

Hello and Welcome to Swansea!

“A good place to live, and growing better every day”

Welcome to the Village of Swansea. You will enjoy our beautiful neighborhoods, parks, and the convenience of nearby shopping and services. The Village of Swansea was founded in 1886. However, it has been changing and growing dramatically over the last few years. We are connected to the entire metro St. Louis area with the “MetroLink” light rail system. MetroLink, with a station in Swansea, runs from Scott Air Force Base in Belleville to Lambert St. Louis International Airport.

This packet contains information that you will find helpful in getting settled into your new home. It includes general information about the services we offer, specific details of our solid waste program and our sewer charges, as well as names and telephone numbers should you wish to obtain additional information. Please make a special note that you dial 911 for emergency services. If you made it clear to the telephone company that your address is within the Village, a call placed to 911 will reach the Swansea dispatcher who can immediately send police, fire, and medical personnel to you.

I hope this information will be beneficial to you and serve as an introduction to the Village of Swansea. We will also mail you a copy of our newsletter, The Swansea Report, each month as a means of helping you stay informed about what’s going on in your community.

Please call if we can help you in any way.

Sincerely,
Jim Rauckman
Mayor

Swansea Government:

The term “village” does not relate to the size of a municipality. Rather, it refers to a form of government made up of a Board of Trustees (the legislative body) headed by the President of the Board (same as a Mayor - the executive branch of local government). An elected clerk maintains the village’s records and an elected treasurer manages its finances. The Board of Trustees is comprised of six members, each elected for a four-year term. These trustees are elected “at large”, meaning they do not represent a particular area of the Village, but the interests of all residents, regardless of where they live.

A “city” on the other hand, is divided into wards, and aldermen are elected from each ward to represent the residents who live within that geographic area.

Residents with questions or concerns may discuss those with any trustee or the President of the Board of Trustees, or call the Swansea Government Center.

A Brief History:

In the late 1800’s the area that is now Swansea was a mix of farming and commerce. It was home to underground coal mines, foundries, brickyards, and the Gundlach Drill Works, manufacturers of the most efficient grain drills of that era.

A group of 35 area residents voted on December 16, 1886, to form their own community and name it “New Swansea”. A petition for annexation to the city of Belleville was being circulated in the territory. Establishing an independent community was a quick and effective method of avoiding annexation. Consequently, a new municipality was incorporated on December 20, 1886. The name “New Swansea” is believed to be associated with Swansea, Wales, a seaport town and home of the poet Dylan Thomas. In April of 1895, “New Swansea” was renamed “Swansea” in order to conform with the name given to the local post office. The village grew and prospered, and the residents developed a strong sense of community.

Swansea is predominantly a residential community. However, recent commercial developments located along Route 159 have brought new retail and professional office centers. The Village has balanced these developments by promoting the construction or annexation of residential subdivisions in a broad price range. Swansea is now recognized as one of the fastest growing communities in the metro-east.

The Services We Provide:

Police Protection

The Swansea Police Department is headquartered at the Swansea Government Center Complex at 1400 N. Illinois Street. The Police Department consists of a Chief of Police, a Deputy Chief of Police and twenty patrol officers. The police department has its own investigative section serving the community. The department has several trained instructors in such areas as Hazmat, Blood Borne Pathogens, Firearms, Self Defense and Defensive Driving. Through continuing education, the department is able to provide a very knowledgeable and professional police organization.

The police department also operates its own Telecommunications Center, which serves as a 9-1-1 Public Service Answering Point. A telecommunications supervisor and 4 full time telecommunicators staff a high-tech communications center 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. By running our own 9-1-1 center, emergency calls come directly to our telecommunicators providing faster and more proficient service. A 7-digit telephone number, (618) 233-8114, is available for non-emergency calls.

Fire Protection

The Swansea Fire Department is comprised of a full-time Fire Chief and Deputy Chief. Firefighters are paid on-call. Firehouse # 1 is located at 1350 N. Illinois Street. The Village has an ISO Class 4 fire rating.

The station houses one rescue vehicle, two pumpers, and one ladder fire truck. Firehouse # 2 is located at 144 Huntwood Road. Daytime fires are normally answered by a first response of 8 to 12 firefighters and 3 vehicles. Night fires are usually answered by 20 - 25 members. The department has enough equipment to outfit 35 firefighters.

Land Use and Development

The Village's Building and Zoning Department is located at the Swansea Government Center, 1400 N. Illinois Street, 355-0280. The Building and Zoning Department oversees land use and development within the Village. The department issues all building and zoning permits, and inspects all new construction. The department responds to all property maintenance complaints.

The Village's Planning & Zoning Board helps to assure that development occurs in an orderly manner. The board monitors the Village's long-term plans for development and ensures individual projects do not impair the fulfillment of the planning goals.

Street Maintenance

Streets owned by the Village of Swansea are maintained by the Public Works Department employees. The maintenance includes roadway repair, right-of-way maintenance, street sweeping, snow removal, and the erection and maintenance of street signs. Construction of new streets and major repairs are usually accomplished through contracts with outside firms. Some streets within the Village limits are owned and maintained by either St. Clair County or the State of Illinois. The Village has jurisdiction over these streets for traffic control, but not for maintenance.

Utilities:

Waste Water Treatment

Swansea owns and operates a Waste Water Treatment Plant that provides sewage treatment for our residents and some properties adjacent to the Village. Sewer bills are mailed to residents every other month.

Trash and Recycling

Although Swansea does not directly operate a municipal trash collection, it has implemented a solid waste program. This program services residential properties of one, two, or three units. Allied Waste is the only company authorized to provide residential trash services. Residents purchase special stickers to indicate pre-payment for the collection of trash and yard waste that is picked up by the licensed company. Residents pay only for the amount of trash collected. The program includes free recycling and the Village provides one recycling bin to each residence.

Other Utilities

Our utilities are provided by private firms. Electricity and natural gas are provided through Ameren IP, 800-755-5000. Telephone service is provided through independent companies such as AT&T, Verizon, Charter, etc. Water is provided through Illinois American Water Company, 800-422-2782. Cable television is available through Charter Communications, 888-438-2427.

Parks & Recreation:

Mel Price Memorial Park

Melvin Price Memorial Park, in the 1500 block of Caseyville Avenue, is 24 acres in size. The park includes two community centers, athletic fields, several pavilions, a walking path, a roller-hockey rink and playground equipment. The park is the site of the Village's Veterans Memorial, the 911 Memorial, and a Korean War Memorial. Park facilities may be rented by Swansea residents for a small fee. To make reservations, residents should call the Swansea Government Center.

Centennial Park

Centennial Park on Rt. 161 encompasses 30 acres as a nature park developed and maintained in conjunction with St. Clair Township. This park includes a fishing lake, hiking trails picnic area, and is intended to preserve the natural environment in the middle of a metropolitan area.

Swansea Kingdom

Schranz Memorial Park is the home of Swansea's newest park playground, Swansea Kingdom. The park is a 3/4 acre handicap accessible, themed playground entirely built by community volunteers and totally funded by donations and available grant monies. The partially fence-enclosed playground features a castle structure, dragons, swaying bridges, a carriage and much more. The playground is located in the park behind Fire Station #2 on Huntwood Road.

C. "Herb" Tempel Park

C. "Herb" Tempel Park is a "mini-park" located at the corner of Morgan Street and Caseyville Avenue. It contains three benches and two picnic shelters. It's a great spot for a brief picnic.

Swansea Dog Park

The Swansea Dog Park is located on the west side of Caseyville Avenue in Melvin Price Memorial Park. The park consists of a fenced in area where dogs can run off-leash. There is an area for small dogs as well as for large dogs.

The cost of the yearly membership for Swansea residents begins at \$25.00 for the first dog, and \$10.00 for each additional dog (three dogs maximum). For non-residents, the yearly membership begins at \$50.00 for the first dog, and \$20.00 for each additional dog. The year runs from May 1st thru April 30th. Fees are pro-rated quarterly for members who sign up after July. To become a member, pick up an application at the Swansea Government Center, or download a form from our website. Proof of current rabies vaccination is required at time of registration.

Senior Citizen Transportation

Services Provided by the Village of Swansea:

The Village of Swansea provides and funds transportation for senior residents on every Tuesdays and Thursdays between 8:00 AM and 2:00 PM. Seniors can schedule transportation by calling the Government Center at (618) 234-0044 on the day before, no later than 2:00 PM. The van provides transportation for shopping within the Village of Swansea and to doctor appointments within the Belleville, Fairview Heights, and Swansea areas.

Services Provided by Third Party:

Seniors can also contact Alternative Transportation Services (ATS) as another avenue for senior transportation. ATS is not affiliated with the Village of Swansea.

ATS provides handicapped accessible vans. Seniors must be at least 60 years of age and must register with ATS at least 48 hours in advance of their first use. Transportation can be arranged by calling 239-0749 Ext. 232, Monday - Friday between 8:30 AM and 4:30 PM. Once you are registered, you may request service from one day to two weeks in advance. This program services Belleville, Fairview Heights, O'Fallon, and Swansea. The fee to use ATS is \$4.00, one way.

Things You Don't Pay For in Swansea:

Animal Tags

While you are not required to register your pets with the Village of Swansea, St. Clair County requires all dogs and cats, four months of age and older to register with Animal Control. If your pet is not registered and is current on their immunizations, you simply take their rabies certificate to Animal Control at 1250 S. 11th Street in Belleville and pay a \$9.00 registration fee. If your pet needs immunizations, your local veterinarian will take care of the registration when your pet is vaccinated. You will still need to pay the \$9.00 registration fee. If you have any questions, please contact Animal Control Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. at 235-0585. Their office is closed daily between noon and 1:00 p.m.

Please remember Village ordinances require dogs to be kept under restraint at all times, meaning controlled by a leash, at heel, obedient to a person's commands, in a vehicle, or on his own property. Dogs not under restraint or running loose can be picked up by a member of the police department and turned over to St. Clair County Animal Services. Cats invading another person's property can be picked up and impounded in the same manner as dogs.

Services Available From Other Sources:

Schools

Swansea does not operate a municipal school district. Residents who live in Swansea are served by one of four elementary school districts. Those on the extreme southern edge of the Village attend District 118 schools in Belleville, those in the northern area of the Village attend Wolf Branch District 113 in Swansea, and those in between attend High Mount District 116 in Swansea. Those who reside in Creekside Estates and a portion of Lake Lorraine attend

Whiteside District 115. Residents who reside in Crossfield Estates and some residents of Lake Lorraine attend Wolf Branch District 113. School district boundaries are established independently from municipal boundaries, and do not usually change. High school students attend either Belleville East, Belleville West, or Althoff Catholic High School. All of these schools operate as separate “governmental” agencies in the State of Illinois. There are numerous parochial elementary schools and private schools available.

Library Facilities

Swansea residents can utilize the Belleville or Fairview Heights libraries. Since Swansea residents do not pay property taxes to support those facilities, they are charged for a library card as an “out-of-district” resident. Currently, the annual non-resident fee for a library card in Belleville can be calculated by multiplying the taxable value of your property found on your current tax bill by .002335. As of July, 2010, non-residents may purchase a card for the Fairview Heights Library for \$94.00 per household.

Municipal Swimming Pool

Swansea residents may use the Belleville municipal pool, paying for it when they choose to use it, and not annually through property taxes. Pools can also be found at the local YMCA and at a number of private clubs in the general area.

Paying For Local Government Services

Swansea residents pay directly for municipal services through property taxes. Other revenues that help fund municipal services come from several sources. Some monies are received from the State of Illinois as a share of the money the State collects in Swansea. For example, of all items bought at retail within Swansea, 1% is returned to the Village in the form of sales tax. The state also provides the Village with a share of the Motor Fuel Tax, Income Tax, and other state revenues. As a resident, you may therefore help indirectly to support the Village by something as simple as shopping in town. Other people who shop here also help to pay for your municipal services.

In addition to state revenues and local property taxes, Swansea also charges some user fees. These fees directly offset the costs of providing specific services, but are only paid by those persons using the service. Building permits are an example of revenue that comes only from those who need the service. Sewer charges are an example of revenue that includes a basic fee each month in addition to an additional amount that is proportionate to the amount of water residents use.

Using “Swansea” as Your Address

One of the most frequently asked questions when a new resident moves to Swansea is whether they should use “Swansea” or “Belleville” as their mailing address. Swansea does not have a separate post office and presently shares a zip code (62226) with part of the City of Belleville. Residents could use either municipality as their address and be assured that the mail will reach them. **However**, the Village prefers you use Swansea as your address. Doing so makes it clear to other people that you live within Swansea’s corporate limits, which may save you money and aggravation.

Telephone companies may charge an *infrastructure maintenance fee*. The same is true for some other taxes and fees. Swansea’s property tax is less than the City of Belleville, meaning you want to make sure you are paying the lower amount. Census data is used to determine some of the State revenues that help to keep property taxes low. Yet, it is not uncommon for the Census Bureau to assume that people with a “Belleville” address live in Belleville and not Swansea.

Rights-of-Way and Easements

When making any improvements to your property, remember to consider easements and rights-of-way.

It is important to know the difference between a right-of-way and an easement. “Right-of-way” is property owned by the Village. In most cases, it is the first 10 feet or so behind the curb along a street, although its width may vary. This is land reserved by the Village for street widening, utilities, sidewalks, street lighting, and traffic control signs. The only thing a resident can legally erect within this area is a mailbox. Therefore, be sure you place trees, shrubs and basketball goals behind this 10 foot strip and on your private property.

An easement is different. You officially own this property but have granted a “right” to someone else to use it. Your easement may allow the power company, phone company, or some other utility to place its utilities across or under your property. It also gives them the right to enter upon that property to maintain its utilities without permission. Any structure or planting of trees or shrubs in any easement is at the owner’s risk with respect to all costs for demolition, removal, or reconstruction.

Trees and shrubs are limited in terms of where they can be planted so they do not obstruct streets and rights-of-way. Basically, the law states that a tree or shrub cannot be planted less than 7 feet from any property line which fronts a street or within the triangle formed when you measure 30 feet in either direction from the intersection of two streets and connect those points.

If you have any questions about the Village’s services call 234-0044 or email us at swanadmn@swanseail.org.

Important Information About ... Your Sewer Bill

How Your Bill Is Calculated

With the exception of a few residents served by private waste disposal systems, Swansea provides wastewater treatment to its residents through its own sewer system. Residents are billed bi-monthly for using that system, with billing periods ending June 30, August 31, October 31, December 31, February 28, and April 30. The Village uses a post card bill. Sewer bills may be paid in person at the Government Center between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, or dropped in the 24-hour night drop box located in the lobby. We also offer an option for customers to authorize automatic withdrawal of funds for their payment. Enclosed is a form to fill out and sign. Just mail or drop off electronic sewer billing authorization form with a voided check.

Sewer charges are billed in two parts - the "Bi-monthly Charge for Basic Service", and "Sewer Use". The Basic Charge is \$24.80 per billing period. Every individual unit pays this amount to offset the normal operational costs of the sewer system. Even if there was no sewer usage during a specific period, the Basic Charge is billed and payable. If you buy or sell a home during the billing period, the Basic Charge is pro-rated.

The Sewer Use charge is based upon the amount of water used and reported to us by Illinois American Water Company. The assumption is made that water, once used, is discharged into the public sewer system. The Village charges Sewer Use at a rate of \$2.48 per one hundred cubic feet of water used. Your bill will list the *Present* and *Previous* readings in units of one hundred cubic feet, and then compute the difference. For example, a present reading of 548 (units of 100 cubic feet) and previous reading of 529 (units of 100 cubic feet), would result in a consumption of 1900 cubic feet. At a rate of \$2.48 per one hundred cubic feet, the formula becomes $1900 \div 100 = 19$ (units of 100 cubic feet) times $\$2.48 = \47.12 . This customer's total sewer cost for the billing cycle would therefore be $\$24.80$ (Basic Charge) + $\$47.12$ (Sewer Use) for a total of $\$71.92$. This type of rate structure is most equitable because everyone pays a flat amount for the system's operation, plus another charge that is calculated according to the amount of water they use.

We have one very important reminder for you.

If you use a lot of water that does not go into the sewer system, and you want a credit so you are not billed for it, Swansea's law requires you to prove the water did not enter the system. You do this by using a *deduct meter*, a water meter that attaches to an outside faucet. It then measures the water that passes through the faucet. When you purchase one, call the Government Center, and register the serial number. Whenever you want a credit for the usage recorded by the meter, you may call the Government Center; we take the reading, and enter an adjustment to your next bill. A meter might cost between \$80.00 and \$90.00, so it may not be economical if you are only

going to wash the car occasionally. But if you water your lawn extensively, or have a swimming pool, it can mean a big savings on your sewer bill.

Another option offered to residents who have lived at their service location for at least one (1) year is the Annual Summer Usage Deduction. A Summer Usage Deduction is allowed to the owner of the property once each year with the fall billing cycle, provided that an application for the deduction has been submitted by the owner between September 15th and October 15th of that year.

A Summer Usage Deduction is calculated by determining the customer's average consumption during the preceding year, and then determining the difference between that average and the consumption for the summer billing months. The Village then credits the customer's sewer account by deducting fifty percent (50%) of the difference between that average and the actual consumption, as reported to the Village of Swansea by the water company.

Municipal Directory Below

Municipal Directory

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Police Department

Emergency 911
Non-Emergency 233-8114

Fire Department

Emergency 911
Non-Emergency 234-3291

Building & Zoning

355-0280

All Other Departments

General access number 234-0044

Mayor's Office
Village Clerk
General Administration

Utility Billing
Public Works

Swansea Chamber of Commerce

1400 N. Illinois St., Swansea, IL
233-3938

LOCATIONS OF BUILDINGS

Swansea Government Center

1400 N. Illinois Street, Swansea, IL 62226

Police Department
24 Hour Accessibility via Lobby

Administrative Offices
Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Building & Zoning

1400 N. Illinois Street, Swansea, IL 62226

Swansea Fire Stations

144 Huntwood Road, Swansea, IL 62226
1350 N. Illinois Street, Swansea, IL 62226

Street Department Garage

215 Service Street, Swansea, IL 62226

Wastewater Treatment Plant

209 Service Street, Swansea, IL 62226

CONTACT PERSONS

James "Jim" Rauckman - President, Board of Trustees

Lauren O'Neill - Village Clerk

Mike Leopold - Treasurer

Trustees

Bill Saak - Susan O'Malley - Brian Wells

Dave Thacker - David Freed - Ron Sutterfield

Mike Arnold - Police Chief

John McGuire - Fire Chief

John Openlander - Village Administrator

John Openlander - Building and Zoning Director

John Budde—Superintendent of Streets

Rick Tucker—Superintendent of Sewage Treatment