

# Road Map Berrien County Michigan

Berrien County Road Commission  
2860 East Napier Avenue  
P. O. Box 768  
Benton Harbor, Michigan 49023  
Phone 269-925-1196  
or 1-800-442-0734 (within 269 area)  
Fax 269-925-8098  
Web Site: [www.roadcommission.com](http://www.roadcommission.com)  
Email: [bcre@roadcommission.com](mailto:bcre@roadcommission.com)

Issued by  
The Board of County  
Road Commissioners

For further information contact one of the following area organizations:

Berrien Springs/Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce  
Phone 269-471-2484  
P. O. Box 177, Berrien Springs, MI 49103  
[www.bseccchamber.org](http://www.bseccchamber.org)  
Bridgman Chamber of Commerce  
Phone 269-465-4413 4809 Lake St.  
P. O. Box 464, Bridgman, MI 49106  
[www.bridgmanarea.org](http://www.bridgmanarea.org)  
Buchanan Area Chamber of Commerce  
Phone 269-695-3291  
119 Main St., Buchanan, MI 49107  
[www.buchanan.mi.us](http://www.buchanan.mi.us)  
Coloma Area Chamber of Commerce  
Phone 269-468-9160 209 N. Paw Paw  
P. O. Box 329, Coloma, MI 49038  
[www.chamber-of-commerce-mi.org](http://www.chamber-of-commerce-mi.org)  
Cornerstone Chamber of Commerce  
Phone 269-925-6100 38 W. Wall St.,  
Benton Harbor, MI 49022  
[www.cstonealliance.org](http://www.cstonealliance.org)  
Four Flags Chamber of Commerce  
Phone 269-683-3720  
321 E. Main St.  
P. O. Box 10, Niles, MI 49120  
[www.nilesmi.com](http://www.nilesmi.com)

Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce  
Phone 800-362-7251 or 269-469-5409  
530 S. Whittaker, New Buffalo, MI 49117  
[www.harborcountry.org](http://www.harborcountry.org)  
Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce  
Phone 269-429-1170  
P. O. Box 93, Stevensville, MI 49127  
[www.lakeshorechamber.org](http://www.lakeshorechamber.org)  
Southwestern Michigan Tourist Council  
Phone 269-925-6301  
2300 Pipestone Rd., Benton Harbor, MI 49022  
[www.swmichigan.org](http://www.swmichigan.org)  
Three Oaks Business Association  
Phone 269-756-3121  
P. O. Box 84, Three Oaks, MI 49128  
[www.threeoaks.org](http://www.threeoaks.org)  
Watervliet Business Association  
Phone 269-463-6397  
P. O. Box 234, Watervliet, MI 49098



Berrien County, Michigan

Berrien County boasts over 50 miles of sparkling white beaches along the Lake Michigan coastline, making Berrien County one of the most popular midwest vacation destinations!

Cover Photo: The Walton Road Bridge in Buchanan

## Michigan's Great Southwest

Walk Lake Michigan's eastern shores in southwestern Michigan and you will quickly see why people have come here for almost three centuries.

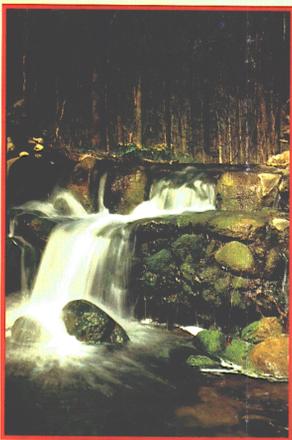
The area is rich in history: fur traders, indian tribes, early trading posts and forts located along the St. Joseph River.

Climb the white sand dunes running along Lake Michigan's coast line. Enjoy excellent fishing in the surrounding lakes and rivers. Hunt game, bountiful throughout the county. Bask in the sun at the many boating, canoeing, swimming and sun-bathing locations located in the county, or golf on many of our superb public courses.

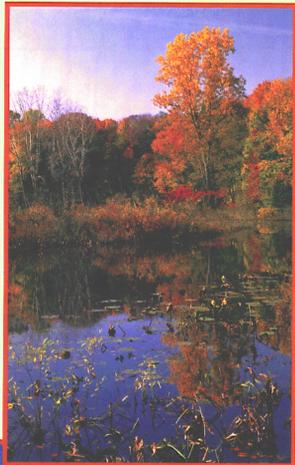
Pick farm-fresh fruit and vegetables in the heart of the fruitbelt, sip award-winning wines from the local wineries, attend our local festivals, golf invitational, regattas and art shows.

Color Photos by Kevin Reed

Road Map Drawing by Michael Juengling



Redbud Waterfall



Scenic Wetlands



Fall Harvest



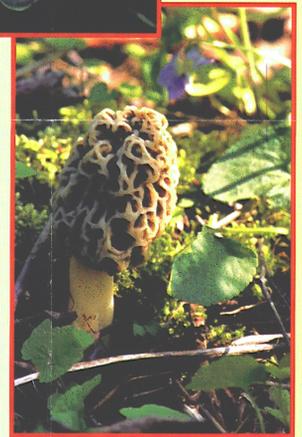
Winter Wonderland



Spring Wildflowers



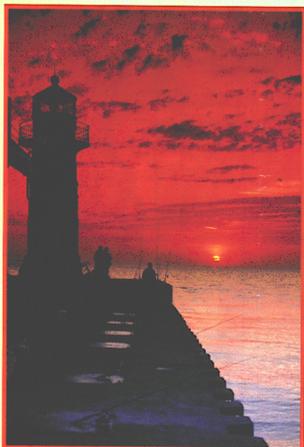
Delicious Fruit



Mouth-watering Treasures



Buchanan Dam on the St. Joseph River



Sunset Coast



Abundant Wildlife



Sunflowers near Baroda



Winter Chores

## HELPFUL INFORMATION FOR OUR DRIVING PUBLIC

### Berrien County

The Berrien County Road Commission's mandate is to maintain a county road system that is safe and convenient for public travel. This mission is carried out by a staff of 85 dedicated employees.

The Road Commission is responsible for 1,468 miles of County roads. These roads lie outside incorporated cities and villages. We also provide traffic control and maintain the roadsides along these roads. The Michigan Department of Transportation maintains the state roads such as I-94, M-63, and U.S. 12. On this map these state roads are shown in red.

The Road Commission's work is a cooperative effort ... a partnership with residents, townships, cities, villages, the county, and the state.

Berrien County residents assist the Road Commission by providing valuable information about road conditions and initiating discussion on issues affecting motorist safety. The Road Commission strives to be available and responsive to the motoring public's needs.

The Road Commission is governed by a Board of three appointed county road commissioners. The Board's regular meetings, to which the public is invited, are held at 9:00 a.m. every other Wednesday at the Road Commission office, 2860 East Napier Avenue, Benton Harbor, MI.

The Road Commission has six maintenance garages which are located in Watervliet, Benton Harbor, Eau Claire, Baroda, Three Oaks, and Bakertown. The Road Commission has 62 trucks,

4 motor graders, 6 front end loaders, 105 snow plows, 44 sanders, 3 gradalls (backhoes), 2 self contained pothole patching machines, and other road maintenance equipment.

The Berrien County Road Commission invites you to attend a regular commission board meeting, talk or write to your road commissioners or discuss issues with commission staff members. Call Toll Free at 1-800-442-0734, or 269-925-1196. Or stop by at 2860 E. Napier, Benton Harbor, Michigan.

### Seasonal Load & Speed Limits

Seasonal weight and speed reductions may be enforced during January, February, March and April on County roads. Maximum axle loads shall be reduced by 35 percent and shall not exceed 450 pounds per inch of tire width. Travel speed limit is 35 MPH during seasonal restrictions. More complete information can be obtained by contacting The Road Commission Weighmaster or the Motor Carrier Division, Michigan State Police District Headquarters in Paw Paw, Michigan.

### Speed Limits

The purpose of a speed limit is to provide a safe roadway environment for motorists and pedestrians. Speed limits must be acceptable to motorists and enforceable by police.

The public often requests lower than realistic speed limits, warning signs, traffic signals and

stop signs as ways to control driver speed. When these devices are misused for speed control purposes, research shows they are ineffective and hazardous, and may actually cause an increase in motorist speeds. The more uniform the speed of vehicles in traffic, the less likely the chance of conflicts and collisions.

Safe and appropriate speed limits are not based on casual observations. They are determined by thorough traffic engineering surveys done by qualified traffic personnel.

### Snowy Road Conditions

The Road Commission is responsible for clearing Berrien County roads outside cities and villages, and works to provide acceptable driving conditions in a reasonable amount of time following winter storms.

The Road Commission's first priority is to clear primary roads and roads with bridges, railroad crossings, hills, curves and signalized intersections. Next, local roads averaging 1,000 vehicles per day or those with schools or fire stations are cleared. The Road Commission then clears other local roads and subdivision streets.

The most important thing to remember when driving in snowy conditions is to slow down. Most snow or ice related accidents are caused by driving at speeds too fast for existing conditions. Also, the law states that a person shall not remove or cause to be removed, snow, ice or slush onto or across a roadway in a manner

which obstructs the safe vision of the driver of a motor vehicle; or deposit, or cause to be deposited snow, ice or slush on any roadway or highway. The Road Commission recommends residents keep the shoulder in front of their driveway clear and also clear snow for a short distance from the driveway in the direction of approaching traffic.

The Road Commission also has some requests designed to make the winter and snow-plowing season easier for everyone.

Mailboxes should be marked so that they are easily visible to snowplow drivers. They should be securely fastened to posts, so that the force of flying snow from plows doesn't dislodge them. Drivers should not leave cars in roadways, or in turnarounds that have been cleared solely for the purpose of turning around Road Commission trucks. The commission assumes no responsibility for accidents caused by such parked cars, but it might hold the drivers of those vehicles responsible.

Drivers who in severe weather are forced to abandon vehicles in roadways or rights-of-way should notify the Road Commission so that snow plows can avoid the vehicles when clearing snow. The phone number is 269-925-1196.

Road Commission trucks back up at intersections. If drivers or other vehicles get too close behind the trucks, snow plow drivers might not be able to see them. Drivers should remain well in back of snow plow trucks.

### Permits for Use of Right-of-Way

Any activity or use of County road right-of-way other than for a highway travel purpose requires a permit from the Road Commission. For example, we require a permit to build a new driveway or to reconstruct or pave an existing driveway. Townships may also require a completed driveway permit before they issue a land use, land division or building permit.

Activities requiring a permit include a) driveway construction, b) utility installation, c) seismicographic exploration, d) oversized transport. However, we allow mailboxes installed on 4 inch by 4 inch or 4-1/2 inch diameter wood or metal, that is no stronger than a 2 inch diameter standard strength steel pipe, without a permit in the road right-of-way. Permit applications, specifications and road right-of-way standards are available at the Road Commission office.

Activities that we do not permit in the road right-of-way are: fences, retaining walls, sprinkler systems, landscaping, rocks, boulders or berms, filling existing drainage ditches without our approval or dumping debris, planting trees, shrubs or bushes that have potential of obscuring vision and signs, light posts or encroachments considered hazardous. Our goal is for the right-of-way to be lawn areas, free of encroachments.

Your cooperation will help keep roadways safe for vehicle traffic and reduce the future maintenance expense of our County road system.

### Brush Cutting

Keeping roadways clear of brush, overhanging tree limbs, and small trees is part of the Road Commission's mandate to professionally maintain the more than 1,468 miles of roads in Berrien County.

Roads are selected for cutting based on complaints received and on brush thickness, including the amount of brush encroaching on the traveled portion of the roadway.

Primary roads with higher volumes of traffic receive greater priority for cutting than local roads. Primary roads also receive wider brush clearings than local roads.

### Potholes

Most potholes result from frequent freeze-thaw cycles during winter and spring months, which create small cracks that allow moisture to enter, freeze and expand ultimately creating potholes. The Road Commission, in addition to its normal maintenance practices, has two self-contained pothole patching trucks that operate year round in the fight against potholes.

We realize some roads are worse than others in the spring, and we do our best to concentrate our efforts on these sections of roads. We also ask that you as drivers exercise caution and drive with care when these conditions exist and our crews are present.