

Village of Orion  
1202 4th Street  
P.O. Box 69  
Orion, IL 61273-0069

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# The Nosy Neighbor

## Tough Times for Recycling

On November 18th, village board members learned from Paul Jaquet, owner of Eagle Enterprises Recycling, Inc., that the recycling industry is going through a crisis. The village contracts Mr. Jaquet's business to conduct curbside recycling in Orion.

Jaquet told board members 70% of the United States' recycling waste had been received by China until the country realized they were accepting more waste than it could handle. The Chinese market dried up in the second half of 2017.

Jaquet also pointed out Illinois's new minimum wage law, higher fuel taxes, higher license fees, and increased competition for CDL drivers have caused his business to lose money. He asked the village board to consider opening its current contract with Eagle Enterprises to allow for a per household increase of 60 cents per month.

Jaquet said his request for a 60 cent increase will allow his business to break even. He and others in the recycling business hoped for an improved market this fall but it did not materialize.

The village board recognized the difficulties of the recycling market and the burden of Illinois's increased fees and taxes. Board members unanimously approved a rate of \$4.48 per household per month beginning with the December utility billing. It will replace the existing rate of \$3.88.

This year, a monthly average of 22,755 lbs. of glass, aluminum, paper, plastic, tin, and other materials were collected from Orion residents for recycling.

## Merry Christmas To All



### Thank You

#### Cops & Kids Donors!

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Main Street Orion Insert

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## IS SOLAR ENERGY THE ANSWER?

The solar array proposed will cost \$330,480.

Options are to pay cash, borrow funds, or enter a power purchase agreement allowing Eagle Point Solar to own the array and reap a portion of the benefits.

In an attempt to reduce electric costs at the sewer plant, Sewer Superintendent Chris Lundburg suggested investigating solar energy. Of the two solar companies contacted, the board chose to negotiate with Eagle Point Solar.

The board can purchase a solar array or enter into a power purchase agreement, whereby Eagle Point Solar would pay for and install the array and reap some of the profit. Incentives are offered by the state of Illinois but it is rate-payer money, not taxpayer money. Each person who pays an electric utility bill in Illinois will find an extra fee on their bill, which is used to fund the solar incentive.

Investigation is ongoing in order to establish accurate cost savings that could result by switching to solar energy.

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*If using the power purchase arrangement, Orion would be responsible for site preparation and about \$21,000 in application, commission, and other fees.*

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## GET READY! HERE IT COMES—2020 CENSUS

### **March 12-20**

An invitation to respond online

### **March 16-24**

A reminder letter

**If you haven't responded yet:**

### **March 26-April 3**

A reminder postcard

### **April 8-16**

A reminder letter and paper questionnaire

### **April 20-27**

A final reminder postcard before follow up in person

What to expect from the 2020 Census process:

When it's time to respond, most households will receive an invitation in the mail. Every household will have the option of responding online, by mail, or by phone. Depending on how likely your area is to respond online, you'll receive either an invitation encouraging you to respond online or an invitation along with a paper questionnaire.

2020 Census will work with the U.S. Postal Service to stagger the delivery of these invitations over several days. This way, the number of users responding online can be spread out and the Census Bureau will be better able to serve those who need help over the phone.

If you miss the initial mailing, reminders will be sent and you'll eventually receive a paper questionnaire. All households that don't respond will be followed up in person.

Remember, Census Bureau employees cannot share information with anyone else, including law enforcement—not the FBI, ICE, or even local police.

## MEETING MOVED TO LIBRARY AFTER WATER LEAK

Water leaking from a copper pipe in the basement of the village hall caused the location of the November 18th board meeting to be changed to Western District Library.

Water soaked into ceiling tiles in the basement and paper records stored in the area. Paper records were arranged around the meeting room for drying, the only space available in the village hall. Heat and fans were used to hasten drying, but the process took several days, so the village board meeting was moved to the library, the process for the food pantry's Thanksgiving give-away was slightly altered, and a group using the building every Tuesday evening had to cancel.

For lack of space, records will be boxed and stored around the perimeter of the meeting room, avoiding the area where previously stored.

The village board has been investigating the purchase of the building at 1000 4th Street, formerly Peterson Frame & Alignment. The clerk along with building and grounds committee chair, Bob Mitton, are concerned about lack of space, security, and proper records storage. The water leak in the basement of the village hall drove the point home that records should be stored away from a water source, and that is not possible with the current set up at village hall.

Back in May, when considering whether the Peterson building would fit the village's needs, mayor Jim Cooper deemed it a cornerstone of the downtown community.

The village board hired Klingner & Assoc. to inspect the Peterson building. Once the inspection was complete and the project deemed feasible, Klingner performed an asbestos inspection. During the November 18th meeting held at the library, the board agreed to move forward with an appraisal of the building.

Tom Peterson retired as owner and operator of Peterson Frame & Alignment and small portions of his building have since been rented by a mechanic and a potter.

Previously housed in the basement of the old State Bank of Orion building, since demolished, the village hall moved to its existing location in 1982. The building was purchased from the Orion Christian Church at a price of \$50,000.

Will Orion buy a building and move its village hall?



The village hall is used by the clerk and treasurer as well as providing offices for the mayor and police department.

The building inspector and food pantry share an office, and the water superintendent has a desk in a small records retention office.

Records storage in the basement shrunk, overtaken by food pantry needs. The basement is also used for village board meetings.

Other organizations use the board room on a weekly or monthly basis for their meetings.

*May all the  
magic of Christmas  
conspire to gladden your heart.*



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