

# LOWER SAUCON TOWNSHIP GEO-GAME POLICY AND GUIDELINES (includes Geocaching, Letterboxing)

The purpose of this policy is to establish management and placement guidelines for geo-gaming so as to minimize the impact on natural and cultural resources in the municipal parks of Lower Saucon Township. Lower Saucon Township maintains seven (7) parks and a 1.4 mile portion of the Saucon Rail Trail located in the Township. Permits are required to place Geo-caches and Letterboxes in Township parks and along the Saucon Rail Trail. There is no fee to obtain a Permit.

**Geocaching** involves the placement of 'caches' (usually small containers) in natural areas. The general location and geographic coordinates of these caches are shared on the Internet, i.e. at [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com). Global Positioning System (GPS) users can then use the location coordinates to search for and discover the caches. Caches contain a variety of items and the visitor is asked to leave a new item to replace the one they removed. Cache owners monitor the cache they placed with logbooks in the cache box, as well as on Internet sites.

**Letterboxing** involves the placement of small containers in natural or urban areas that contain a personal stamp (usually a rubber stamp) and logbook. Participants follow clues, sometimes using a compass or maps, to locate the letterbox. The logbook in the box is then stamped with the finder's personal stamp and the letterbox stamp is stamped inside the finder's logbook. Information on letterboxing, which began in Dartmoor England and has spread to the USA, is available at [www.letterboxing.org](http://www.letterboxing.org)

## LOWER SAUCON TOWNSHIP PROCEDURE FOR PLACING A GEOCACHE OR LETTERBOX IN A TOWNSHIP PARK OR SAUCON RAIL TRAIL:

1. Read this Policy and Guidelines.
2. Complete the Permit Application.
3. Submit the application to the Lower Saucon Township office (3700 Old Philadelphia Pike, Bethlehem, PA 18015).
4. A Permit or a Denial Letter will be issued to the applicant within 10-days.
5. Upon issuance of a permit, the cache owner may then place and promote the cache.

1. The cache/letterbox owner is responsible for care and monitoring of the cache/letterbox while on municipal park/rail trail property. Lower Saucon Township is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.
2. ALL municipal park and rail trail regulations must be followed, including the use of the park/rail trail only during daylight hours (from dawn to dusk). For a complete listing of Township Parks and Saucon Rail Trail, please visit the Lower Saucon Township website at [www.lowersaucontownship.org/parks.html](http://www.lowersaucontownship.org/parks.html) and [www.lowersaucontownship.org/srt.html](http://www.lowersaucontownship.org/srt.html).
3. When choosing a location for a geo-cache or letterbox, owners should be aware of the perception of other park/rail trail visitors and non-geocachers. Caches that interfere with current park/rail trail activities, pavilion reservations, or other recreational activities will not be approved. Also, cache locations should not pose any danger to those searching for the cache or to other visitors. Lower Saucon Township retains the right to remove a cache/letterbox in the interest of protecting the park/rail trail environment and/or visitor safety.
4. No archaeological, historic, or ecologically sensitive sites will be approved for cache/letterbox locations.
5. No burying or digging is permitted.
6. Cutting trees, shrubs, or plants is prohibited.
7. Physical caches/letterbox are prohibited inside or attached to any Lower Saucon Township facility or structure. Caches/letterboxes may not be placed in dangerous, inappropriate, or protected areas and habitats; or on cliffs, underground or underwater.
8. FOR CACHES/LETTERBOXES ON THE SAUCON RAIL TRAIL:
  - a. Caches/letterboxes on the Saucon Rail Trail must be placed off the 10-foot wide gravel pedestrian/bike trail but within the 30-foot right-of-way that is leased from SEPTA
  - b. Caches/letterboxes are prohibited on any private property that borders the Rail Trail.
  - c. Caches/letterboxes should not be placed behind any of the safety fences on the Rail Trail
  - d. Caches/letterboxes may not be placed in locations that that may lead to the creation of spur trails.
  - e. Caches/letterboxes should not impede activities such as walking, biking and cross country skiing on the Rail Trail.
9. Lower Saucon Township will issue permits for "Micro" caches (such as a 35mm film container), "Regular" caches (such as a plastic kitchen container), and "Mystery" caches. Multi-stage caches will be reviewed on a case-by case basis and may require separate permits.
10. No "large" caches/letterboxes (i.e., buckets, ammo cases, pipe containers) are permitted.
11. Caches/letterboxes must be placed at least 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a mile apart. With the 1.4 mile distance of the Township portion of the Rail Trail, this would permit up to fourteen (14) caches/letterboxes on the Rail Trail.

12. The cache/letterbox owner must provide all application information and be available to accompany the Township representatives to the proposed cache/letterbox location, if requested.
13. A photo of the proposed cache/letterbox container must be furnished with the application.
14. A list of the proposed cache/letterbox container contents must also be submitted with the permit application.
15. No firearms, weapons, ammo, food, alcohol, drugs, explosives, or adult items may be included in the cache/letterbox. Cache/letterbox contents must be suitable for all ages.
16. Caches/letterboxes placed in Lower Saucon Township municipal parks/rail trail should be available to the public via the public website (such as [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com) or [www.letterboxing.org](http://www.letterboxing.org)).
17. If a cache/letterbox is archived by the owner, the Township should be notified.
18. This policy is effective immediately for all geocaches/letterboxes within the Lower Saucon Township municipal parks and on the Township portion of the Saucon Rail Trail. Non-permitted caches/letterboxes may be removed and destroyed by Lower Saucon Township at anytime.

## TOWNSHIP GEOCACHING / LETTERBOXING SITE PERMIT APPLICATION

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CACHE/LETTERBOX OWNER INFORMATION:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Caching Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**CACHE/LETTERBOX INFORMATION:**

Cache/Box Name (as listed on geo/box website): \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Cache:  Micro  Regular  Mystery  Letterbox Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Cache/Box Container Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Container Contents: \_\_\_\_\_

**REQUESTED CACHE/LETTERBOX SITE LOCATION:**

Township Park/Rail Trail Requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Description/Address of Location: \_\_\_\_\_

GPS Coordinates: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of hiding place: \_\_\_\_\_

This cache will be posted on the following URLs: \_\_\_\_\_

A photo of the cache container must be attached to this application.

**FOR TOWNSHIP USE ONLY:**

Permit Number: LST - \_\_\_\_\_

Date Issued: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

For a complete listing of Township Parks and the Saucon Rail Trail, please visit the Lower Saucon Township website at [www.lowersaucontownship.org/parks.html](http://www.lowersaucontownship.org/parks.html) and [www.lowersaucontownship.org/srt.html](http://www.lowersaucontownship.org/srt.html)