



CITY of BELDING

live. grow. naturally.

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Belding, MI

120 S. Pleasant St.
Belding, MI 48809
Phone: 616-794-1900, Ext. 210
Fax: 616-794-0091

City Hall Administrative Office Hours:
Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.



LOCAL POSTAL CUSTOMER
BELDING, MI 48809

HARVEST/HOLIDAY TRIVIA! SEE ANSWERS ON PAGE 5.

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Line Dancing Lessons \$10 per class.
Every Monday and Thursday
5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Happening NOW through October 30th
at the Belrockton, 108 Hanover Street.
Wear shoes that easily slide on the floor such as cowboy
boots, dress shoes, etc.
Contact the City Clerk at 616-794-1900, extension 210 or
j.ortego@ci.belding.mi.us for more information.
Additional classes may be offered based on interest.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- October 6: B Foundation Glow Walk/Run
- October 31: Trick-or-Treat Hours 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- October 31: Halloween Open House 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
at the Fire Station
- November 5: Belding Museum & Silk City
Quilters Annual Quilt Show
- November 27: Friends of the Library
Candlelight Reception
- December 2: Home for the Holidays



**11. Stuffing or dressing—
is there a difference?**

BOARD/COMMISSION APPLICANTS SOUGHT

Serving on one or more of the City of Belding's boards and/or commissions is a great way to actively shape the future of our community! Recommendations for Appointment are made by the respective board/commission to the City Council, with City Council making the *formal* appointment. A description of the focus of each board/commission is available on the city website, www.belding.mi.us or you may contact the City Clerk. Please note that some boards/commissions may strongly suggest and/or require training and/or certification, which is offered to you at no cost upon your appointment. It is not necessary for there to be a vacancy to apply as applications will be kept on file for one (1) year from the date of filing and are considered for appointment as positions become available. An application is available on the city website – www.belding.mi.us, or at City Hall – 120 S. Pleasant Street, during regular business hours. Please contact Janae Ortego at 616-794-1900, ext. 210, or by emailing j.ortego@ci.belding.mi.us for additional information. Please submit applications to the City Clerk.

Board/Commission	Vacancies	Term	Meeting Date/Time	Residency Required
Building Authority	1	3 years	Meets as needed	Yes
DDA—Downtown Development Authority	4	4 years	Meets quarterly on the first Wednesday in February, May, August & November at 4:15 p.m.	Must reside or work in the DDA District
Planning Commission	1	3 years	Meets monthly on the fourth Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.	Yes
*ZBA—Zoning Board of Appeals	1	3 years	Meets as needed	Yes

* In addition to a regular appointment, alternate positions are sought for the ZBA. An alternate member serves on the Zoning Board of Appeals in instances where an appointed member may have a conflict of interest.

Belding Bugle

October–December 2023 Edition

The City of Belding wishes all of our residents a safe, healthy and happy Holiday Season!

MAYOR

A Fresh Start For Belding Citizens and City Staff

Government buildings should be accessible to all American citizens. Local government buildings are no exception; in fact, you are more likely to utilize the services of your local city or township hall than you are to use a County, State or Federal government building. Belding City Hall is no exception.

Over the past several months, Belding City Officials have conducted independent studies and have had multiple conversations regarding City Hall's lack of accessibility and simple, basic functionality. The independent studies came back with a multi-million-dollar price tag and a timeline of a decade or more to correct the obsolescence and inefficiencies in and around City Hall. An elevator alone is quoted at \$550,000 - \$600,000 and all of City Hall would still not be accessible to our residents!

City Officials chose to explore other cost-effective options.

At the City Council Meeting on Tuesday, September 19th, City Council members announced that they have come to an agreement with the owners of 115 and 117 East Main Street, to purchase the former Belco building and parking lot for \$300,000. The building is fully accessible, includes an elevator and ample room for growth, while being a safe and secure facility.

We are very excited that in the very near future we will have a City Hall building that will be safe and fully accessible to everyone!

CITY MANAGER

Fall Leaf Collection Program

The Fall Leaf Collection Program will begin in mid- to late October and as soon as most leaves have fallen. Leaf collection will cease in mid to late November.

The Start and Stop dates for leaf collection can vary significantly due to weather conditions. Watch Facebook and the electronic sign outside of City Hall for updates.

Residents are asked to rake their leaves to the curb line but not into the street. Leaves should be loose (not bagged) and free of any debris such as sticks, branches, vegetation, sand, soil or gravel.

Leaves should be placed at the curb as early as possible so they will not be missed.

Leaves that are placed in the wrong location, or are mixed with debris or put out past the collection end date will not be picked up. In these cases, the property owners will become responsible for removal at their own expense.

Improved Service

This year, the city will be collecting leaves using a leaf vacuum as opposed to a loader, which should speed up the process.

Work crews will make one complete pass through town beginning in the older parts of town where large and mature trees are located. This is primarily the center of town between M-44 and the Flat River.

A second pass through town is planned for later in November but is not guaranteed if inclement weather becomes a factor. Again, putting your leaves out as early as possible is critical and will help ensure that your leaves are removed.

HARVEST/HOLIDAY TRIVIA! SEE ANSWERS ON PAGE 5.

OFFICE HOURS AND SERVICES

City Hall Administrative offices are open Monday through Thursday (excluding holidays/observed holidays) from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. offering our citizens the unique opportunity to conduct business face-to-face before or after work! In most instances, calls are answered by one of our dedicated staff, not by an automated service where it is near impossible to ever get to speak with a live person. Payments can be made online, with the credit card vendor assessing a nominal fee. Our website and Facebook page provide a vast array of information, answering most of your questions—or you can always email us. We are proud to be a business that continues to offer a mix of old-fashioned personal service along with modern-day technology to our residents!



CITY HALL HOLIDAY CLOSINGS



1. The most popular Halloween costume is:
A. Pumpkin
B. Spiderman
C. Witch

November 23: Thanksgiving Day
November 27: Day After Thanksgiving (observed)
December 21: Christmas Eve (observed)
December 25: Christmas Day
December 28: New Year's Eve (observed)

2. The first Christmas tree to be lit by electric lights was in 1882.
The lights were:
A. White
B. Colored





POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Belding Police Department would like to remind you that school has started. It is very important for drivers to watch out for our students walking to and from school. They may dart into the street at any time or be walking in the street where there are no sidewalks available.

Drivers need to observe the school bus flashing lights. If the red lights are flashing you must **STOP**.

If you are a parent or guardian picking your child up from school or after school activity, please be mindful not to use or park in emergency fire lanes.

Take some time to check the security of your home beginning with the locks on doors and windows. Trim bushes and shrubbery and place lights on timers. If you are going to be gone for an extended period of time, please contact the police department and request that your property be placed on the vacation property inspection list during your absence. Forms are available on the City website.

While you are away it is recommended that a trusted neighbor, friend or family member also check the interior of your residence. You should stop mail delivery and have grass mowed or sidewalks / driveways shoveled if we receive snow.

As a reminder, the yearly **NO PARKING 2:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.** will be enforced starting November 1, 2023 through March 31, 2024.

Many of us do not want to think about it but winter weather may start to appear as soon as October. Now is the time to start thinking about winter driving. Make sure that your vehicle is ready for inclement weather conditions. Check your tires for proper tread depth and air level, check all fluid levels and the brakes.

Make sure that the engine coolant is rated for below freezing temperatures and fresh enough to prevent rust. Give yourself extra time and drive more slowly when it is foggy, raining or snowing and conditions are hazardous. Increase your distance from the vehicle in front of you; stopping distances increase in inclement weather.

Always drive with your lights on so that you may be more visible to others.

Other safe travel recommendations:

-Keep an emergency kit in your car that includes a shovel, ice scraper, flashlight, jumper cables and flares or reflective triangles.

-Kitty litter or sand can be used for traction if you get stuck.

-Keep blankets and warm weather clothing in your vehicle along with water and non-perishable food.

-Keep a small toolkit that has a wrench, pliers and screwdrivers in your vehicle.

-Keep your gas tank full and do not let it get below a half tank. This will keep condensation to a minimum help to prevent gas lines from freezing.

CODE ENFORCEMENT/ANIMAL CONTROL

Property owners and residents are responsible for the maintenance of their property and the adjoining right of way. Please take the time to trim along the edge of the roadway, near sidewalks, around sign posts and fire hydrants.

Sidewalks need to have the grass trimmed that grows over them. This process will define the edge of the sidewalk for walkers as well as promote drainage and maintain the integrity of the concrete.

Brush may be placed at the curb after the 18th of the month and will be picked up the last full week of the month. Remember that once your brush has been picked up there will not be another pickup. The last pickup is in October.

Yard waste must be placed in paper bags and at the curb **NO EARLIER** than 6:00 p.m. Sunday for Monday pickup.

Loose Leaf pickup will begin in Mid- October. Make sure that the leaves are raked to the curb for pickup. If you wait until spring they will have to be bagged. **THERE IS NO LOOSE-LEAF PICKUP IN THE SPRING!!**

**3. Which holiday shopping day has a higher sales profit?
A. Black Friday B. Cyber Monday**

SOLID WASTE:

Sec. 66-52. - Same—Collection conditions.

Solid waste may be placed in receptacles which have a capacity not exceeding 35 gallons, having handles of adequate strength for lifting, and having a tight fitting lid capable of preventing entrance into the container by vectors. The mouth of the container shall have a diameter greater than or equal to that of the base.

Solid waste may be placed in plastic sacks designed to store refuse with sufficient wall strength to maintain physical integrity when lifted from the top. The total weight of each bag and its contents shall not exceed 35 pounds.

All solid waste containers shall be placed curbside no later than 6:00 a.m. of the day regularly scheduled for collection, but no earlier than 24 hours prior to scheduled. Once the trash is collected the can must be taken back to the house or garage and cannot remain at the curb. If everyone does their part it will make Belding a safer place to live, work and play.

4. What is the is the all-time most popular Christmas/holiday song in the United States?



FIRE DEPARTMENT

Clarifications regarding a Bon Fire Pit.

It is a City ordinance that you have a permit for a bon fire within the city limits. It is against the city ordinance to burn anything except firewood in a bon fire pit. You cannot burn leaves or brush in a pit. Call the Fire Dept. at 794-1900 x212 with any questions you may have.

Leaves can be bagged and placed at the curb for pick up. Brush can also be placed at the curb for pick up. See the Cities website for dates and times for pick up service.

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors

October is Fire Awareness Month. October is also the time to change your detector batteries, if they have them. If you have an alarm from one of your detectors, you can call the Fire Dept. for assistance.

With colder weather will come the need for heating sources for your residence. Please use proper methods for heating your residence. Non approved methods can quickly cause unnecessary danger and even death. Please call if you have any questions 616-794-1900 x212.

Have a great Fall! Hope to see you on Halloween at the Fire department. We will have popcorn and drinks as usual and the police will be checking candy again.

**5. True or False:
Australians serve kangaroo
versus turkey for Thanksgiving dinner.**

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Payment for taxes **MUST** be on a separate check or money order from water/sewer payments as they are deposited into different banks. Payment will be returned to be separated if they are combined on one payment.



You can make payments for taxes or water/sewer bills with cash, checks, or money order at the City Hall office during business hours, via the drop box outside city hall or the USPS mail. *Payments are applied the day they are received in office. We cannot accept postmark or check dates as date of payment.*

You can also pay online by visiting the city's website at https://belding.mi.us/bill_pay.php. There are separate links for Taxes and Utilities (which refers to the water/sewer billing). If you have any questions regarding the payment website, do not hesitate to contact us at 794-1900 ext. 217 and we will be happy to help. If you choose to pay with debit or credit card, whether in office or online through the City of Belding's website, there is a 3% service fee charged by the card processing company.



TAXES:

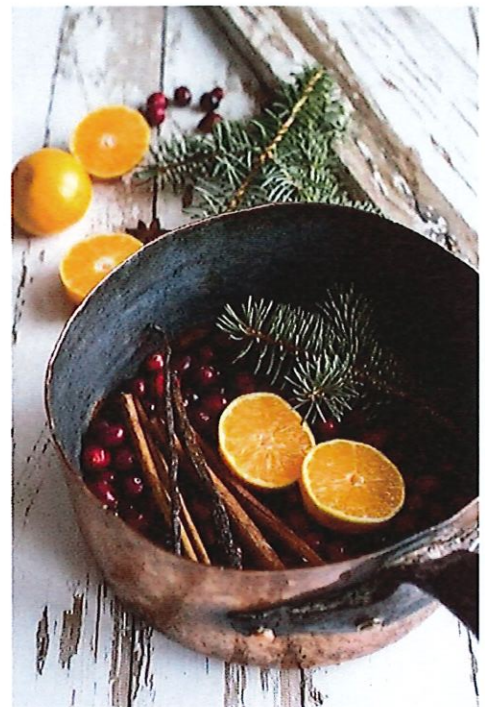
Summer 2023 taxes were due by 8/15/2023; the 3% late fee has been assessed to any unpaid taxes. Please contact the treasurer at 616-794-1900 ext. 203 to receive the new total balance due before making out a check or purchasing a money order for this payment. Winter 2023 taxes will be mailed by December 1, 2023 and are due IN OFFICE BY February 14, 2024 without an additional 3% late fee. This bill will only reflect the winter totals, and will not include any balance for the summer taxes.

Please avoid "rounding up" when making out a check or money order for your property taxes. Tax payments must NOT exceed the total amount due for taxes. When paying the full amount, please write checks for the EXACT amount due.

WATER/SEWER:

Be sure to unhook your garden hose from your house before the winter weather sets in. This will help ensure the water is not accidentally left on to the hose, which can cause it to freeze and break. This can result in the water running/leaking from the spigot without you noticing right away.

October water/sewer bills are mailed at the end of September. If you do not receive your bill by the end of the first week of October, feel free to contact the office at 616-794-1900 ext. 217 to receive the total amount owing. The sooner you call to find out the total, the more time you have to prepare. Payment in full is due in office BY October 30th to avoid the 10% late fee.



6. True or False:
Tootsie rolls are considered to be one of the top 10 Halloween candy all-time favorites.

7. Yes or No:
Halloween was paused due to sugar rationing during World War II.

QUARTERLY BILLING CYCLE DATES AND MONTH BILLED:

January 1st Bill: (September 1 through November 30 cycle dates)

Due by January 30th

April 1st Bill: (January 1 through February 28/29 cycle dates)

Due by April 30th

July 1st Bill: (March 1 through May 31 cycle dates)

Due by July 30th

October 1st Bill: (June 1 through August 31 cycle dates)

Due by 10/30

Payment can be made between the 1st and 30th of the above months, but must be received in office BY the 30th to avoid late fees.

If unpaid by the 30th of the billed month, a ten percent (10%) late penalty on the unpaid balance is added to the bill. If the bill continues to be unpaid a "shut-off notice" is issued, and a fifteen (15) day grace period is instituted. If unpaid by the 16th day, a \$75.00 shut-off listing charge is added to the bill and the water service discontinued. Services so discontinued shall not be restored until payment is made in full, including penalties and late fees. Partial payment does not cancel the shut-off action (Section 86-291b).

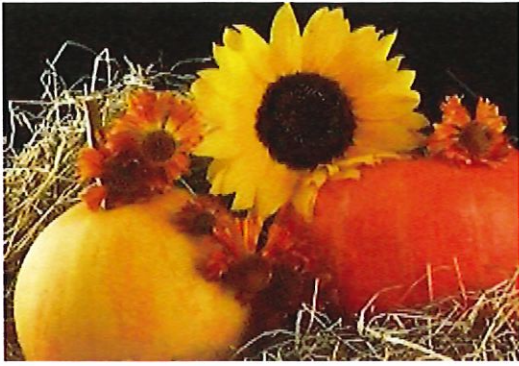
Did you know that you do not have to wait until you receive your bill to make payment to your water/sewer account? Several residents take advantage of sending in smaller payments bi-weekly or monthly PRIOR to when the bills are mailed to build a credit on their account. A total of any payments made prior to the bills being printed will appear as a credit on the bill, leaving a smaller balance to be paid at that time.



FOR WATER OR SEWER EMERGENCIES:

Monday-Thursday, 7:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m., call 616-794-1900 ext. 217 for assistance. After hours or holidays call Central Dispatch at 616-527-0400 and they will contact the on-duty employee from the DPW to assist you.

8. True or False: Roughly 600 million pounds of candy is bought for Halloween, which is equivalent to about 6 Titanic ships.



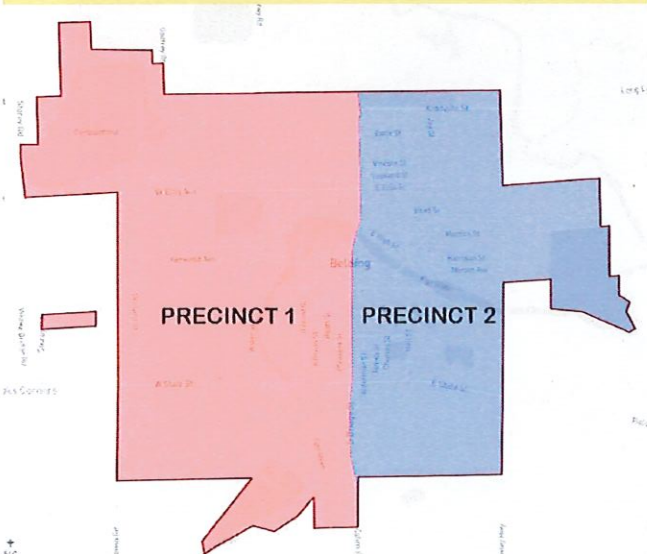
CITY CLERK

The City of Belding will NOT be conducting an election on November 7, 2023. There are no candidate races or proposals in Ionia County that affect the City of Belding.

2024 -

NEW CITY PRECINCT BOUNDARY LINES

Among the *many* new changes that *all* Michigan voters will see in 2024 due to a constitutional amendment, Belding voters will be seeing a few more! The City of Belding Election Commission voted 3-0 on May 15, 2023 to draw new precinct boundary lines and eliminate Precinct 3, effective January 1, 2024. The boundary line is simply down the middle of Bridge Street; Precinct 1 being west of the center line of Bridge Street to the west City limits, Precinct 2 being east of the centerline of Bridge Street to the east City limits. New voter ID cards will be mailed to all registered voters before the 2024 Presidential Primary. Additionally, ALL Election Day voting will take place at the Belding Community Center, 108 Hanover Street. For your convenience, you may utilize the parking lot at the Masonic Lodge or the Library while voting. The nine days of Early In-Person voting will take place in Ionia—stay tuned as the Bureau of Elections, lawmakers and clerks throughout the state work to develop, train for and implement all of the new changes. For questions, please contact the City Clerk at 616-794-1900, extension 210 or by emailing j.ortego@ci.belding.mi.us.



9. What is the most popular Halloween candy in America?
 A. Reese's Peanut Butter Cups
 B. Candy Corn
 C. M & M's

LIBRARY

OCTOBER

October 2 at 6:00 p.m. *FAMILY* Harvest Party
 October 4, 11, 18, 25 at 10:30 a.m. Story Time
 October 4 at 2:00 p.m. *SENIOR* Social Bingo
 October 5 at 3:30 p.m. *TWEEN*, Slime Workshop
 October 16 at 5:00 p.m. *ADULT* Craft, Spooky Art
 Registration Required.
 October 19 at 3:30 p.m. *TEEN*, Spooky Cake Making
 October 25 at 6:00 p.m. (*EVENING* Book Club)
 "The Graveyard Book"
 October 26 at 10:00 a.m. (*MORNING* Book Club)
 "Up North Murder"
 October 27 at 3:00—4:30 p.m. *ADULT*, Sew and Tell
 October 28 *ADULT*, Chili Cook Off Registration Required



NOVEMBER

November 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 at 10:30 a.m. Story Time
 November 1 at 2:00 p.m. *SENIOR* Social Bingo
 November 2 at 3:30 p.m. *TWEEN*, Life Size Arcade
 November 3 at 3:00 p.m. *ADULT* Craft, Book Trees.
 Registration Required.
 November 6 at 6:00 p.m. *YOUTH*, Twisty Tales Braiding
 November 13 at 5:00 p.m. *ADULT*, Cookie Crumbler Baking
 Contest. Visit the library for details.
 November 15 at 6:00 p.m. (*EVENING* Book Club)
 "Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine"
 November 16 at 10 a.m. (*MORNING* Book Club)
 "Killers of the Flower Moon"
 November 16 at 3:30 p.m. *TEEN*, Guitar Pick Accessories
 November 27 at 7:00 p.m. Friends of the Library
 Candlelight Reception



DECEMBER

December 6, 13, 20, 27 at 10:30 a.m. Story Time
 December 6 at 2:00 p.m. *SENIOR* Social Bingo
 December 13 at 5:00 p.m. *FAMILY* Holiday Party
 December 18 at 5:00 p.m. *ADULT* Craft *To be announced*
 December 22 at 3:00—4:30 p.m. *ADULT*, Sew and Tell
 December 26 at 10:00 a.m.--4:00 p.m. *YOUTH* Craft Day Drop-In
 December 28 at 10:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. *TEEN* Activity Day Drop-In



MUSEUM

BEL-Belding Exploration Lab

The hands-on children's museum is open the first Sunday and Wednesday of each month from 1:00-4:00. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Admission is free, but your donations support our programs.

For the most current information, please check our Facebook page: BEL-Belding Exploration Lab.

Belding Museum

Spend an afternoon with us the first Sunday of each month from 1:00-4:00. Admission is free. Handicapped parking and an elevator are available for those needing assistance.

On November 5, our annual Quilt Show will be held in cooperation with the Silk City Quilters. We hope you'll join us!

For the most current information, please check our Facebook page: Belding Museum.

BELDING HOUSING

Best wishes for a Happy and Healthy Fall Season! As authorized by the State of Michigan under Public Act 18 of 1933 and ordinance #274 on December 19, 1950, the City of Belding created the Belding Housing Commission to assist in providing decent, safe, and affordable housing within the city. As an instrumentality of the city, the agency is governed by a board of five Commissioners, each appointed by City Council for five-year terms. The Board of Commissioners is responsible for adopting policy provisions as required under Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations and in accordance with state and local law. Funding for operations and maintenance of properties and program is derived from rent revenue and subsidy provided through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. While no local or state funding is received, the federal government mandates a Cooperation Agreement as a requirement of receiving federal funding. The Cooperation Agreement outlines the relationship between the city and the housing commission. The Cooperation Agreement requires Belding Housing Commission to provide rental assistance to eligible families and requires the City of Belding to assist in support of efficient operations. Belding Housing Commission remits the maximum allowable PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) to the city on an annual basis in its support and commitment to the local community. Persons interested in obtaining income-based rental housing may visit the administrative office located at 41 Belhaven, inquire by phone (616) 794-1740 or '211', or email info@beldinghousing.org for more information. Belding Housing Commission is an Equal Opportunity Housing agency.



ANSWER KEY:

1. Witch
2. B- Colored
3. B- Cyber Monday
4. "White Christmas" by Bing Crosby
5. False
6. False. It is one of the top 10 LEAST favorites.
7. Yes
8. True
9. A-Reese's Peanut Butter Cups
10. True
11. Yes—stuffing is cooked inside the bird,
12. dressing is cooked outside the bird, typically in a casserole dish.

ASSESSOR



Two of the most common questions I hear are:
"I haven't done anything to my house since I've lived here, why are my taxes going up?"
 Answer: The Consumers Price Index increased.

"Why does my neighbor pay less in taxes when their house is bigger/nicer than mine?"
 Answer: They have a lower Taxable Value (TV).

Assessors in the State of Michigan are responsible to maintain the State Equalized Value (SEV) and Taxable Value (TV). First, let's make sure you understand the difference.

The SEV should be 50% of the property's True Cash Value or Market Value. This value is determined by the physical attributes of the property and studies of recent sales (2-year sale studies are the most common). The TV is determined by the Consumers Price Index (CPI), not to exceed 5%.

Why was the TV lower in the second question? The last decade has seen residential sale studies with increases between 5 to 15 percent, while the Consumer Price Index only exceeded 5% once and that was last year (5% was the TV increase for 2023, the maximum allowed by law). Thus, your neighbor who has lived there for 10 years has a lower TV than you, who purchased last year.

The Assessor's Web Page is (<https://belding.mi.us/assessor.php>) where you may find answers to other questions or links to forms you're looking for. If you have other questions or concerns, please give me a call at 616-794-1900 Ext 201, or email me at: assessor@ci.belding.mi.us.



10. True or False:
 Americans spend nearly \$500 million annually on Halloween costumes for pets.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

The final **brush pick-up** of the year will begin the week of October 23rd at 7 a.m. Please place brush at the street between October 18—23 but no earlier than the 18th of each month. The total amount of brush and limbs per household shall not exceed 10 cubic yards per month. Brush must be placed parallel at the curb, but not in the road. All cut ends must face the same direction. Branches can be no longer than 6 feet long and no larger than 3 inches in diameter. To ensure pick-up, please locate brush in a clear area, at least 4' (ft.) away from any Consumers poles and guy cables, telephone poles, walls, fences, mailboxes, overhead wires, or any other obstacles that will prevent a safe and efficient pick-up for the staff and equipment.

Yard waste pick-up is every Monday and will be collected through the season. Bags must be biodegradable and must not exceed 35 pounds, and cannot contain other materials such as rocks, shingles, garbage, sticks or brush. Please place bags at the curb by Monday at 7 a.m. but no earlier than 6 p.m. on Sunday.

Loose leaf pick-up will start in October as soon as most leaves have fallen and will continue as weather permits.