

Township Government in Ohio

Township Statistics

Townships hold a necessary place in Ohio, as they are important to the delivery of valuable services to residents. They provide the best value for amount of money spent.

Townships provide services that the state, and generally the county, do not:

What is the exact value of a township? This is difficult to quantify, as no two townships are alike and the value of each township is in the eye of the taxpayer.

CEMETERIES

There are approximately 2,400 registered township cemeteries in the state of Ohio.



History

Townships, which existed prior to statehood, have been around since 1785. That is when the Land Ordinance established townships in what would eventually become Ohio. Township government has proven to be an effective and efficient form of government, as it has lasted through settlement, the Industrial Revolution, the Progressive Era and the Great Depression. Throughout the last 225 years, only a few townships have been eliminated, either through merger or because they were annexed by a municipality. Today there are 1,308 townships in Ohio.

Authority

The township form of government is self-governance in its truest and purest form. Townships are meeting the demands of their constituents as well as an increasing array of state and federal mandates. Townships are statutory governing bodies and have only those powers granted or inherently implied in the Ohio Revised Code.

Approximately 40-45% of the state's population lives in the unincorporated territory of the state. The largest township has a population of more than 60,000 and the smallest has just 94 residents.

Structure

The township in Ohio is governed by three trustees (legislative body) and a fiscal officer. All are elected officials and serve four-year terms. They are directly responsible to their residents.

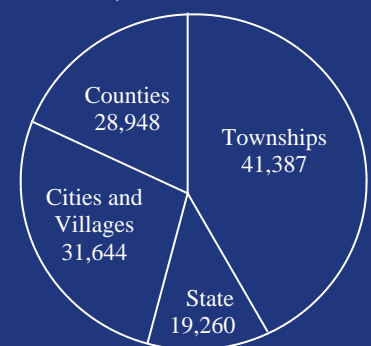


Small townships may have no formal department structure and none or only a few full or part-time employees. It is not uncommon in small and medium-sized townships that the trustees provide general township labor. Larger townships may have separate departments for police, finance, community services, and parks and recreation.

ROADS

Townships maintain 41,387 miles of Ohio's roads, more than any other governmental entity. This is their largest responsibility and includes patching, chipping and sealing and removing snow.

Maintenance of Ohio's Road Miles 121,239 Total Miles



PARKS



Information compiled by the Ohio Township Association. The OTA was founded in 1928 for the purpose of preserving and promoting Ohio's townships. For more information, visit www.ohiotownships.org.

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Collaboration

Townships in Ohio collaborate with other local government entities on an array of services, including fire and police protection, sharing road equipment, and purchasing, from salt for winter months to office supplies, to name a few. For example, Oxford Township and the City of Oxford in Butler County have a joint agreement for fire and EMS services.

Funding

Townships are primarily funded through property taxes levied on real property within the township. The other major sources of revenue include: local government fund, gasoline tax and motor vehicle license plate tax.

Cost of Service

Regardless of size, the average cost per township resident is relatively low for the amount of services provided. Services include road and cemetery maintenance and can include fire, EMS, police, zoning, waste management, senior centers, parks and street lighting.

For example, a property valued at \$160,900 in Jefferson Township (Franklin County) paid a total of \$2,540.88 in taxes in 2009. Of that amount, Jefferson Township was paid \$292.67 for the basic, quality of life services provided. Those services include: road maintenance, fire, EMS, waste management, parks, cemeteries and zoning.



Other examples include the following. A property in German Township (Montgomery County), valued at \$174,430, paid a total of \$714.70 in 2009 for the township services of road maintenance, fire, police, EMS, parks and recreation, cemeteries, a senior center, zoning and waste management.

A property in Bath Township (Allen County), valued at \$86,900, paid \$141.70 in 2009 for the township services of fire, EMS, road maintenance, drainage, zoning and police protection.

Last, a property in Swanton Township (Lucas County), valued at \$124,000, paid \$181.85 in township taxes for the services of road maintenance, fire, EMS, cemeteries, refuse pick up and zoning.

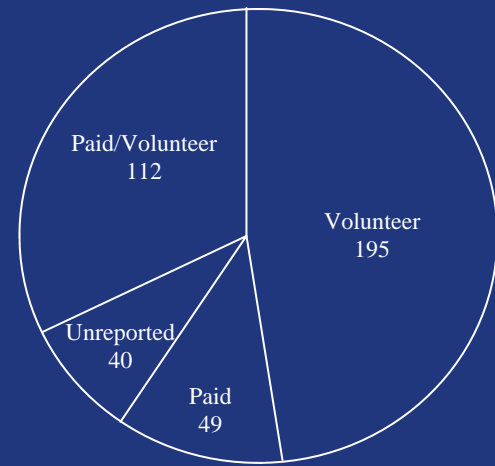
FIRE PROTECTION

There are 405 township fire departments as listed on the state fire marshal's website.

EMS

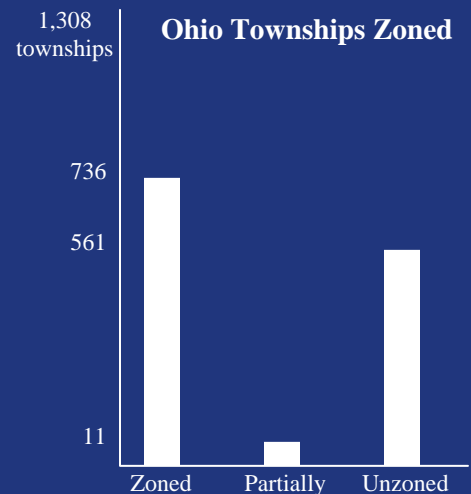
Ohio's townships operate 396 EMS units, comprised of the following: 195 volunteer; 112 combination paid/volunteer; 49 paid units; and 40 did not report their status.

Ohio Township EMS Units
396 Total Units



ZONING

According to research compiled in 2006 by OSU Extension Services, there are 736 townships that are zoned and 11 townships that are partially zoned.



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