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## Park district puts replacement levy on ballot

By Lisa Wakeland  
lwakeland@communitypress.com

ANDERSON TWP. - The Anderson Township Park District is placing an operating levy on the November ballot.

This 1.9-mill levy will replace the current operating levy, and allow the park district to maintain the parks for the next 10 years.

Ken Kushner, executive director of the park district, said even though the ballot language lists the new levy as an additional tax, it is not.

Under Ohio law, new levies can only be called a replacement levy in the last year it is effective, and the current levy is set to expire in 2010.

If the new operating levy is approved, Kushner said taxes from the 2000 levy would not be collected, and the levy would be rescinded.

If passed, the operating levy would annually cost a homeowner \$56.19 per \$100,000 of assessed value.

Kushner said one reason to put the levy on the ballot early is because the park levies have only been successful in presidential election years.

Financial officer Biz Martella said by going to the voters early, the park district has another opportunity to get the levy passed the following year if it fails.

The park district operating levy has stayed at 1.9 mills since 1992, providing funds to maintain facilities and infrastructure, plan for new recreational spaces and continue to offer a variety of year-round activities.

In addition to maintaining the parks and activities, other projects being considered for the next levy cycle are the continued development of Johnson Hills Park on Little Dry Run, renovating the playgrounds in the park system and enhancing the parking lots at Clear Creek Park on Batavia Road.

Kushner said playground equipment lasts around 10 years before it needs replacement, and the park district would need to implement a renovation schedule since equipment can cost between \$100,000 and \$600,000.

For Clear Creek Park, Kushner said the overflow grass parking can be a problem on rainy days and the park has enough parking to accommodate six fields, not all 24 fields.

Martella said the levy brings in an additional \$400,000 a year to the park district's operating budget, which was \$3.7 million in 2008.