



BENNINGER BULLETIN

2015 EDITION

Celebrating 40 years in business

Bruce Benninger started the Benninger Insurance Agency in 1974 with his wife Diane.

Bruce decided to represent Erie Insurance from the beginning. While continuing to represent Erie Insurance it was decided to add additional insurance companies to allow a wider variety of options for our clients. Eventually, Bruce's son Wayne and daughter Dawn joined the agency. After time Wayne started a family and moved away.

After years of dedicated service to the Poconos Bruce decided to retire. He had forged a relationship with Ron Brosky over the years. They both valued commitment and service to their customers. Bruce felt this was a perfect match and he sold the Benninger Agency in 2008 to JMB Inc, an affiliate of Brosky Insurance Agency Inc.

The staff at Benninger was retained to make the transition as seamless as possible. Dianne

Cosgrove, our manager has been a dedicated valuable employee for 20 years. Joining Dianne are the other valuable members of our top notch team, Carole Costenbader 19 years, Robyn VanWhy 11 years, Samantha Perry 5 years and Amy Hammer 1 year. They strive to give the best possible service to our clients. Today the Benninger Agency

celebrates 40 wonderful years of dedicated commitment to their clients in the Pocono's.

BENNINGER
Insurance Agency

40
YEARS

"We will always be grateful to our customers and hope they feel they always got and will get great service, affordable insurance and respect from the Benninger/Brosky Insurance Team."

Brosky Insurance is celebrating 50 years in business serving the Lehigh Valley. Ron Brosky and his three children Todd Brosky, Scott Brosky and Cheryl Butler are equal partners in both agencies. We would be remiss if we did not thank all of our customers some of who have been clients from the first year. We will always be grateful to our customers and hope they feel they always got and will get great service, affordable insurance and respect from the Benninger/Brosky Insurance Team.

***Thank you for a GREAT
40 YEARS.***

Reduce Basement Flood Risks

Rain showers might be dandy for your garden but not for your basement.

Wet basement problems may be solved simply by repairing an obvious gutter or downspout leak, but other water problems may have causes that are difficult to identify or expensive to fix.

The Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety offers three steps to help you reduce the risk of repeated basement flooding. If you cannot determine the source of the problem yourself, contact a professional.

Step 1 - Evaluate the risk by considering these questions:

- Does the basement flood every year at approximately the same time?
- Does the basement flood during random intervals?
- Where is the basement flooding?
 - Is it at the top of the basement wall?
 - At the bottom of the wall?
 - Through a floor drain?

Step 2 - Inspect the location where water is entering and consider these solutions:

- Reshape the landscaping around the foundation of the building or home. If water is entering near the top of the wall in one location, an improperly sloped landscape angled toward the building could be the cause.
- Extend and re-direct the downspouts away from the foundation wall.
- Caulk any cracks on the exterior and interior of the wall around where the water is entering.
- Consider hiring a licensed contractor to install a waterproofing membrane. If the entire wall is damp or water is entering through multiple wall surfaces, this may be a sign of a faulty or missing exterior water proofing membrane.
- For an unfinished basement, consider applying an internal sealant that can be painted on interior surface of basement walls. These products typically require constant maintenance or they will stop working.

Step 3 - Try other location-based solutions:

If the water appears to be entering the home or building near the foundation or through a floor drain, consider installing a French drain or a sump pump.

The French drain could be installed around the perimeter of the building, diverting the water away from the foundation. A sump pump should be installed in the basement floor with a battery backup system. Before you begin, consider hiring a licensed contractor for help.

Check your insurance coverage

As with any type of insurance, it's important to know what your policy does and doesn't cover. All basic homeowners insurance policies exclude flood and certain types of water-related damages. Only flood insurance will cover losses in the event of a flood.

Flood insurance can be purchased from the federal government's National Flood Insurance Program, and from some private insurers. Erie Insurance works with American Bankers Insurance to offer flood coverage. There is a 30-day waiting period for the policy to go into effect, so it's important to start the process before severe weather strikes.

Contact our agency to determine what is covered under your insurance policy and learn more about flood insurance coverage. We can help you review your current coverage and help customize a policy that's right for you. Call 610-264-3940.

DEFINITION of 'Insurance'

A contract (policy) in which an individual or entity receives financial protection or reimbursement against losses from an insurance company. The company pools clients' risks to make payments more affordable for the insured.

Common everyday lingo

The many of us pay for the misfortune of the few!!!

Parents and Children Beware

Children on their parent's auto insurance policies must be aware that they cannot buy a car in their own name while only a driver on their parent's policy. YOU MUST BE A NAMED INSURED. Parents look to put your children on their own auto insurance policy as soon as they turn 18 years old, look to purchase their own auto, graduate college, begin a full time job or move out of your household.

Insurance Shopping

Did you know that excessive insurance shopping hurts you? Building a relationship with an insurance company gives you better rates, longevity discounts, accident forgiveness or a lesser surcharge due to the length of time insured with a company.

Commercial Insurance

Do you own a business?? Do you need commercial liability insurance or own a building or auto that needs coverage? We represent top insurance companies for commercial risks. Give us a call to compare pricing and coverage.

Find us on Facebook!!!!

Could you be the beneficiary of an unclaimed life insurance policy?

It's estimated that there is \$1 billion worth of forgotten and lost life insurance policies in America.

How to prevent a lost life insurance policy:

- Clearly name your beneficiaries on the policy(s) and also tell them the name of the insurance agent and company that issued the policy(s)
- Keep your insurance documents in a safe, logical place like a fireproof safe at your home or a safe deposit in the bank.

How to find a lost life insurance policy:

- **Comb the house.** Sometimes the thing we're missing is right under our nose. So first go through any files or safe deposit boxes where the lost life insurance policy may be before launching a full-fledged investigation.
- **Think back to the beginning.** Which insurance agent may have sold it? Which insurance company may have issued it? What was the name and Social Security number of the person who bought it? Was the policy a term or permanent life policy? Any information you can remember will help the insurance agent and/or customer representative you contact. You might also have to contact any attorneys, financial advisors, accountants or other advisors who might have had something to do with

issuing the policy. If the policyholder passed away relatively recently and you have the authority or permission, take a look at the deceased person's bank statements for premium payments or policy-related material.

- **Contact your state's insurance department.** By law, an insurance company that is unable to locate a policy's beneficiary is required to turn over the benefits to the state's unclaimed property office. Think about the state in which the policy could have been issued. Then visit the National Association of Insurance Commissioners website to learn how to contact your state insurance department at www.naic.org. Also consider contacting the deceased individual's former employer. Many times the policies are group policies that were originally issued through an employer.
- **Watch out for scammers.** There are life insurance scams out there whereby an "insurer" promises to reunite you with unclaimed funds. Don't immediately respond to someone claiming to be the representative of an insurance company. Instead, call that insurance company's claims number verify the offer is legitimate.

Learn more about life insurance options and which kind of policy may benefit you and your loved ones, please contact our office at 610-264-3940 and ask for Jonathan.

Surprising factors that affect home insurance rates

Your home is generally the largest investment that you will own. There are several factors that play a role in the cost of your home insurance. Is the front of your home stone, brick or vinyl siding? A good insurance agent will want to know details about your home. Do you have hardwood floors, or carpeting? What texture is on your walls, paint, wallpaper or tile? Questions by your agent will allow them to understand the home they will be insuring.

Home insurance companies give significant consideration to past home insurance claims submitted by the homeowner as well as claims related to that property and the homeowner's credit.

While insurers are there to pay claims, they're also in it to make money. Insuring a home that has had multiple claims in the past three to seven years, even if a previous owner filed a claim, can bump your home insurance premium into a higher tier. You may not even be eligible for home insurance based on the number of recent past claims filed.

Weather related claims are a major culprit for driving up rates for everyone. Wind and hail claims are the most expensive types of home insurance claims according to the Insurance Information Institute.

A lot of other personal factors will play a key role in the price of your home insurance.

Pets

What kind of dog breed do you have? How about an exotic animal?

Credit rating

Your credit score/insurance score will impact your homeowners insurance; don't be alarmed if you have poor credit, because this will mean higher insurance rates. Insurance companies believe this is a good predictor of submitted claims in the future. Each insurance company has their own unique rubric for determining premiums.

Age and homeownership status

First time home buyers could pay more than a mature home buyer who is older and been well established in their community.

Risky fun

Do your children beg you for a trampoline, swimming pool or swing set? These fun activities can be extremely dangerous if not monitored properly.

Location

Where your home is located also affects your insurance rates. Are you close to the coastline, a fault line or a flat region where tornadoes like to strike?

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Deductibles

The higher the deductible you choose, the lower the annual insurance premium you pay. This is an excellent way to control the cost of your home insurance policy.

Having the proper type and amount of insurance in place is vital in today's world. Pull out your policy and schedule a talk with your agent to discuss what you have and what you need. This should help you sleep better at night by knowing if there is a big loss, you've got some help on your side.

Every insurance company views these items with different importance. Allow our licensed agents to determine which insurance company fits best for you.

We Appreciate Your Business

Thanks again for choosing Benninger Insurance-where you get more than coverage and service. You get 40 years of business experience behind you, plus the freedom to manage your policy your way with a licensed insurance agent in person.
(We) Do it the personal way!!!!

MEET THE STAFF

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Scott Brosky, CISR

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