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## Message From The Mayor & Council

These are most challenging and unprecedented times for our County. What started as a special newsletter relating to the COVID-19 situation has abruptly turned to the mourning of those lost in an unthinkable tragedy here in Colchester.

Words cannot describe the depth of sadness we are feeling as at this time. The news has been shocking and for many of us, we are still coming to terms that this nightmare is indeed reality.

We would like to extend our sincerest and most heartfelt sympathies to all the families, friends and community members affected. Our hearts go out to you.

We especially acknowledge RCMP Constable Heidi Stevenson, who was killed in the line of duty as she bravely worked to serve and protect her community. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family, friends, and the entire RCMP organization. Moreover, we thank all first responders for their selfless courage and heroic efforts and extend our profound appreciation to all involved.

In memory of those lost, the flags at all Colchester Municipal Sites are flying at half mast. On the evening of April 20th, Council also held an Emergency Meeting. To support the families left devastated, a motion was approved to contribute up to \$5,000 to help offset the funeral expenses of each victim.

For those affected by these tragic events and in need of help, please reach out to us at 902-897-3185. We will put you in touch with the support you need. Contacts for local grief and mental health support services can also be found on the back page of this newsletter.

As we learn more details about the tragic events of April 18th and 19th and the true impact to our community, we would encourage all to show love and support to one another as we process this unfathomable event together.

We can honour the victims, their families and loved ones by hanging tartans and blue scarves and ribbons from our trees, windows and balconies. It's a way to show our strength and our love, as well as to come together while staying apart through this difficult time.

*(Message continued on page 2)*



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Further to coping with this tragedy and the loss of cherished community members, we are challenged to do so amidst the ongoing state of emergency resulting from the COVID-19 situation.

Throughout this pandemic, the Municipality and Council continues to adapt so we can support and service you and your community.

Although our offices and facilities remain closed to the public, all departments remain operational to serve you by phone, email or other modifications to service.

Council has continued to meet by video conferencing using Zoom and will continue to do so on a weekly basis until the state of emergency is lifted. Future meetings and Public Hearings will be accessible through this online platform. Those without online access may contact the office to determine other alternatives to participate or remain informed.

This year Council's budget deliberations have been greatly influenced by the anticipated financial strains that residents and businesses will undoubtedly face as a result of COVID-19. The Municipality itself regrettably had to layoff 38 fulltime staff at our Materials Recovery Facility for safety purposes as well as 3 crossing guards until schools reopen. We are all too familiar with the reality of job losses and reduced income throughout the County.

Care continues to be taken to reduce expenses in the Municipality's budget wherever possible. Council also recognizes the importance of continuing to move projects forward that will support and sustain activity in our local economy.

We continue to search for ways to support residents in need at this time, and to adapt during these unusual circumstances. Recognizing that things can change quickly, we encourage you to follow us closely on Facebook or Twitter and to check our website, [www.colchester.ca](http://www.colchester.ca), for updates or changes that may occur after receipt of this publication.

## Low Income Municipal Tax Assistance Program

The application deadline for the Low Income Municipal Assistance Program has been extended to **May 29, 2020**.

To qualify, applicants must own and occupy the property as their principal residence and fall into one of the following categories:

- Single person with less than \$26,406 gross income (\$199.46 exemption)
- Family of 2 with less than \$34,877 gross income (\$265.96 exemption)
- Family of 3 or more with less than \$41,852 gross income (\$332.45 exemption)

For questions or complete details please call (902) 897-3150.

## Waste Collection Changes

All Solid Waste Facilities in Kemptown remain closed to the public.

**Recycling pick-up resumed** as of April 8th and will continue on your regular collection day. **Spring Clean-up has been replaced with new program.** Starting May 4th you will be allowed to put **TWO** bulky items curbside on your regular collection day. This will replace a single Spring Clean-up.

**Compost Giveaway** (scheduled for May 2nd to 9th) will be deferred until further notice.

**Hazardous Household Waste Event** scheduled for May 2nd in Debert is cancelled.

**Mobile Household Hazardous Waste Event** (scheduled for May 30th) in Economy will be deferred until further notice.

**Safely Store Sharps at home** - Pharmacies are instructing patients to use heavy duty plastic containers to store used needles ('sharps') at home until further notice as suppliers will not be shipping sharps pails during the COVID-19 situation.

Containers, like those used for laundry soap, may be used and should be clearly labelled *Sharps* and kept safely out of reach of children. Reminder: NO sharps or containers with sharps inside should ever be put in regular garbage or recycling for collection. Help keep our workers safe!

## Parks and Trail Closures

Until further notice:

- All municipal and provincial parks and their parking lots are closed.
- All trails **within** municipal and provincial parks are closed.
- All playgrounds are closed.
- Parking lots used for accessing municipal trails are closed. Driving to and parking at trailheads to access trails is not permitted.

**Sections of the Cobequid Trail operated by the Municipal of Colchester remain open for exercise if you can access them by walking, cycling, or wheelchair from your home.** These include:

- Rail trail section from Shore Road in Old Barns easterly to the Town of Truro boundary (near Emera driveway, near north end of Wade Road)
- Farnham Brook section in Valley and Bible Hill
- Dalhousie Agricultural Campus section

Gathering limits of five and physical distancing of at least two metres must continue to be followed.

## Recreation Programs and Events

Until further notice, the following programs and events are cancelled or suspended:

- Step into Spring
- Learn 2 Skate
- Nova Scotia Before and After Program in Tatamagouche
- After School Programs
- Stewiacke Senior Fitness Class
- MultiSport Programs
- Equipment Loan Program (Treasure Chest) is also suspended

Summer day camps rely on school facilities, therefore if schools remain closed, day camps will likely be cancelled. Please check [www.colchester.ca](http://www.colchester.ca) or follow us on Facebook for updates. If you have any questions regarding programs and services, please call Colchester Recreation at 902-897-3185 or email us at [trobblee@colchester.ca](mailto:trobblee@colchester.ca) or [kwesley@colchester.ca](mailto:kwesley@colchester.ca).

## Planning & Building Inspection Services “Open for Business”

The Municipality of Colchester will continue to provide community planning and building inspection services to the maximum extent possible during the COVID-19 situation. Please note that the Municipal building at 1 Church Street is closed to the public and services will generally be offered electronically and by telephone. There is also a secure drop box at the rear entrance to leave applications and other paperwork.

To discuss and submit applications for development permits, subdivisions, rezonings and development agreements, as well as requests for zoning letters, please contact [comdev@colchester.ca](mailto:comdev@colchester.ca) or call 902-897-3170 for instructions on how to proceed.

To discuss and submit building permit applications, or, to schedule a building inspection for a project under construction, please contact [building@colchester.ca](mailto:building@colchester.ca) or call 902-897-3170.

## Tax Sale Postponed

The tax sale originally scheduled for May 5, 2020 is postponed. As soon as a new date is set, it will be posted on [www.colchester.ca](http://www.colchester.ca) and on the Municipality's Facebook and Twitter pages.

## United Way to Lead Support for Vulnerable Seniors

United Way has entered into funding agreements with Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) to support vulnerable seniors. United Way Centraide Canada (UWCC) and United Way Centraides (UWCs) are working to quickly deploy funds to respond to urgent needs of seniors (55+) impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in communities across Canada.

The purpose of these funds is to address a gap in support relating to the immediate needs of seniors. These funds are intended to be used to increase immediate support for seniors in direct response to COVID-19.

Locally, the Municipality of Colchester is working with the United Way of Colchester to identify needs within the County and ways to quickly deliver support for the immediate needs of seniors impacted by COVID-19 and the public health crisis.

## Business As Usual for Animal Control

The Municipality of Colchester is continuing to provide services for Animal Control throughout COVID-19. For information, or to express a concern, please call 902-897-3170.

### Dog Tags:

Many of our external businesses who regularly sell tags have changed the way they are serving their clients. We have been emailing or mailing out forms to residents who are having difficulty registering their dog(s) under these circumstances. Tags are \$12.00 for the year from January 1-December 31.

## Province-wide Open Fire Ban

A ban on open fires is now in effect to protect Nova Scotia's forests during the pandemic. The Ban is in effect until May 15th unless otherwise specified by the Department of Lands and Forestry.

No open fires are allowed in woods or within 305 metres (1,000 feet) of woods in any part of the province. For more information, visit <https://novascotia.ca/burnsafe/>.



## Public Works

**Permits for water/sewer connections** are still being processed. Apply by calling the Community Development office at 902-897-3170. Lateral installations will still be inspected by work crews, as long as sites are unoccupied at the time of inspection.

**Permits for water/sewer lateral repairs** are not being issued at this time and work can be done using best practices.

**Frontage culvert permit applications** can be provided digitally and returned digitally or by hard copy at the rear drop box, 1 Church Street. Field inspections will be waived during this time, provided property owners follow the requirements of the permit.

**Tenders** – Public Works is still issuing some construction and equipment tenders. Ads will be posted to the Provincial website and County website, with drop off at the back door mail drop, 1 Church Street.

**Lower Truro Spring** is still open and we are sanitizing twice daily.

**Social Distancing** - County employees are practicing social distancing. If you see any workers in the field, please do not approach them. Direct all questions to the office at 902-897-3175.

**Call before you dig** - We are still providing locations of sewer and water lines.

Public Works is still responding to **water/sewer service interruptions**, and carrying out **critical road/sidewalk repairs**. Contact us at 902-897-3175.

**Water utilities** are operating as normal.

Public may see some **delays in spring clean-up of landscaped areas** along sidewalks, as well as lawn maintenance on County properties. We ask for your patience during this time.

**Please don't flush wipes or gloves** - Flushing of items that belong in the trash like disposable wipes and gloves causes considerable damage to sewage treatment facilities. Thank you for putting trash where it belongs. We appreciate your cooperation.

## Canada Emergency Student Benefit

In recognition of challenges that students may have finding work this summer, the federal government has recently announced the Canada Emergency Student Benefit to assist. Details of this and other programs offered in response to COVID-19 are available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>.

## Economic Development

**Business Support Team** - Colchester's Economic Development Officer has been participating in a COVID-related business support team. The team includes representatives from the Truro-Colchester Partnership for Prosperity, Atlantic Opportunities Agency, Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Truro Partnership, Canadian Business Development Corporation, Town of Truro, and Municipality of Colchester. The group has been meeting regularly online to exchange information and ideas to assist local businesses cope with the current state of emergency.

**Business Attraction and Development** - While regular economic development activities such as business attraction and development of the Debert Business Park continue, a strategic focus will shift to actions that can help rebuild our post-COVID economy.

**Rural Broadband Project** - Our recently announced Cumberland-Colchester Rural Broadband Project that will bring highspeed internet to 24,400 households currently underserved in the region is moving forward. Xplornet Communications is working hard to accelerate installation of new equipment to begin improved service in the coming months. This period of online meetings and facetime with friends, streaming entertainment, online shopping, video assessments by doctors and veterinarians, and distant classrooms has emphasized the need for reliable highspeed internet for all citizens. The new normal will certainly include greater use of digital services now that more people have become familiar with them.

## Provincial Support for COVID-19

The Province is offering a number of programs to assist Nova Scotians and businesses at this time including:

- Fee deferral
- Support to individuals and families
- Support for seniors
- Support for Businesses
- Healthcare and continuing care

For more information visit <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/support/>.

## Canada Emergency Response Benefit

If you have stopped working because of COVID-19, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) may provide you with temporary income support. The CERB provides \$500 a week for up to 16 weeks. For more information on Federal programs related to COVID-19, visit <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application.html>.



# Colchester

1 Church Street  
Truro, Nova Scotia  
B2N 3Z5  
[www.colchester.ca](http://www.colchester.ca)

Toll Free (in NS):  
**1-866-728-5144**

Reception - 902-897-3160,  
902-897-3150, 902-897-3175

Administration  
Tax Office  
Public Works

Community Development - 902-897-3170  
Building Inspection  
Development Officer  
Animal Control  
Planning

Property Information - 902-897-3178

Colchester Recreation - 902-897-3185  
[recreation@colchester.ca](mailto:recreation@colchester.ca)

Materials Recovery Facility and  
Regional Balefill Facility - 902-897-0450

Waste & Recycling Helpline:  
902-895-4777  
[helpline@colchester.ca](mailto:helpline@colchester.ca)

## Fax Numbers

### Courthouse Building

Administration - 902-843-4066

Community Development - 902-843-4061

Finance / Tax Office - 902-843-4067

Human Resources - 902-843-4063

Information Services - 902-843-4068

Property Information - 902-843-4062

Engineering/Public Works - 902-843-4064

Recreation Services - 902-843-4065

### External Locations

Regional Sewage  
Treatment Plant - 902-897-0335

Public Works Building - 902-895-5251

Water Utilities - 902-641-3102

Materials Recovery Facility/  
Waste Reduction - 902-897-0453

Regional Balefill Facility - 895-2307

## Colchester County Support Lines

**Mental Health Provincial Crisis Line** is available 24/7 to anyone experiencing a mental health or addictions crisis, or someone concerned about them, by calling 1-888-429-8167 (toll free).

**Kids Help Phone** is available 24/7 by calling 1-800-668-6868 (toll free).

**Morneau Shepell** has opened its 24/7 bilingual crisis support line to help anyone in need of emotional support as a result of recent tragic events by calling 1-844-751-2133 (toll free).

**HOSPICE Colchester East Hants** is available for grief support by calling 902-893-3265 or [questions@cehhospice.org](mailto:questions@cehhospice.org).

**The Association of Psychologists of Nova Scotia** is offering psychology professional services, at no charge, to help with the mental health of adults, children, adolescents and families. Contact Executive Director Susan Marsh at 902-422-9183.

**211** is available If you need non-emergency, non-medical help, call or visit [ns.211.ca](http://ns.211.ca). 211 is a toll free helpline that connects you to community and social services in your area.

**Domestic Abuse** - If you're in immediate danger, call 911. If you need help or information about emergency shelter, safety planning and available resources, call the 24-hour toll-free line at 1-855-225-0220.

For funeral expense support to families of victims, contact Kelly Gratto-McCarthy, Municipality of Colchester, at 902-843-4193.

If you need help being directed to any Support Lines please call  
The Municipality of Colchester at 902-897-3185

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Stay informed of our latest news.

Visit [www.colchester.ca](http://www.colchester.ca)



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