries, appliances, and Styrofoam. In addition, SWACO operates a Household Hazardous Waste drop-off site where residents can take items such as fuel, paint, pool and lawn chemicals for recycling and safe disposal.

The art and business of recycling is alive and growing in central Ohio. If you're interested in learning more about how you can help keep valuable materials out of the landfill, or find a SWACO recycling drop-off site near you, visit [RecycleRight.org](https://www.recycleRight.org)

## Drop-Off Recycling Program:

<https://www.swaco.org/299/Recycling-Drop-Off-Program>

## Recycling Convenience Center:

<https://www.swaco.org/459/Recycling-Convenience-Center>

## Household Hazardous Waste Facility

<https://www.swaco.org/195/Household-Hazardous-Waste>

## Township Bulk Recycling

As many might know, a free drop-off recycling site is located at Station 82, 2491 Walker Road.

Please make sure your cardboard boxes are torn down to make room for more recycling. And please do not leave any recycling outside of the bins.

Additionally, no dumping of trash, or construction debris, is allowed anywhere on the premises. Violators will be fined.

# County & Township crews clear snow from township roads

## It's that time of year again...

Both Franklin County and Brown Township crews are responsible for clearing snow from roads in unincorporated Brown Township.

County roads are treated by Franklin County crews and township roads are handled by Brown Township personnel. Streets and roads in Brown Township within the City of Hilliard are handled by Hilliard crews.

The two-person Brown Township crew typically works 12-hour shifts to clear snow from township roads:

|                  |              |
|------------------|--------------|
| Carter           | Langton      |
| Cole             | Morris       |
| Creek            | Olde Roberts |
| Darby Knolls     | Olde Walker  |
| Golfview         | Spicewood    |
| Hardwood         | Widener      |
| Heritage Estates | Woodsend     |
| Jermain Lane     |              |

Both the county and the township use plows, road salt, and anti-icing chemicals to keep the roads safe for motorists.

In an effort to combat drifting, Franklin County also erects snow fencing in

areas that typically experience high winds. The Franklin County Engineer conducts an annual program in agricultural areas to encourage farmers to leave partial cornstalks to help to prevent snowdrifts.



**Don't pass  
the snow plow!**

*It is extremely dangerous to pass a snow plow  
and you should always maintain a safe  
distance behind them.*

Snow Emergency Levels are defined by the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness and are as follows:

**Level 1:** Roads are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Roads may also be icy. Motorists are urged to drive very cautiously.

**Level 2:** Roadways are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Roads may also be very icy. Only those who feel it is necessary to drive should be out on the roads. Contact your employer to see if you should report to work. Motorists should use extreme caution.

**Level 3:** All roadways are closed to non-emergency personnel. No one should be driving during these conditions unless it is absolutely necessary to travel or a personal emergency exists. All employees should contact their employer to see if they should report to work. Those traveling on the roads may subject themselves to arrest.

The general public is also alerted to snow emergencies via: local broadcast stations, reverse 911 calls, mass text messaging services, public address systems, and lighted signals.

Or, you can contact the Franklin County Sheriff's office at 614-525-3333 and ask about the current snow emergency level.

# Explosion Destroys Brown Township Home

## The Kents share their story to raise awareness of using propane.

Morris Road residents Becky and Jason Kent are well aware they are fortunate to be alive and safe following a terrifying propane explosion and fire at their home in October.

Now living in rental housing outside Brown Township, the Kents are navigating their way through an investigation of the incident, insurance issues, and decisions about the future.

In retrospect, they realize several oddities occurred in the days leading up to the incident. A couple of days before, while Jason worked at home, their propane supplier arrived to fill the tank – odd because it had recently been filled and is typically filled only about every three months. A few hours later the supplier arrived again, filled the tank, and left an invoice in the door. Jason collected the invoice, checked the gauge and found it 100% full. He considered the visit odd but did not give it further thought.

The following day, upon arriving home, Becky noticed a faint organic smell but thought little of it. The next morning, the water in the shower was very hot, not uncommon in the winter. That same evening when arriving home, Becky noticed the odd smell again. This time they checked the gas range which was operating normally.

Unbeknownst to Becky and Jason, the propane tank had been filled far



*Sunroom doors at the rear of the Kent house.*

above the optimum level. A propane tank should be filled only to 80% of its capacity to allow space for the propane to expand as temperatures fluctuate. This is known as the 80% fill rule. Filling a tank beyond 80% can lead to excessive pressure build-up within the tank, potentially causing damage or leaks. And a leak is exactly what happened, leading to 150 gallons of propane seeping through the ground and into the basement.

On the night of the incident, Becky was upstairs taking a bath. The bath water was, at first, very hot, then ran out. Becky called down and asked Jason to check the water heater pilot light. He went to the basement and relit it, not realizing that the propane had pooled there. He was on his way up to the second floor to report that

he had relit the pilot light when the explosion occurred, knocking him to his knees and blowing double doors off their hinges toward Becky in the bathroom. Both were, miraculously, unhurt.

They ran out of the house and called 911.

Becky reports that the explosion sounded like an airplane hitting the house. The furnace and fan was running so the fire spread rapidly through the house. Three doors in the sunroom blew out eight feet from the house, possibly saving the entire structure. The damage is extensive and will require months of repair. The Kents have decided that their home will no longer be fueled in any way with propane.

Becky is very grateful for the Norwich Township Fire Department's immediate response and professionalism. Four other fire departments also responded to the incident.

Becky wants other propane users to be aware of the 80% fill rule and to be sure that their tanks are never filled beyond that level. It could be a matter of life and death.

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***Becky was interviewed by Beth Clark, former executive assistant to the Board of Trustees of Brown Township.***

## Thanking our Firefighters at Christmas



*To show their appreciation to the Norwich Township Fire Department for its dedicated service, several dozen Brown Township community members baked Christmas cookies and distributed cookie boxes for each of the 88 firefighters. (R to L: Station 81, Station 82, Station 83)*



Brown Township  
2491 Walker Road  
Hilliard, OH 43026

### Brown Township Administration Office

2491 Walker Road, Hilliard, Ohio 43026  
(614) 876-2133

#### Website

[www.BrownTwp.org](http://www.BrownTwp.org)

#### Fiscal Officer

Becky Kent • (614) 446-2359

#### Trustees

Mr. Gary Dever • (614) 876-4768

Mrs. Pamela Sayre • (614) 582-0191

Mr. Joseph Martin • (614) 309-8879

#### Norwich Fire Department

Dave Baird, Chief • (614) 876-7694

#### Franklin County Sheriff's Department

Emergency • 911

Non-Emergency • (614) 525-3333

Public meetings are held the third  
Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m.  
at 2491 Walker Rd., Hilliard, Ohio



L-R: Trustees Pam Sayre,  
Gary Dever and Joe Martin  
Seated: Fiscal Officer Becky Kent

### Medication Disposal

Dispose of unused medication in the red  
disposal station inside main entrance of the  
Joint Safety Services Building located at 5181  
Northwest Parkway, which is next to the  
Franklin County Fairgrounds.

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# PUBLIC SAFETY SUMMARY

Each issue of the Brown Township newsletter  
contains a quarterly wrap-up of public safety  
reports and calls in Brown Township.

### Norwich Township Fire Department

Calls to addresses in both incorporated and  
unincorporated portions of Brown Township.

#### Fire Calls

#### EMS Calls

Incorp Unincorp Incorp Unincorp

| SEP<br>2024 | 4 | 6  | 1 | 15 |
|-------------|---|----|---|----|
| OCT<br>2024 | 2 | 13 | 3 | 24 |
| NOV<br>2024 | 2 | 4  | 6 | 19 |

### Franklin County Sheriff

Calls to addresses in Brown Township:

9/2 - Discharge of firearm at or near Widen-  
er Rd.

9/9 - Shots fired at a known location on  
Widener Rd.

10/7 - Financial property and ODL taken  
from an address on Morris Rd.

10/7 - Financial property and currency taken  
from an address on Morris Rd.

10/13 - Assault, Disorderly Conduct and  
Menacing at an address on Amity Rd.

10/13 - (reported 10/21) Assault at an ad-  
dress on Amity Rd.

10/26 - Breaking and Entering and Grand  
Theft of a motor vehicle at an address on  
Amity Rd.

10/26 - Property damaged at an address on  
Jones Rd.

10/28 - Grand Theft of a motor vehicle on  
Hayden Run Rd.

11/2 - Theft at an address on Walker Rd.

11/5 - Breaking & Entering and Grand Theft  
of 2 motor vehicles at an address on Cole Rd.

11/8 - Misdemeanor Theft at an address on  
Walker Rd.

11/ 11 - Misdemeanor Harassment occurred  
at an address on Amity Rd.

### Hilliard Division of Police

Calls to Brown Township addresses within  
the City of Hilliard.

10/26 - Dispatched to a noise disturbance at  
an address on Davis Rd. in Brown Twp.

11/16 - Dispatched to a noise disturbance at  
an address on Davis Rd. in Brown Twp.