

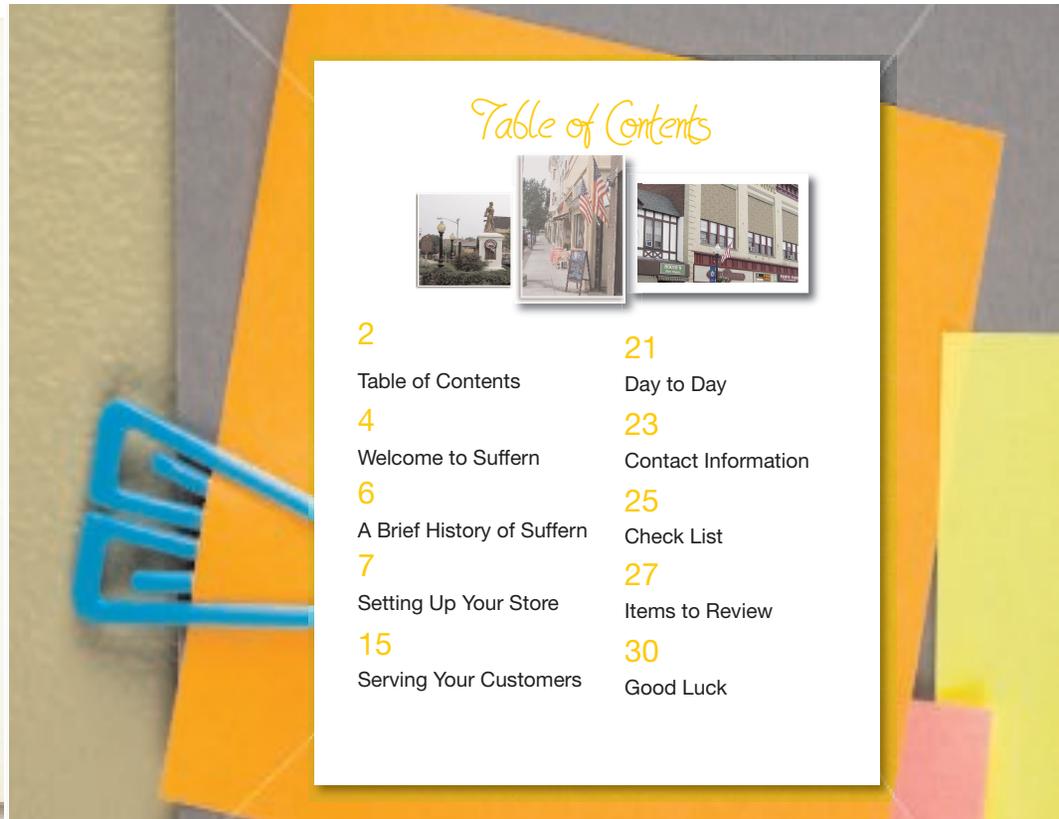
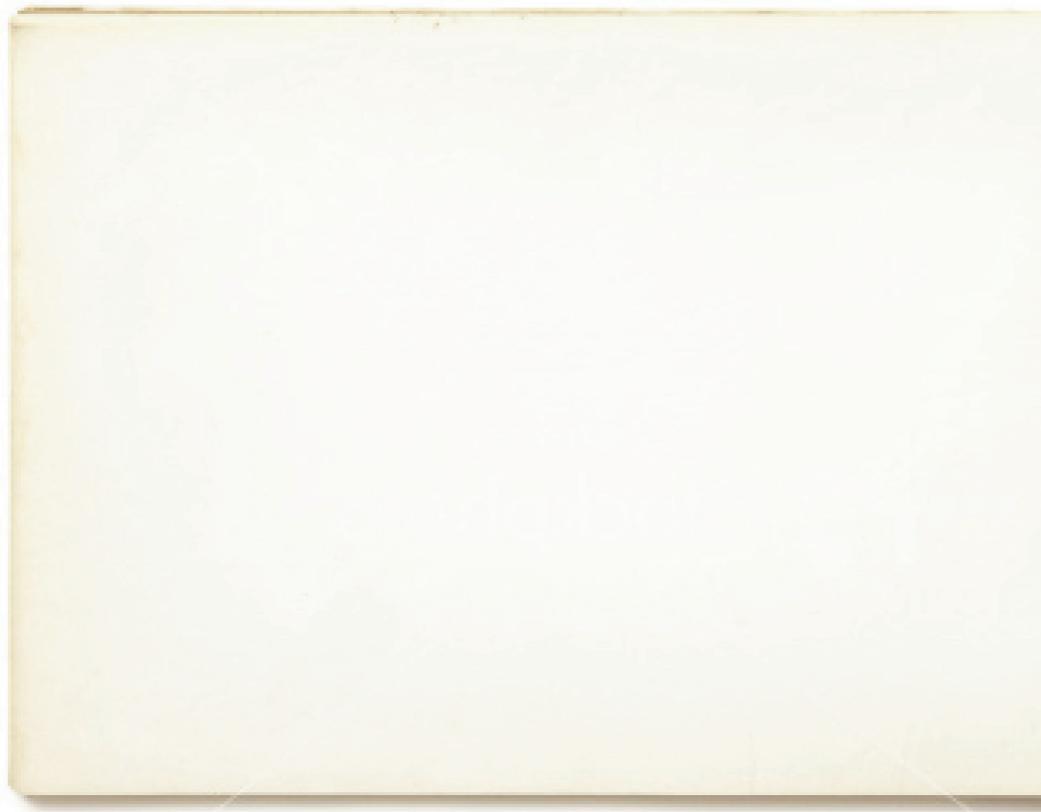
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

A guide for Suffern business owners



**SUFFERN**

*A great place to work and raise a family*



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## Welcome to Suffern

Congratulations on becoming a member of the Village of Suffern business community. Our fraternity of entrepreneurs continues to grow and helps add to this growing business-friendly village that still manages to maintain the small town spirit that has been the character of Suffern for centuries.

Suffern has so much to offer a business owner – from its wide array of fine restaurants and specialty food stores; to the various mom and pop shops and multi-national corporations you can say that Suffern truly has it all! There is of course great difficulty attached to opening a business and succeeding in any community, and hopefully this guide will give you a blueprint of how to set up your business, how to use the resources available to you to help your business grow and how to successfully manage the day to day operations that is required of all businesses.

Throughout the pages in this guide are various phone numbers and web-sites to all of the services in the Village of Suffern. Should you need to notify the Village government of anything or need any forms – those sources are provided here. Should you need to contact the Chamber of Commerce – you will find that number is also listed within. If you need the Parking Authority for anything – that too can be found here. These along with all of the other parts of Suffern living are here at your fingertips whether this is Day One of your venture or if you are a longtime owner and you need to refresh your memory.

We look forward to a long relationship with you and your business and together we can make Suffern not only the best place to do business, but also the best place to live and raise a family in all of Rockland County.

Sincerely,  
The Mayor of Suffern and the Village Board  
The Chamber of Commerce Executive Board  
The Suffern Parking Authority Chairman

## A brief history of Suffern

The Village of Suffern dates back to an age when the area was inhabited by the Munsee and Ramapough Indians before the European settlers arrived and through the Revolutionary War. Some of the first settlers to Suffern were from the Germanic region, Scotland, England, the Netherlands and Ireland and they arrived here in the early parts of the 1700's when this was all wilderness. There are many current Suffern residents that are able to trace their lineage to these early settlers.

John Suffern arrived in the Americas in 1763 and eventually settled in what is now Suffern in 1773 and the Village itself would be incorporated in 1786. He worked as a teacher, farmer and store owner, and would eventually build his house at what would become a strategic crossroads in the Revolutionary War – at what is now the intersection of Washington and Lafayette Avenues. He would serve the public in many capacities including serving the people in both Houses of New York State government. War would mar the idyllic village by the end of the 1700's.

George Washington, Marquis de Lafayette and Aaron Burr all conducted war operations from the Village of Suffern. Washington stayed in Suffern for five days at Suffern's Tavern and coordinated war activity there with the Continental Congress. Troops were stationed at what is now the Salvation Army.

Industry began to grow in Suffern by the dawn of the 19th Century and railroad stations were becoming important regular stops in trade routes between New York City and the northern regions. Suffern flourished as a result and the region continued to grow.

Suffern has enjoyed several longstanding relationships with businesses. Avon Products has been situated in Suffern since 1887 and Good Samaritan Hospital has cared for local residents since 1902.

Today, Suffern is surely different than it was during John Suffern's lifetime, but it is still idyllic in its own right and a vital part of Rockland County and the region as a whole.

### Some facts about Suffern:

The Village is 2.1 square miles. As of the 2000 census, the population was 11,006 in 4,634 households. 25 percent have children under 18 years of age. 47 percent are married couples. The median household income was \$59,700.



# 13 steps to help you begin

Before you open your doors you will need to know who to contact for signage approval, what days you have garbage collection, how to get your business entered into the police data base and so much more. Breathe a sigh of relief because all you questions will be answered here.

1

## WATER AND SEWER

If not already in place when you move in, contact the Deputy Treasurer (357-2600, x128) to turn on the water, connect the sewer hookup or regarding any other billing problem.

New buildings must have water or sewer hookups – applications are with the Planning Board (357-2600).

Make sure that the water meter is in your name. In order to change the meter from the former owner's name, or if it is a new facility, to register your own name, you need to contact Village Hall. In addition, if the number should change or if the phone line is being repaired, make sure that the Village is aware of this situation (357-2600).

2

## ROAD OPENING AND PERMITS

If you need to provide for a road opening for your business, you must get a permit to do so. Permits are available with the Department of Public Works (357-1617).

All new buildings must have road permits – applications are with the Planning Board (357-2600).

3

## SIGNS

Signs require Planning Board approval, and this includes your main store sign. Provide the Planning Board (357-2600) with a picture of your storefront and a drawing of the sign specifying colors. You must also contact the Planning Board for window signs of all types, including neon. Signs can ONLY be 10 percent of the window space. Exceptions include sales, functions and others. Applications and information available at the Planning Board office in Village Hall (357-2600)

4

## SAFETY

Contact the Police Department (357-2300) to have your business emergency contact information and your burglar and fire alarm information entered into their database.

Make sure that your facility has adequate fire extinguishers, smoke detectors and clear exits.

5

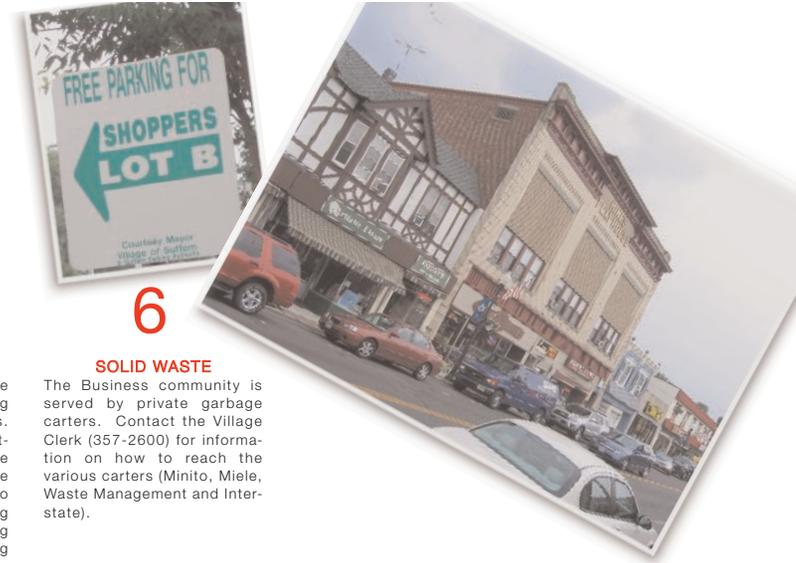
## PARKING

Municipal regulations require businesses to provide parking spaces for their customers. Contact the Building Department (357-2600 x139) to make sure you have provided the correct amount of space or to settle the fees for not providing the proper amount of parking spaces. For more on Parking see pages 18 and 19.

6

## SOLID WASTE

The Business community is served by private garbage carters. Contact the Village Clerk (357-2600) for information on how to reach the various carters (Minito, Miele, Waste Management and Interstate).





# 7

## CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

One decision to make when you set up your business is whether or not to join the Chamber of Commerce (357-8424). For more information visit [www.suffernchamberofcommerce.org](http://www.suffernchamberofcommerce.org). There are currently scores of proud members, representing businesses of all shapes and sizes. Some of the benefits and details of the Chamber membership are:

\* (fee information available upon request)

## reasons to join

The Chamber of Commerce not only beautifies the Village of Suffern by providing hanging baskets and "Welcome" banners but it can also help improve your business. Once a month you can meet with other business owners and work as a collective whole in order to get answers to questions, learn from speakers and enhance your enterprise

Discounts on Suffern Street Fair involvement for members.

Holiday dinner with local chamber businesses

Listing on the Chamber Website directory with links to your website

Your voice heard by business and community leaders

Chamber provided Village with "Welcome to Suffern" signs at all entry points

Chamber provided increased voltage and illumination of downtown street lamps

Chamber provided banners on street posts in summer and winter months



Chamber provided hanging plant baskets on street posts

Active partnerships with Village Government, Police Department and Parking Authority

Guest speakers at monthly meetings

Business networking meetings

Chamber-sponsored events – Street Fairs, Suffern Day, Holiday events, other programs

Street Fair Applications available through the chamber

Group Advertising rates available



## 8

### CHANGING STORE USAGE

If you are moving into a space previously occupied by a restaurant and your business is something outside of the food service industry (or visa versa) – a site plan must be submitted to the Planning Board. Restaurants wishing to add additional parking or outdoor tables must also seek Planning Board approval, as must anyone looking to alter their façade. All new buildings must also be approved by the Planning Board.

If you seek alterations to your property, you may require approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals (357-2600). If your building or overhang does not

follow the Village Code, then you will need to obtain a variance. Other situations that would require a variance include – building over the property line, unitizing fewer parking spaces than required, changes to the sign code, and others. When in doubt, contact the ZBA for more information.

ZBA approval is also needed for anything that would require a SEQUA (State Environmental Quality Review) application – such as building that would disturb wetlands. Application to the ZBA is also required for any appeals to Building Inspector rejections.

## places to go for answers

Before you add on, remove, alter or otherwise change the physical aspect of your business go to these sources in order to proceed safely and lawfully.

## 9

### PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board consists of five appointed members who must complete Land Use Law courses, and receive continued training in order to serve.

The Board advises and regulates variance requests, subdivision regulations, zoning changes, site plan regulations and recreation studies and they determine compliance with the Village Comprehensive Plan.

It also regulates sign permits, site plan reviews, historic preservation, architectural & subdivision reviews

ZBA review forms are available with the secretary at Village Hall (357-2600) and can be downloaded at [www.suffernvillage.com](http://www.suffernvillage.com). Please note that some applications may require a lawyer or architect.

TIP – When in doubt, call the Building Department first (357-2603) to find out if the Planning Board or Zoning Board of Appeals need to be involved in your plans.

## 10

### THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Any decision made by the Planning Board must follow Village Code.

The Board meets publicly the third Wednesday of the month, in addition to other informal meetings that are announced as needed.

Any requests, variances, zoning changes or other matters to be brought before the Planning Board must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the next meeting.

The Zoning Board of Appeals consists of five appointed members who meet publicly to decide on whether or not to allow variances to the Village's local zoning laws.

These variances are granted on the basis of practical or monetary difficulties and/or various hardships. The board also reviews administrative decisions of the building inspector when requested.

The Zoning Board of Appeals meets at Village Hall the third Thursday of each month at 7:30. (357-2600)





## 11

### CERTIFICATE OF USE

Certificates of Use are available at the Building Department, Village Hall (357-2600, x139) Monday through Friday from 9 am to 3 pm.

The Building Department is responsible for the enforcement of the New York State Building Code, the Suffern Zoning Laws and the Fire Prevention Code. All new construction must be in compliance, failure will result in the withholding of the Certificate of Occupancy.

Changes to existing structures require a building permit (357-2600 x139).

There is a set fee in place for locations with no construction and a separate fee for those that require new construction.

Obtaining a certificate could take as little as a day or could take longer if the Planning Board needs to review. Make sure you submit your application with a floor plan of the site along with the correct fee. Be certain to call for proper inspections with the Code Enforcement Officer (357-2600 x139) and make absolutely certain that your floor plan matches the actual layout of the business.

Keep your certificate applications as specific as possible. If the plan expands, make sure you add to your application. Everything must match. Always contact the Building Department or Code Enforcement Office before you make any changes to your business or business plan to make sure that you are in compliance with the Village Code and that you are filling out the proper paperwork.

This is based on square footage of the location and there is a fee attached to this application. Businesses must have an annual fire inspection. Call Building Department (357-2600 x 139) for the application and to schedule your inspection.

## last items

Never take anything for granted when it comes to changes you plan on making to your building. Always check with the proper authorities before you begin construction or open a new business.

## 12

### FIRE SAFETY CERTIFICATE

## 13

### FLOOR PLAN

Make sure you submit any and all floor plan changes to the Building Department (357-2600, x139).



Serving  
your  
customers

# 3 ways to attract customers

Take advantage of street fairs, concerts and holiday events so that you can promote your business and introduce it to new customers.

1

## DRAWING IN CUSTOMERS

Suffern has many events and facilities that attract people to our village and to our businesses – the following are a few of these:

Many ball fields, pocket parks and playgrounds to attract families in good weather

Gazebo in the heart of the village for concerts and other events

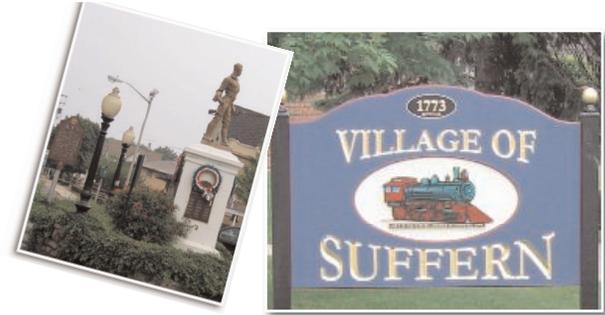
Fishing pond, skating and nature parks nearby

9/11 Memorial and reflection area at Donna Hallet Park within walking distance of the downtown shopping region

Holiday events – Easter Egg Hunt, Halloween Parade, Holiday lighting

Senior Citizen Clubs that meet regularly downtown

Family Day, Pool Parties, concerts and the Village Camp Out take place during summer months



Community room for events and meetings in Village Hall and Leo Lydon Community Building

Teen Theater Program

Fishing pond, skating and nature parks nearby

George J. Parness Community Center – offers year-round programs and is home to many events that draw in people to the Village

Farmers Market – held every Saturday Morning during the warm months of the year in the Orange Avenue commuter lot.

Suffern Day – Partnership between the Village Government and the Chamber of Commerce – designed to promote the Village and its Business Community - full day of music, games, performances and a chance for businesses to provide information or services



## the other two ways

Never take anything for granted when it comes to changes you plan on making to your building. Always check with the proper authorities before you begin construction or open a new business.

# 2

### ADVERTISING

If you intend to canvass, solicit, distribute flyers or call from door to door within the Village of Suffern, you need to inform the Village Clerk and fill out the appropriate paperwork (357-2600)

# 3

### SUFFERN STREET FAIRS

The Signature event for the Business Community – held three times during the year. Applications are available through the Suffern Chamber of Commerce [www.suffernchamberofcommerce.org](http://www.suffernchamberofcommerce.org), (357-8424 or 357-2600)



Suffern businesses provide outdoor displays to sell their wares, food, provide services or simply distribute information. Lafayette Avenue and its side streets are closed down and people from all over the region gravitate to the Village

Many activities for children – past features include petting zoo, rides, etc.

Musical entertainment throughout the day

Farmers Market – held every Saturday Morning during the warm months of the year in the Orange Avenue commuter lot.

Free parking in municipal lots



# 4 parking related details

Where do you park? Where do your customers park? Do you need a parking permit? All will be answered here.

## 1

### THE PARKING AUTHORITY

The Parking Authority (368-0017) establishes the criteria used to allocate parking spaces for annual, monthly and yearly passes. Annual passes are allocated to persons renewing their passes from the previous year and then sold to the wait list.

The Village Parking lots serve hundreds of commuters and shoppers, as well as the local merchants and their employees. The Parking Authority provides two and three hour parking for shoppers, as well as daily and monthly permits for fees. (368-0017 for fee details.) Daily Permits are available at Parking Authority and at their website-[www.sufferndowntown.com](http://www.sufferndowntown.com)

## 2

### PARKING AUTHORITY HOURS

The Parking Authority is located at 45 Lafayette Ave.

Hours of operation are:  
Monday and Wednesday  
7 am to 1 pm

Tuesday and Thursday  
9 am to 1 pm and 5pm to 8 pm

Friday  
7 am to 1 pm and 5pm to 9pm

Saturday  
9 am to noon and 5pm to 0pm

Sunday  
Closed

## 3

### PARKING LOT DETAILS

For a virtual tour visit:  
[SuffernParking.org](http://SuffernParking.org)

LOT A – Orange Avenue and Lafayette Avenue (across from bus stop). Daily Permits available and three hour free parking area for shoppers.

Lot B – Chestnut Street (Across from Post Office) – Daily and monthly permits available and three hour free parking area for shoppers. Overnight parking by permit.

LOT C – Orange Avenue and Lafayette Avenue. Three hour free parking for shoppers.

LOT D – Orange Avenue (under Thruway Bridge). Daily and monthly Permits available.

LOT E – Off Chestnut Street by the Ball fields. Daily Permits available.

LOT H – Hallet Place (North of Post Office) – daily and monthly Permits available.

Lot O - Behind 120-/122 Orange Ave - access via entrance to 122 Orange Ave. Daily and monthly permits available,

LOT R – Suffern Train Station. Daily numbered spaces – permits available. No permits required after 10:30 am.

LOT T – Parking next to Lafayette Theater – Three hour free parking for shoppers. Overnight parking by permit.

## 4

### GETTING BUSINESS PERMITS

There is no overnight parking in any lots other than Lots B and T, where it is only available by permit.

Two hour parking is available on the streets of the business district. Merchants are NOT to park on the street.

No permits are required after 4pm daily and all day on weekends and Federal holidays.

Place permits on the inside of windshield on the driver's side, lower corner. Do not use on another vehicle - permits are not transferable.

Free parking in municipal lots.



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No permits required after 4 pm daily and all day on weekends and Federal Holidays.

Place permits on inside of windshield on the driver's side, lower corner. Do not use on another vehicle. Permits are non-transferable.

Free parking in municipal lots



# 10 essentials

Who do you contact if a street light goes out or if you have a question about your water bill? Here are the answers.



1

### ROAD MAINTENANCE

Public Works Department maintains the roads and is responsible for the following (357-1617)

- Road Repair
- Street sweeping
- Snow plowing
- Cleaning catch basins and storm drains
- Trimming vegetation within the right-of-way
- Pruning and removing dead trees within the right-of-way
- Street signs
- Traffic Safety signs
- Pavement stripping
- Village facilities grounds maintenance

Contact the Public Works Department at 357-1617 for tree removal permits - tree trimming does not require a permit.

2

Street lights – Contact the Public Works Department (357-1617) if there is a problem

Street Decorations – If your decorations spill over onto the sidewalk area, a permit is required from the Public Works Department (357-1617).

### WATER

Suffern has its own Water Department and has control over its own water supply – The water bill is sent out in November and May and is due 30 days from the date of the bill or is subject to penalties (357-1617)

3&4

### TAXES

Building owners are responsible for paying Village and Solid Waste Taxes, as well as other taxes (town, county, school, etc.). Contact the Village Clerk for more details (357-2600). If you do not own your building, you are not responsible for payment, your landlord is. Village Clerk is open from Monday-Friday from 8 am to 4 pm.

### FIRE DEPARTMENT

Two fire houses serve Suffern – Hose Company #1, 35 Washington Ave. and Hook & Ladder Co. #1, 143 Lafayette Ave. In an emergency, call 911.

Fire Houses are open for tours. Contact the Chief at (357-6066 or 357-2300)

5

### POLICE

Suffern has its own Police Department (357-2300), established back in 1896, it now contains a patrol force, detective bureau, Drug Abuse Prevention Education program, Juvenile Aid Bureau, K-9 unit, and bicycle/motorcycle patrol.

**TIPS – Always make sure you lock your doors and windows; you'd be surprised how many thefts result from failure to lock up properly!**

**Report all suspicious behavior, no matter how minor it seems. If possible, leave a light on inside your business so that a patrol may have a better view into your facility.**

6&7

### SUFFERN FREE LIBRARY

Dedicated in 2000 – in addition to a vast array of adult and children's books, the library has programs available such as children's story hours, summer reading programs, arts and crafts and a community room which is available for all sorts of events and discussions. Contact the library at 357-1237

### SUFFERN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Not-for-Profit designed to benefit children, youth, seniors and families in Suffern and the entire region.

Contact the Suffern Community Foundation at

8&9

### SUFFERN MUSEUM

On the top floor of the Municipal Building – Features the rich history of Suffern. Open second Monday of the month at 7:30 pm and Sundays from 2-4 pm, except on major holiday weekends. Museum is available by appointment in July and August. (357-2600)

### THE RAILROAD

Located on Orange Avenue and housed in the historic 1908 Wells Fargo Building. Museum is available by appointment only. (357-2600)

10

### VILLAGE GOVERNMENT

Suffern's Village board consists of a Mayor and four trustees elected every two years. The Mayor - Supervises the Police Department and other branches of Village government and meets regularly with the Chamber of Commerce to discuss ways to help the village residents and businesses. The Mayor is available by appointment.

Trustees – The governing and legislative body of the village, the trustees set policy and appropriate funds for governmental departments and services. They adopt the budget, levy taxes, fill appointments, authorize bonds, acquire lands, and other such actions for the people. The trustees are directly involved with the

Business Community through a Marketing Committee with the Chamber of Commerce.

Board Meetings – the first Monday following the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 pm at Village Hall. (357-2600)



# 22 #’s to keep at hand

Throughout this booklet we have listed contact information for each department and agency. Here again is that information along with other contact numbers and websites conveniently listed in a directory.

Suffern Chamber of Commerce – 845-357-8424  
[www.suffernchamberofcommerce.org](http://www.suffernchamberofcommerce.org), Email - [suffernchamberofcommerce@yahoo.com](mailto:suffernchamberofcommerce@yahoo.com)

Suffern Village Hall – 845-357-2600, [www.suffernvillage.com](http://www.suffernvillage.com)

Suffern Planning Board/Zoning Board of Appeals - 845-357-2600

Suffern Building Department - 845-357-2603

Suffern Recreation Department - 845-357-7943

Suffern Village Clerk - 845-357-2600  
Email - [suffernclerk@suffernvillage.com](mailto:suffernclerk@suffernvillage.com)

Suffern Police Department - 845-357-2300  
[www.suffernpolice.com](http://www.suffernpolice.com)

Suffern Fire Department - 845-357-6066/357-2300  
[www.suffernfire.org](http://www.suffernfire.org)

Suffern Parking Authority - 845-368-0017  
[www.suffernparking.org](http://www.suffernparking.org)

Bulk Item Pickup – Department of Public Works - 845-357-1617  
Email address - [deptpubworks@suffernvillage.com](mailto:deptpubworks@suffernvillage.com)

Code Enforcement - 845-357-2603 x122

Suffern Village Attorney - 845-357-2600 x111

Suffern Free Library - 845-357-1237  
[www.suffernfreelibrary.org](http://www.suffernfreelibrary.org), [www.rcls.org/sufpl](http://www.rcls.org/sufpl)

Suffern Village Pool - 845-357-1116

George Parness Community Center - 845-369-8603

Suffern Recreation Department - 845-357-7943

Ramapo Valley Ambulance - 845-357-1788

Good Samaritan Hospital - 845-368-5000  
[www.goodsamhosp.org](http://www.goodsamhosp.org)

Ramapo Central School District - 845-357-7783  
[www.ramapocentral.org](http://www.ramapocentral.org)

[www.suffernfootball.com](http://www.suffernfootball.com)

[www.suffernlittleleague.com](http://www.suffernlittleleague.com)

[www.suffernrotary.org](http://www.suffernrotary.org)

Check list

8

## items to review

We've made the list now you make sure to check it twice. Highlight the items that pertain to you then go back and cross it off the list once you have followed through.

### BUILDING INSPECTOR/BUILDING DEPARTMENT

- Find out zoning requirements
- Schedule fire safety inspection
- Receive any referrals to the Planning Board
- Obtain application for Certificate of Use – make sure to include a floor plan. Submit any floor plan changes to the Building Department.
- Building Permit for changes to existing structures
- Code Enforcement Officer must be contacted for inspection

### VILLAGE CLERK

- Water and sewer billing information
- Garbage pickup information from the Village Engineer
- Grand Opening Banner permits – may remain up for up to a month
- Register here if you intend to canvass, solicit, distribute flyers or call door to door
- If you own the building, make sure you pay taxes with the clerk

### PLANNING BOARD

- Provide with your information two weeks prior to your hearing
- If you have a new building, obtain application for water/sewer hookup
- Road permit application (New buildings only)
- Sign Application from the Planning Board Secretary – provide a picture of the storefront and a drawing of the sign and colors. Approval needed for all types of sign, including neon.
- Submit site plan if changing the store's usage, façade alterations, addition parking and/or outdoor seating.



### POLICE/FIRE DEPARTMENT

- Provide your business' information for inclusion in police database
- Contact police for Crime Prevention Survey to better your protection
- Provide adequate fire extinguishers, smoke detectors and clear exits

### PUBLIC WORKS

- Permit for road opening if necessary.
- Obtain permits for tree removal
- Contact if there is problem with street lights
- Obtain a permit if your holiday lighting spills into sidewalk area

### PARKING AUTHORITY

- Obtain necessary permits for your business' parking spaces as required by village law

### DEPUTY TREASURER

- Turn on the water, connect the sewer hookup – make sure the meter is in the correct name.

### ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

- Necessary to get variance if – building or overhang does not follow Village Code, building goes over the property line, alterations to parking requirements, sign code changes. When in doubt, call the ZBA.
- Also needed for anything requiring SEQUA approval and to appeal decisions of the Building Inspector.

### CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

- Contact for information on joining the organization and being part of the business community.
- Obtain application for Street Fair participation

A blue paperclip is attached to the left side of an orange folder. A white rectangular note is placed on the folder, containing two lines of handwritten text. The background shows other colorful folders in shades of grey, yellow, and pink.

*Welcome to the Suffern  
business community.*

*We wish you the very best in  
your new endeavor.*