

# Community Spotlight

## Village of Breckenridge

This article was submitted by Roy R. Anklam, Michigan Rural Water Association Drinking Water Circuitrider II.

The Village of Breckenridge, the fourth largest community in Gratiot County is located along M-46, in the Central Michigan area of the Mitten. Charles H. Howd located the land here in Wheeler Township back in 1860 and settled on it in 1872 when the Pere Marquette Railroad came through; he became the first postmaster on May 19th, 1873; The Village was incorporated in 1908 named for early mill-owners Daniel W. and Justin A. Breckenridge.

The Village Hall is located at  
104 E. Saginaw Street

Through the years large agricultural elevators were raised and enlarged to handle the harvested crops from the farms surrounding Breckenridge. One of the most significant moves was the purchase of the Breckenridge Bean and Grain Company by a group of area farmers. Crawford and Company as it was known prior to 1924 had served the area for over a half a century. The new business formed by the farmers, the Breckenridge & Wheeler Co-op (B & W Co-op) enjoyed phenomenal growth from 75,000 bushels of storage at the purchase in 1947 to over 8,500,000 bushels when the Co-op was broken up and sold in 2001. B & W had been a major player in agricultural service and supply in the State of Michigan as well as a significant dealer in domestic and international grain and edible bean markets for over forty years. Breckenridge has a present population of 1,339 residents. It is growing fast and is in the heartland of one of the finest agricultural counties in Michigan.



### Village Government

The Village of Breckenridge is a General Law Village that operates under the Village Council/Manager form of government. Six Trustees and a Village President are elected to serve on the Council. The council meets every fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Breckenridge High School in the Media Center.

(It takes a good council to govern and run the village), the People at the helm of the Village Government



**Chuck Seeley**  
President



**Robert Zimmerman**  
Councilperson



**Linda Chapin**  
Councilperson



**Susan Ostrander**  
Councilperson



**Mike Sterling**  
Councilperson



**Nan Clapp**  
Councilperson



**Tim Schaub**  
Councilperson

The Village Office Staff are: (It takes a good office staff to run a village)



**Jeff Ostrander**  
Village Manager



**Bridget Suhr**  
Treasurer and Clerk



**Ann Schneider**  
Deputy Clerk

**Village Manager – Jeff Ostrander** Directs and Coordinates the administration of Village government, Chief Administrative Officer, Zoning Administrator, Street Administrator, Police Administrator, Administers Budget, Approves all purchasing, Reviews/Administers Policies as set by Council, Maintains Public Relations.

**Village Treasurer – Bridget Suhr** Collects real and personal Village taxes, Keeps an account of Village receipts (revenues) and expenditures, Deposits and invests Village revenues in approved depositories, Reconciles bank statements, Prepares monthly/annual financial statements, Prepares Budget Resolution and Amendments, Completes Reports for the Federal and State Government.

**Village Clerk – Bridget Suhr** Maintains custody of all Village records, records and maintains minutes of Village Council meetings, Administers Oaths of Office, Maintains/Keeps Village Ordinance Book, Keeps Voter Registration File and conducts Village Elections Issues, checks for payment of invoices and also Payroll Clerk.

**Deputy Clerk-Ann Schneider** Accounts Payable, Producing Checks, Cash Receipting, making Deposits Website Design and Marketing, Cemetery Records, Along with any other misc. items.

Police Department (It takes good police and fire departments to keep the citizens safe)



Chief of Police is James Durham; Patrol Officers are Rebecca King, Erkin Ward, John Andrews, Cole Swan (not in picture), Chad Williams (not in picture) and Jason Coon (Reserve Officer)



The Breckenridge-Wheeler Township Fire and Rescue Department services all of the Village of Breckenridge, Wheeler Township and a number of other Townships. The department is governed by a board made up of two (2) Village representatives, two (2) Township representatives and a member-at-large. The ownership is divided on a 60-40 % basis, with the Village being the 40 % partner. The department has six (6) modern fire trucks and a new rescue vehicle. Linton "Pug" Chapin is the Fire Chief, other officers are Rob Fleming the Assistant Chief, Chris Engle is a Captain, Brent Gillis is a Lieutenant, Jeff Westall is the Training officer, Jason Westall is the Liaison and Jim Cooper is the Secretary/Treasurer.

The Department of Public Works: (It takes a good public works department to keep the village running)



New DPW Building (From Back)

The DPW employees take care of the Lagoon and Collection System, the Water Plant and Distribution System, Cemetery, Parks, all DPW Duties such as streets, snow plowing, cold and hot patching etc.

The DPW Employees are:

| NAME              | TITLE            | LICENSE                             | YEARS WORKED |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| Jake Oswald       | Water Supervisor | S-3 & D-3 Water, L-2 Lagoon CDL "B" | Over 1       |
| Warren Faber      | DPW Specialist   | S-4 & D-4 Water                     | 5            |
| Chad Snyder       | DPW Specialist   | CDL "B"                             | 3            |
| Mike Sterling Jr. | DPW Specialist   | No License at this time             | 1            |

**EQUIPMENT**

2007 416E Cat Backhoe, 2006 Cat 906 Loader, 2009 Elgin Whirlwind Sweeper/Vacuum Truck, 2011 Model 1500 Chevy 4x4 Water Truck with panel box for tools and maps, 2004 Model 1500 Chevy 4x4 DPW Truck, 2001 1 ton Dodge Plow Truck with Dump, 1992 Model 4700 International Dump truck with Plow, 1999 C-6500 Chevy Dump Truck, 2003 Sewer Jetter, 2009 Wach Valve Turner with Mini Vacuum, 1996 Spaulding Hot Patcher, 2004 Model 7532 4x4 Cub Cadet Tractor with Snow Blower and Brush Hog and other accessories, 1984 Tarco IN Leaf Vacuum, 1980 Onan Trailer Mounted Gas Generator, 2006 Kohler Trailer Mounted Diesel Generator, 1987 Inger Rd. Trailer Mounted Air Compressor, 2006 Swenson Salt Spreader, Two (2) Root Underbody Scrapers, Two (2) Zero Turn Ferris Mowers with 61 inch Cut and accessories, and much, much more equipment.

**WASTEWATER** The Village has an aerated Lagoon system, aerated by wind-power; The Lagoon has Three (3) Cells, Primary, Secondary and Polishing Pond. Five (5) Lift Stations in the Collection System, every Lift Station will have permanent back-up generators with automatic transfer switches. The wastewater Lagoon System receives about 80,000 gallons per day from the collection system, 70,000 gallons from the Village and 10,000 gallons from Wheeler Township. Funding for the Lagoon Cells and Lift Stations was 6.4 Million Dollars Loan and Grant from Rural Development, with 1.4 Million Dollars being Grant Funds. The Michigan Economic Development Corporation funded the storm and sanitary sewers in the Industrial Park.

Wastewater Rates are: \$1.70/ 1000 Gallons with a Ready to Serve Charge of \$15.35.





Wind-Powered Lagoon Cell



Lift Station with Gorman-Rupp Pumps



**WATER** The water system consists of Three (3) Groundwater Wells that are each over 300 Feet deep, the raw water is pumped to a Iron Removal and Softening Plant, where 12.5 % Sodium Hypochloride (Chlorine) is used in pretreatment and for disinfection, plus the Distribution System and a 300,000 Gallon Water Tower built in 2010. The water plant produces approximately 70-80,000 Gallons per Day. Because residents in the village rely on groundwater as their drinking water source, a voluntary Wellhead Protection Program (WHPP) was developed. The goal of a WHPP is to protect the sourcewater from contamination. The Village established a team of people to oversee the program. First a Wellhead Protection Area (WHPA) was developed. At the edge of this area, it would take ten (10) years for contamination to reach the Village Municipal Wells. Because activities within this area could have an impact on the safety of the drinking water, this was the area to be protected. Potential and existing sources of contamination were identified and mapped within the WHPA. A Contingency Plan was established in the event of a contaminated event. Public education and management activities were also implemented to educate the public about the importance of groundwater protection.

The Funding for the Water System improvements came from Rural Development 3.8 Million Dollars total Loan plus Grant with 2.3 Million being Grant Funds.



Water Plant Filters (during plant renovations)



Water Plant Filters (during plant renovations)  
Iron Removal and Softening Plant

Water Rates are: \$5.00/1000 Gallons, Ready to Serve Charge is \$18.00. Meters are read monthly. Average Family of Four (4) pays a total of \$67.00 per month for water, wastewater and garbage removal.

A fun alternative to a community pool, with entertainment for the whole family to add a modern twist to old fashion summer fun is the Breckenridge Splash Park. The Village Parks Committee has begun to design and plan for a Splash Park to be located at the Jaycee Park in Breckenridge. Jaycee Park is the largest of Four (4) parks located in the village. The Parks Committee has selected a manufacturer and design for Phase 1 of the Breckenridge Splash Park that will be completed in 2013. The advantages of a Splash Park are:

1. Safe entertainment for the whole family.
2. Allows children and adults with disabilities to interact and access water features safely and easily.
3. Interactivity among play features and children.
4. A teambuilding environment for all ages.
5. Water conservation through low water consumption.
6. Lower maintenance and overhead costs compared to a community pool.
7. Play features that add curb-appeal to community facilities.
8. A new way to play that encourages exercise in a fun way



Breckenridge Splash Park

**Exclusively for RURAL WATER!**

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**STATE  
RURAL WATER  
ASSOCIATION**

PRESENTED BY  
**Your State  
Rural Water  
Association**

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