

CECIL COUNTY CHRISTMAS PARADE

2026 APPLICATION PACKAGE

P.O. Box 528 / 106 South Main Street - North East, MD 21901-0528
Telephone: 410-287-5801 (extension 7102)

November 2026

Greetings,

On behalf of the Town of North East and the Parade Committee, I am happy to invite you to complete an application for the 2026 Cecil County Christmas Parade to be held at noon on Saturday, December 5, 2026. You are receiving an application because you are a past participant, you have contacted us and have requested an application, or we believe you would be a great addition to the parade.

Please review the entire package carefully since categories and regulations have changed effective 2026. We ask that you please pay special attention to the regulations on pages 3, 4, 5 and 6 because they have been revised. Do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions regarding the regulations. In addition, if you are completing the application; however, another member from your organization or group will be representing the organization or group on parade day, please provide the name and contact information of the individual as well as make sure they have a copy of the regulations with them on parade day.

All commercial entries are required to submit the $50.00 entry fee with your application. If paying by check, please make the check payable to the "Town of North East". Please indicate Cecil County Christmas Parade in the bottom left corner of your check.

Please note "inclement weather date" of December 12, 2026 at Noon! If postponement is necessary, the decision will be made by noon on December 4, 2026. Please call 410-287-5801 or visit our website at www.northeastmd.org

If you should have any questions, please contact Stephanie Dean at: 410-287-5801, ext. 7102 or via email at sdean@northeastmd.org. Applications may also be obtained by visiting our web site at www.northeastmd.org.

Thank you for your commitment. Without you we would not have the opportunity to have a successful fun family event!

Sincerely,
Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie
Parade Chair

MISSION STATEMENT

To bring our entire community together to celebrate the holiday season, where the spirit of goodwill and togetherness creates a positive experience for spectators, volunteers, and participants alike.

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE FOR YOUR USE

- Regulations to Participate .....Pages 3 - 5
- Directions and Map to Parade Staging Area.....Page 6
- General Application to Participate.....Pages 7 & 8
- Vehicle Application.....Page 9
- Equestrian Application.....Page 10

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE

BY 4:00 PM - MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2026

NO EXCEPTIONS

Winners will be listed on www.northeastmd.org by December 30, 2026. Prizes will be mailed to each winner by the end of December.

Thank you for participating in the parade and we hope that you have a great day!

REGULATIONS TO PARTICIPATE – 2026

Mission Statement: To bring our entire community together to celebrate the holiday season, where the spirit of goodwill and togetherness creates a positive experience for spectators, volunteers, and participants alike.

ARRIVAL AND STAGING INSTRUCTIONS

ARRIVAL TIME: Arrive by 11:00 a.m., but not before 10:00 a.m. Please do not arrive late!

STAGING AREA: Staging Area directions on page 7 must be followed. Anyone attempting to stage other than by the directions will be denied and rerouted. You may not park in the staging area unless your vehicle is to be driven in the parade. Entries with participants walking in the parade shall have participants staged together. Entries are prohibited from having members enter the parade along the parade route.

MARCHING ENTRIES: Due to limited space, please arrange to carpool to drop off participants. Carpooling cars will be allowed to stop only long enough to drop off participants and must leave the staging area immediately. Please have your child dressed in their parade attire and ready to go. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

LINEUP: Your predetermined placement in the parade will be assigned by a Committee member on parade day upon arrival. Please do not contact Town Hall prior to the parade to obtain this information. Due to withdrawals and last-minute adjustments, final lineup positions are determined the morning of the parade.

For safety reasons, spectators from the crowd cannot join the parade once the parade has started processing.

FLOAT AND VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS

SIZE OF FLOATS: All floats, including tow vehicles, may not be higher than 11 feet, wider than 12 feet, and must be able to make a 90-degree corner within two traffic lanes. The length of a float, including the tow vehicle, may not exceed 60 feet without prior approval.

All floats must use fire-retardant materials and carry a fire extinguisher. Floats must have handholds or barriers to secure riders in case of sudden stops or uneven movement. Vehicle and float drivers must have a clear view from the front of the vehicle at all times.

DRIVER REQUIREMENTS: All cars, trucks, and other motorized vehicles must be driven by licensed; insured drivers who are at least 18 years old. Drivers must possess a valid driver's license and proof of current automobile insurance. We are aware that many organizations rely on volunteers to assist with parade entries. Please make every effort to utilize drivers who are proficient in backing up vehicles, trailers, floats, etc.

HORNS AND SIRENS: No sirens, vehicle horns, air horns, or similar warning devices may be used during the parade, except in an emergency or by authorized emergency personnel performing official duties.

SAFETY AND PARADE CONDUCT

SAFETY: Please help us keep our children safe! To assure a safe environment and eliminate the possibility of children running into the street/parade route, NO THROWING OR DISTRIBUTING of any items (including, but not limited to candy, gum, giveaway items, printed material, or promotional material) is permitted by a parade entry.

This includes anyone walking, riding, or participating in the parade. Anyone observed throwing or distributing items along the parade route will be prohibited from participating in future parades. Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

PARTICIPANT CONDUCT: All individuals and organizations participating in the parade are expected to conduct themselves courteously, in good taste, and with safety in mind at all times during staging, the parade procession, and dismissal of the parade.

ALCOHOL: The possession, consumption, or distribution of alcoholic beverages by parade participants is strictly prohibited during staging, the parade procession, and dismissal. Violations will result in disqualification.

PARADE OFFICIALS: All entries and participants must follow the directions of parade committee members and police officers at all times. The parade committee members will be wearing reflective vests or some identifying clothing.

MOVEMENT: All entries must maintain a safe distance behind the entry in front of them. Please do not bunch up or allow large gaps to form. Entries may not stop along the parade route except when directed by parade officials, when the parade stops, during an emergency, or for authorized judging.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

HOLIDAY THEME: All entries must depict a visible Christmas or holiday theme through appropriate decorations, such as bows, wreaths, garlands, lights, streamers, ornaments, or other holiday-themed elements. Walking groups, including support staff, must also reflect the parade theme through clothing, costumes, accessories, banners, or decorations.

FLAGS AND BANNERS: Only American, state, county, municipal, school, scouting organization, youth group, or Christmas/holiday-themed flags and banners are permitted to be displayed by parade entries. All flags and banners must comply with the parade's holiday theme and other applicable regulations.

SANTA CLAUS: The Committee has arranged for Santa Claus, who will appear at the end of the parade. No one may have a Santa in their entry. Please do not confuse the children with another Santa! Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

ANIMALS: Horses, dogs, cows, reptiles, and any other wild or domestic animals shall not be in the parade without being identified on the Parade application.

SOLICITING: No soliciting or advertising for membership of organizations is permitted on floats, signs, vehicles, etc.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: Because the Cecil County Christmas Parade is a non-political family event and because many of our current elected officials serve as judges for the parade, and therefore cannot participate, please observe the following policy:

No political floats, vehicles, or groups containing signs, banners, T-shirts, or any other type of political advertising promoting specific candidates or ballot questions will be permitted. Only seated elected officials may be part of the parade, but their entries must have a Christmas theme and must be decorated appropriately. These entries may contain the name of the elected official but will have no reference to any upcoming election.

Only seated elected officials may be part of the parade, but their entries must have a Christmas theme and must be decorated appropriately. These entries may contain the name of the elected official but will have no reference to any upcoming election.

Any entry that does not follow these guidelines (at the sole discretion of parade officials) will not be allowed to participate and will be asked to leave the parade lineup.

APPLICATIONS AND APPROVAL: All applicants must return the application with a signature. All entries must be approved by the Parade Committee before entering the line up to march. Substantial changes to approved entries must receive prior approval. Receipt of application does not guarantee acceptance into the parade.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENT: Entries depicting and/or promoting violence, illegal drugs, illicit or illegal activities, or otherwise, inappropriate for a family audience will be disqualified and not allowed in the parade.

PARKING: Parade participants' cars, buses, and vehicles may park at Turner Park or the North East Community Park after dropping off participants at their assigned locations.

GROUP RESPONSIBILITY: If you are completing this application on behalf of an organization or group, please make sure all members of the organization or group receive a copy of the Regulations and Directions.

FLOAT INSPECTIONS: The Parade Committee may require inspection of floats, vehicles, and other entries prior to the parade. Inspections will take place in the staging area. All entries must be in their assigned locations no later than 11:00 a.m.

POSTPONEMENT: If inclement weather requires postponement of the parade, the decision will be made by noon on December 4, 2026. Please call 410-287-5801 ~~and~~ or visit our website at www.northeastmd.org.

APPLICATIONS - APPROVAL AND COMPLIANCE: All applicants must return the application with a signature. All entries must be approved by the Parade Committee before entering the line up to march. Substantial changes to approved entries must receive prior approval.

All entries must observe these parade regulations during staging through to the conclusion of the parade as well as any applicable federal, state, and local laws. The Parade Committee reserves the right to refuse entry, disqualify, or remove any entry that violates these regulations. Regulations shall be applied consistently and in accordance with applicable law.

PARADE ROUTE AND JUDGING

PARADE ROUTE: West Cecil Avenue to South Main Street to Walnut Street. Vehicles will be directed to exit the parade route by a police officer via Mauldin Avenue. Marching units will be directed down Walnut Street into North East Community Park so they may be picked up. Vehicles will exit the Park via Cherry Street.

REVIEW STAND: The Judges' Review Stand is located at 106 South Main Street (North East Town Hall).

DELAYS: Anyone who delays the parade by stopping in front of the Reviewing Stand longer than 90 seconds will be automatically disqualified and will not be invited back. When the whistle sounds, please move on! The judges' decisions are final.

IDENTIFICATION: To aid the judges, please have some way of identifying your entry or car, such as a sign or banner. Please identify yourself from both sides of Main Street. Historic/Street Rod vehicles should display the model and year of the vehicle on both side windows. Parade entries can compete in only one category. Each entry will be judged on its overall presentation.

DIRECTIONS AND MAP TO PARADE STAGING AREA

DIRECTIONS AND MAP TO PARADE STAGING AREA FOR FLOATS AND PARADE PARTICIPANT WITH THE EXCEPTION OF FIRE COMPANIES, THE SHRINERS AND EQUESTRIAN ENTRIES

Eastbound MD RT 40 - make right hand turn onto Red Toad Road (at red light), proceed through two stop signs, make left onto MD RT 7, follow to parade staging area (3/4 mile).

Westbound MD RT 40 - make left hand turn onto Red Toad Road (at red light), proceed through two stop signs, make left onto MD RT 7, and follow to parade staging area (3/4 mile).

Northbound I-95 - to Exit 100, MD RT 272 North East, Maryland. Proceed south on MD RT 272 to the intersection of MD RT 272 and MD RT 40 (Wal-Mart will be on your right). Turn right at the MD RT 272/40 traffic light. Proceed westbound and turn left onto Red Toad Road (at red light). Proceed through two stop signs, make left onto MD RT 7, and follow to parade staging area (3/4 mile).

Southbound I-95 - to Exit 100, MD RT 272 North East, Maryland. Proceed south on MD RT 272 to the intersection of MD RT 272 and MD RT 40 (Wal-Mart will be on your right). Turn right at the MD RT 272/40 traffic light. Proceed westbound and turn left onto Red Toad Road (at red light). Proceed through two stop signs, make left onto MD RT 7, and follow to parade staging area (3/4 mile).

DIRECTIONS AND MAP TO PARADE STAGING AREA FOR FIRE COMPANIES

Please enter the Town of North East from MD Route 272. You will be staged on North Main Street.

DIRECTIONS TO PARADE STAGING AREA FOR THE SHRINERS

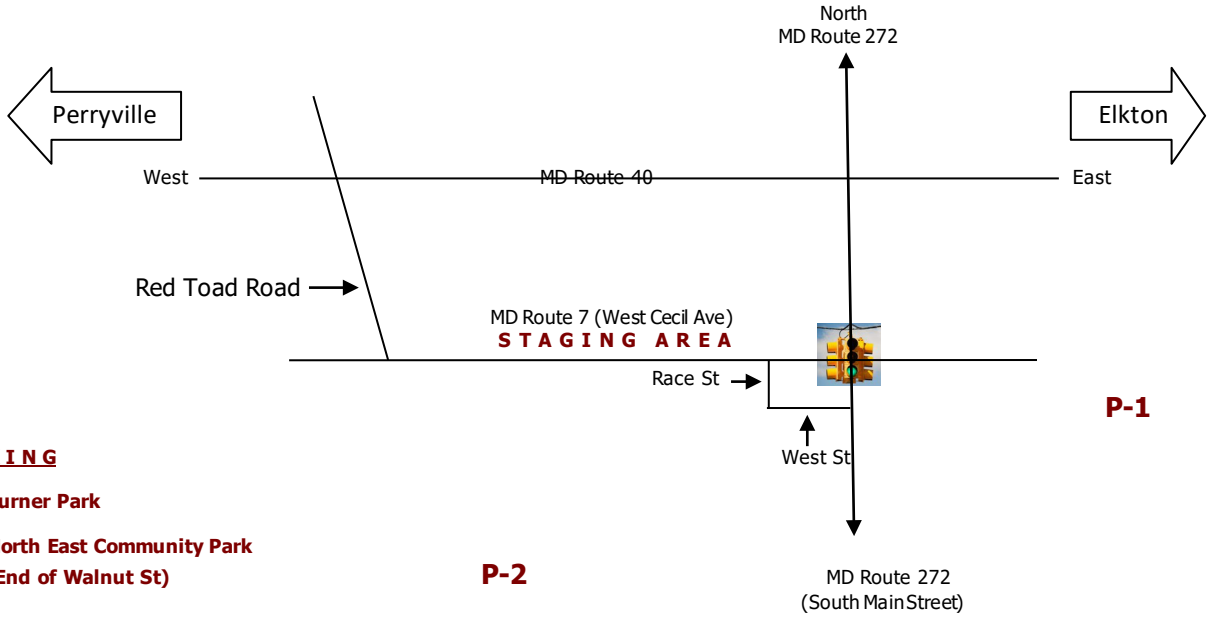
The Shriners will be contacted by the Parade Committee for staging information prior to parade day.

DIRECTIONS AND MAP TO PARADE STAGING AREA FOR EQUESTRIAN ENTRIES

Equestrian participants **MUST** enter the parade staging and line up area via Main Street. Turning onto Race Street from Cecil Avenue **will not be permitted.**

Turn right onto Mill Lane from MD RT 272 (South Main Street) then another right onto Race Street. All entries **MUST** unload at the staging area. If your horse trailer is too large to make the right-hand turn onto Mill Lane, proceed south on Main Street to Irishtown Road, turn left, turn left again onto Mauldin Avenue, get or stay in the left lane and proceed north to West Street, turn left, proceed across Main Street to Mill Lane, turn right onto Race Street to staging area.

Please clean the staging area and line-up area of any debris before you leave the area.



PARKING

P-1 Turner Park

P-2 North East Community Park (End of Walnut St)



CECIL COUNTY CHRISTMAS PARADE
MAIN STREET – NORTH EAST, MARYLAND

DECEMBER 5, 2026 / NOON

GENERAL APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

ENTRY NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

ENTRY CONTACT NAME: _____

CELL PHONE: _____ EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

NAME OF PERSON REPRESENTING THE ENTRY **ON PARADE DAY**: _____

CELL PHONE: _____ EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

NAME & ADDRESS TO SEND PRIZE (IF NOT THE SAME AS ABOVE): _____

_____

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: _____

CIRCLE ENTRY TYPE: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
(PLEASE SEE ENTRY TYPES ON PAGE 9)

ENTRY LENGTH: _____ LENGTH OF FLOAT IN FEET AND INCHES
\+ _____ LENGTH OF VEHICLE IN FEET AND INCHES PULLING THE FLOAT
\+ _____ LENGTH OF VEHICLE(S) IN FEET AND INCHES FOLLOWING THE FLOAT (IF ANY)
= TOTAL _____ **FEET AND INCHES**

WILL MUSIC BE PART OF YOUR ENTRY? _____ YES _____ NO

IF YES, WILL MUSIC BE LIVE MUSIC OR PRE-RECORDED? _____ LIVE _____ PRE-RECORDED

PLEASE REMEMBER TO CLEARLY IDENTIFY YOUR ENTRY FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE STREET

MY SIGNATURE ON THIS FORM HEREBY CERTIFIES THAT I/WE HAVE READ, UNDERSTAND AND HEREBY AGREE TO COMPLY WITH ALL OF THE PARADE "REGULATIONS TO PARTICIPATE - 2026", "DIRECTIONS AND MAP TO PARADE STAGING AREA", DECISION(S) OF THE TOWN OFFICIALS AND THE PARADE COMMITTEE MEMBERS. FURTHER, MY SIGNATURE ON THIS ENTRY FORM INDICATES THAT I/WE AGREE I/WE WILL NOT HOLD THE TOWN OF NORTH EAST OFFICIALS, TOWN EMPLOYEES, CECIL COUNTY CHRISTMAS PARADE COMMITTEE, AND VOLUNTEERS LIABLE FOR ANY PERSONAL OR PROPERTY DAMAGE CAUSED TO PERSONS OR OBJECTS PARTICIPATING IN OR VIEWING THE PARADE AS A RESULT OF OUR PARADE PARTICIPATION. I FURTHER AGREE SHOULD I/WE VIOLATE ANY OF THE PARADE RULES AND REGULATIONS LISTED IN THE APPLICATION THAT I/WE WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN FUTURE CECIL COUNTY CHRISTMAS PARADES.

_____ _____ _____
Signature Title Date

PLEASE RESPOND BY 4:00 PM NOVEMBER 30TH TO: CECIL COUNTY CHRISTMAS PARADE P.O. BOX 528 NORTH EAST, MD 21901-0528

QUESTIONS: Please call Stephanie Dean at 410-287-5801, ext. 7102 or email sdean@northeastmd.org

PLEASE REVIEW THE ENTRIES CAREFULLY AS THEY HAVE CHANGED EFFECTIVE 2026

TYPE OF ENTRIES THAT ARE JUDGED (NOTE 1)

1. In (Cecil) County High School Band
2. Out of (Cecil) County High School Band
3. Adult Non-Profit Float (Club/Group/Organization)
4. Youth Non-Profit Float (Club/Group/Organization)
5. Adult Marching Unit
6. Youth Marching Unit
7. Animal and Equestrian Entry
8. Other – please describe in detail

PLEASE NOTE

If your Entry has both adults and youth participants, please register your Entry based upon the age of the majority of your participants.

Thank you!

ADDITIONAL ENTRIES THAT ARE JUDGED (NOTE 2)

9. Commercial (REPRESENTING A BUSINESS OR INDUSTRY)
10. Vehicles (Historic and Street Rod)

ADDITIONAL ENTRIES THAT ARE NOT JUDGED

11. Emergency Service, Fire, Police or Military
12. Mascots
13. Paid Entries
14. Parade Support (i.e. Grand Marshal, Parade Banner, and Santa)

NOTE 1 Entries will receive a Ribbon and Monetary Prize in the following amount:
First Place $100 Second Place $75 Third Place $50

NOTE 2 Entries will receive a Ribbon for First, Second and Third Place

CERTIFICATE

- Seemed Happiest to Be in the Parade
- Mayor's Award



CECIL COUNTY CHRISTMAS PARADE
MAIN STREET – NORTH EAST, MARYLAND

DECEMBER 5, 2026 / NOON

VEHICLE APPLICATION (HISTORIC & STREET ROD)

(PLEASE COMPLETE A SEPARATE APPLICATION FOR EACH VEHICLE)

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

APPLICANT NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

DAYTIME PHONE: _____ CELL PHONE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

MAKE: _____

MODEL: _____

YEAR: _____

COLOR: _____

TOTAL NUMBER OF FEET NEEDED FOR PARADE ENTRY: _____

WILL MUSIC BE PART OF YOUR ENTRY? _____ YES _____ NO

IF YES, WILL MUSIC BE LIVE MUSIC OR PRE-RECORDED? _____ LIVE _____ PRE-RECORDED

PLEASE REMEMBER TO CLEARLY IDENTIFY YOUR ENTRY FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE STREET

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CECIL COUNTY CHRISTMAS PARADE
MAIN STREET – NORTH EAST, MARYLAND

DECEMBER 5, 2026 / NOON

EQUESTRIAN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE

PLEASE COMPLETE A SEPARATE APPLICATION FOR EACH HORSE)

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

APPLICANT NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

DAYTIME PHONE: _____ CELL PHONE: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

NUMBER OF ANIMALS/PARTICIPANTS: _____

"POOPER SCOOPER" (PERSON) RESPONSIBLE FOR CLEANING UP AFTER YOUR ANIMAL(S) BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE PARADE:

_____ _____

NAME CELL PHONE

- **PROOF OF NEGATIVE COGGINS IS REQUIRED OF ALL HORSES**
- **PLEASE DO NOT SUBMIT APPLICATION IN UNTIL YOU HAVE PROOF OF COGGINS**
- **STAGING AREA: SEE PAGE 7**
- **PLEASE REMEMBER TO CLEARLY IDENTIFY YOUR ENTRY FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE STREET!**

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