



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Kristine Howard

167TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

WEBSITE: www.RepKHoward.com

WINTER 2023

Greentree Office Plaza • 40 Lloyd Ave., Suite 309 • Malvern, PA 19355 • (610) 251-1070

107 East Wing • P.O. Box 202167 • Harrisburg, PA 17120-2167 • (717) 783-4088

/RepKHoward • @RepKHoward

Dear Neighbor,

With the holidays upon us and winter weather just around the corner, I want to provide some helpful information regarding resources available to use right here at home.

My office is here to help you with any state-related services. If you're having an issue, please call my office at (610) 251-1070, and my staff will do all they

can to guide you as you navigate your concerns through our government.

To minimize wait times while allowing us to research your issue and provide the best service possible without the need to rush our visitors, appointments are encouraged.

Happy Holidays,

Kristine C. Howard

PREPARE FOR RISING WINTER ENERGY COSTS

Energy usage is a key factor in the size of winter energy bills, and there are many ways that consumers can control that usage. Energy saving tips include:

- Pay attention to the thermostat – Every degree you raise or lower the temperature could impact energy costs by up to 3%. Also, consider a programmable thermostat to automatically lower temperatures while you are away from home.
- Have your furnace serviced – Regular furnace maintenance along with clean air filters help ensure efficient operation of your heating system.
- Insulate and seal leaks around your home – Adding insulation, installing storm windows and doors, and sealing cracks and air leaks can help you stay warmer and use less energy.
- Install or repair ceiling fans in high-trafficked rooms – Many people can reverse the direction of ceiling fans clockwise to produce an updraft and move warmer air

near the ceiling downward, keeping you and the room warmer.

- Consider resetting your water heater thermostat – Water heaters are the second highest source of energy usage in the home, and many people have the thermostat on their water heater set too high. Setting the temperature on your water heater a few degrees cooler can help save money on your energy bills.

The PUC's electric shopping website PAPowerSwitch.com and natural gas shopping website PAGasSwitch.com have interactive sections with additional easy consumer tips for saving energy, and more importantly, the ability to save substantially by choosing a new power supplier.



LIBRARY SATELLITE OFFICE HOURS

Chester Springs Library

1st Tuesday of each month
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Henrietta Hankin Library

2nd Tuesday of each month
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Chester County Library

4th Tuesday of each month
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

The 167th District includes Malvern Borough and the townships of Charlestown, East Whiteland, West Pikeland, West Whiteland, West Vincent, East Caln, and part of East Goshen Township.

WINTER SAFETY

Snow Removal

The National Safety Council recommends the following tips for safe snow removal:

For anybody shoveling...

- Do not shovel after eating or while smoking.
- Take it slow and stretch out before you begin.
- Try to shovel when the snow is still fresh and powdery, as it's lighter. Push the snow rather than lifting it.
- If you do lift it, use a small shovel or only partially fill the shovel.
- Lift with your legs, not your back.
- Do not work to the point of exhaustion.
- Know the signs of a heart attack, and if you're experiencing any of them, stop immediately and call 911; every minute counts.



For those using a snow blower...

- If the blower jams, turn it off.
- Keep your hands away from the moving parts.
- Be aware of the carbon monoxide risk of running a snow blower in an enclosed space.
- Add fuel outdoors, before starting, and never add fuel when it is running.
- Never leave it unattended when it is running.

Winter Driving

Remember, if severe winter weather is forecast, eliminate all unnecessary travel. This will keep you and your family safe and allow PennDOT to perform its winter duties. However, if you must travel, PennDOT offers the following tips for safe driving this winter season:

- Listen to weather and travel advisories. If you don't have to travel in bad weather, don't.
- Keep your gas tank at least half full, as lower tanks can increase the risk of condensation build-up and cause corrosion and potentially prevent starting.
- Slow down and increase following distance. Remember that the speed limit is a maximum, not a requirement.
- Avoid sudden stops and starts.
- Beware of roads that may look wet, but are actually frozen, often referred to as "black ice."
- Use extra caution on bridges and ramps, where ice can often form before other sections of the road.
- Carry a cellphone.
- Do not use cruise control while driving on snow-covered roads.

- State law requires you to turn on your headlights when your wipers are on.
- Use your low beams in particularly bad weather, especially in cases of heavy or blowing snow, to improve visibility.
- Remove ice and snow from windows, mirrors, hood, roof, and all vehicle lights before you drive and as often as needed. Clearing the hood and roof will prevent it from sliding onto your windows or flying off your car. State law allows for penalties if snow or ice from your vehicle strikes a vehicle or person and causes death or injury.
- Remove snow that may obscure your license plate.

- Do not park your vehicle on snow emergency routes.
- Do not pass or get between trucks plowing in a plow line (several trucks plowing side by side).
- Make sure someone else knows where you are going and when you expect to arrive. In case you run into an emergency and need help, someone will know where to look for you.
- If you do become stranded, it's better to stay with your vehicle until help arrives. Run the engine every hour or so, but make sure the tailpipe is clear and keep the downwind window cracked open.
- Do not drink and drive, and always wear your seat belt.



Where's my plow?

All of PennDOT's roughly 2,200 PennDOT-owned and rented plow trucks are equipped with Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) systems, which use in-truck technology to log and share data in real-time for that truck. The routes of these interstate and expressway trucks can be viewed in real time at www.511PA.com.

GET YOUR POLLINATOR HABITAT FUND REGISTRATION PLATE TODAY!

Based on legislation introduced by state Senator Carolyn Comitta and myself, sales of the Pollinator Habitat Fund Registration Plate, which became available to order on March 3, 2023, will fund a new program to support the migration of pollinators by creating native grass and

perennial wildflower-filled habitats along our state highways.

Twenty-five dollars from every Pollinator Conservation plate sold will be credited to the Pollinator Habitat Program Fund. Applicants for the registration plate must submit Form MV-911, "Application for



Special Fund Registration Plate." This registration plate is available for passenger cars or trucks with a registered gross weight of not more than 14,000 pounds.

UNCLAIMED PROPERTY AT PA TREASURY

- Did you know that the Pennsylvania Treasury is currently holding more than \$3.5 billion in unclaimed property?
- Did you know that one in 10 Pennsylvanians is owed unclaimed property?
- Did you know the average claim is worth about \$2,000?

My office is hard at work trying to notify residents of their unclaimed property, but you don't have to wait for us to reach out: you can search Treasury's online database at any time to see if you or friends and family have property waiting to be claimed. There is no fee to search for or claim property from the state. Learn more at www.patreasury.gov/unclaimed-property.

SEPTA CARDS

Pennsylvanians 65 and older can apply for a free SEPTA Key Senior ID Card or renew their current senior card at my district office. Senior cards can be used on SEPTA trains, buses, trolleys, and subways. Current turnaround time to receive a card is around five weeks from the application date.

PROPERTY TAX/RENT REBATE

The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians 65 and older; widows and widowers 50 and older; and people with disabilities 18 and older. The income limit is \$35,000 a year for homeowners and \$15,000 annually for renters, and half of Social Security income is excluded. Spouses, personal representatives or estates may also file rebate claims on behalf of claimants who lived at least one day in 2022 and meet all other eligibility criteria. The deadline to apply for a 2022 rebate is Dec. 31, 2023. Visit www.revenue.pa.gov for more information.

BIRTH CERTIFICATES AND DEATH CERTIFICATES

My office can help you obtain copies of birth and death certificates. Certificates cost \$20 each, and must be paid via check or money order made payable to "VITAL RECORDS." The fee is waived for veterans.

Visit pahouse.com/Howard and sign up for my email newsletter to stay up to date!

CONSERVATION CORNER

Protecting Bald and Golden Eagles

The eagle has been the focus of one of the greatest conservation efforts of our state and nation's history. While regulations and protective efforts have proved to be successful for the population's rebound in recent decades, and they have officially been removed from the Commonwealth's threatened species list, these

birds still face threats from lead poisoning and poaching.

Taking bald or golden eagles, including their parts (as well as feathers), nests, or eggs is already prohibited under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, but recent legislation introduced by state Sen. Lisa Boscola would increase fines from \$200 to \$2,000 for killing a bald eagle in Pennsylvania.





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MY OFFICE CAN ASSIST WITH:

- ✓ Pennsylvania Driver's Manuals and Commercial Driver's Manual.
- ✓ Assistance with the Department of Human Services.
- ✓ Free Notary Services by appointment.
- ✓ Obtaining Birth and Death Certificates.
- ✓ PennDOT Services: vehicle registrations, reduced vehicle registration, disability placards.
- ✓ Questions for the Department of Revenue.
- ✓ SEPTA Senior Keycards.
- ✓ Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions.
- ✓ Car registrations, special tags, handicap placards, titles, and driver's license applications.
- ✓ Obtaining and completing state forms of all kinds.
- ✓ Voter registration and absentee ballot applications.
- ✓ Birth and death certificates.
- ✓ Unclaimed property.
- ✓ Unemployment compensation, disability, and workers' compensation.
- ✓ Problems with the Department of Human Services (food stamps, medical and income assistance).
- ✓ Pennsylvania income tax questions or problems.
- ✓ Requests for literature of all kinds – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, and senior citizen information.
- ✓ Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding accomplishments and family milestones.
- ✓ Complaints or questions about utilities and the Public Utility Commission.
- ✓ Renewal of state-issued licenses or certifications.
- ✓ Problems or questions about the state lottery.
- ✓ PACE cards for senior citizens.
- ✓ Liquor Control Board concerns or questions.

REPORT POTHOLES!

Potholes and other roadway concerns on state roads can be reported by calling 1-800-FIX-ROAD or visiting www.penndot.gov and clicking on "Submit Roadway Feedback."

