



BONFIELD TOWNSHIP

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Council Passes New Bylaw Managing the Risks of Living with Beavers.

Most municipalities have had to deal with a beaver dam on private property breaking and the rushing water damaging Township infrastructure as well as private property. The Township of Bonfield has taken a pro-active approach by adopting the Management of Beavers and Beaver Dam Bylaw (2023-26) in the spring of 2023 to manage beavers on private property to protect municipal property as well as residential property.

The issue with beaver dams is becoming more relevant as we are seeing an increase in the number of dams reported and located by Township staff. When a dam is located on township property, we will address them. Patrols for the known location of these dams is done to ensure that there are no blockages in our drainage systems and that the trapper is notified of locations where beavers are active. On private property the Township is unable to predict or mitigate active beavers. Staff have reviewed other municipal by-laws in relation to beaver dams and have prepared a by-law to manage beaver dams throughout the municipality.

The by-law addresses access to private property to control the beaver population and provides the private property owner a set of tools so they can manage beaver dams themselves, including resources and contacts for trappers. A landowner also has the responsibility of managing risk so there is no flooding on adjacent properties or onto municipal infrastructure from unmanaged beaver dams on their own property. Once the Township is aware of a dam that requires attention the landowner will receive a letter informing them of the bylaw, tools and resources and they shall be held liable for any damages caused to municipal property or harm caused to the public because of the beaver dam being suddenly breached or washed out.

If a landowner has an issue with beaver control and wishes to use the by-law to their benefit, please contact the Public Works Manager. We can all work together to prevent damages caused by beavers. The by-law can be found at [BY-LAW NUMBER 2023-26 .pdf \(bonfieldtownship.com\)](#). While coexisting and managing beavers is challenging, it is possible. We thank everyone for cooperating to keep our community safe.

Small Community, Big Heart

