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March 2022

Volume 27 Issue 1

MASS CASUALTY COMMISSION

The Mass Casualty Commission is the independent public inquiry created to examine the April 2020 mass casualty in Nova Scotia.

The Commission's public proceedings began on February 22nd and continue through much of 2022. Throughout the proceedings, the Commission will share a series of Foundational Documents that bring together detailed information about what happened. From this factual record, we will work to understand how and why it happened so that we can make recommendations to help keep communities safer in the future.

Visit MassCasualtyCommission.ca to:

- Watch the proceedings
- Read information from our investigation into what happened
- Sign up for updates

To listen to the proceedings by phone, call 1-877-385-4099 and enter code 1742076.

LEARN MORE

- MassCasualtyCommission.ca
- Facebook.com/MassCasualtyCommission
- Twitter.com/NSMassCasualty

CONTACT US

- Info@MassCasualtyCommission.ca
- 902-407-7532 (local)
- 1-833-635-2501 (toll free)

**Waste
Reduction
Sorting
Guide
Inside**

WELLNESS AND CRISIS SUPPORT

If you are in crisis, the Provincial Mental Health Crisis Line is available 24/7 for all ages and you can call for yourself or if you have concern for someone else. You do not have to be in a crisis to call and nothing is too big or too small a reason to reach out.

1-888-429-8167

Finance

Low Income Municipal Tax Assistance Program

SUBMISSION DEADLINE - MAY 6, 2022

Residential property owners may be eligible for an exemption on their 2022/2023 property taxes of **\$563.47**. To qualify, applicants must own and occupy the property as their principal residence and fall into one of the categories below:

<u>Family Size</u>	<u>Gross Income</u>	<u>Exemption</u>
Single	Less than \$27,915	\$563.47
Family of 2	Less than \$36, 871	\$563.47
Family of 3 or more	Less than \$44,245	\$563.47

Gross Income refers to the total gross income from all sources for the calendar year ending December 31, 2021. This must include the income of all members of the household, except full-time students. You should not include income from the following sources:

1. War Veterans Allowance Act (Canada);
2. Veterans Affairs Canada Pension; or
3. GST/HST Rebate

Application forms will automatically be mailed to last years eligible applicants. If you have not received your application form by April 1st, please call 902-897-3162. Late applications will not be accepted.

Applicants must reapply annually. If you did not receive the exemption last year, you may obtain an application from the Municipal Tax Office, 1 Church Street Truro, or by calling 902-897-3162.

For income verification purposes, please bring your 2021 **INCOME TAX RETURN**, which you submit to Revenue Canada. **If you have filed via telephone through the File My Return service, please request a proof of income statement Option 'C' Print to provide as proof of income.**

Notice of Assessments will NOT be accepted.

***NEW* Paymentus - Bill Payments by Credit Cards**

The Municipality of Colchester is pleased to add an additional payment option for residents interested in using their credit card to pay their bill. The County has partnered with Paymentus Corporation - a third party online payment service that accepts Visa, MasterCard and Amex.

- You can pay your bill right away, any time, any day 24/7 online.
- Paymentus will charge a service fee of 2.50% for each transaction. The Municipality does not receive any part of this service fee.
- We **cannot** accept credit cards in person or over the phone.
- Visit our website at <https://colchester.ca/paymentus-online-payments> for more details.

From the Mayor's Desk

Wind Turbine Development By-law: On January 27th, Council passed a motion to undertake a review of our Wind Turbine Development By-law. The by-law's Second Reading was passed on February 24th. The proposed amendments are:

7.2 For a period of six months commencing January 27, 2022, no applications for a license will be received for small- or large-scale wind turbines while the Municipality reviews the requirements for small-and large-scale wind developments.

Upon a motion by Council, where additional time is deemed necessary to complete the review, this review period may be extended one time by a further period of up to six months.

Any applications received following the expiry of the review period shall be processed in accordance with the requirements in force at that time.

Cliffs of Fundy UNESCO Global Geopark: Colchester and Cumberland Counties have worked together to promote the beauty of our coastlines, geological significance of the area, and tourism opportunities which will result in economic benefits to our 75 rural communities, from Apple River, Cumberland County to the Fundy Discovery Site in Lower Truro, Colchester County through the Cliffs of Fundy UNESCO Global Geopark. It has received international accolades from countries around the world.

A UNESCO Global Geopark designation celebrates globally significant connections between geology, local communities, culture, and nature. We have over 40 impressive geosites within a 165 km drive where visitors are welcomed to explore this stunning area. There are two provincial parks, Five Islands and Cape Chignecto, hiking trails, island views, sea stacks, unique rock formations, fossils and dinosaur exhibits, waterfalls, lighthouses, historic places, and Mi'kmaq legends to experience and enjoy.

The Bay of Fundy is home to the highest tides in the world and those tides have helped to shape our landscape. See the amazing cliffs like the Old Wife at Five Islands, the flower pot at Soley Cove, and mud flats in Economy at low tide. The massive Cobequid Fault provides a formidable backdrop of our environment. Learn, explore, discover, enjoy! Come visit us!

Mass Casualty Commission Inquiry: It is with heavy hearts that we listen to the evidence being presented at the Mass Casualty Commission (MCC) public hearings. The survivors of the worst mass shooting in Canadian history continue to suffer through the trauma and grief. Our Council has had presentations from highly trained, experienced professionals who have advocated ongoing, coordinated, organized help. The provincial government has responded by offering support services in local areas. To inquire, the MCC office is located at 128 Esplanade, Truro, and the phone number is 1-833-635-2501.

In closing: Sincere condolences go out to the family of the late Al Gillis, former Warden of the Municipality of the County of Cumberland. Former Warden Gillis worked closely with Colchester County when we formed two historic agreements between our municipalities to bring internet to rural Cumberland & Colchester and to support the Cliffs of Fundy Geopark.

Thankfully, we are hearing a level of normalcy will come back in our lives on March 21st when many pandemic/ COVID-19 restrictions are to be lifted. In the meantime, stay safe.

My regards to all,
Christine Blair, Mayor

Recreation

Like **Colchester County Recreation** on Facebook and follow **@MunColRec** on Twitter for more information about our upcoming programs!



A bench beside the river at Stewiacke River Park, which is available for walking year-round

Regional Parks Open May 7th

Is visiting a new park on your list of things to do in 2022? Maybe you have a favorite park which you look forward to returning to this spring. Add a municipal park to your list!

Experience the spectacular, panoramic view of the Minas Basin at **Five Islands Lighthouse Park**. Stroll on the shaded paths along the river at **Stewiacke River Park**. At the **Fundy Discovery Site**, watch the tidal bore from the Cobequid Trail and enjoy the natural playground. At **Nelson Memorial Park** near Tatamagouche, explore the Butter Trail (part of the Trans Canada Trail). These parks feature picnic facilities, playgrounds, walking paths and washrooms. Visit

www.colchester.ca/parks-and-trails for directions and more information about these parks and many others.

As spring approaches, Municipal staff will be busy preparing the regional parks for regular operation which resumes on May 7th. We look forward to seeing you!

KidSport provides grants to kids (18 years and younger) from families facing financial barriers so they can participate in registered sport programs and experience the lifelong benefits of a season of sport. KidSport Colchester/East Hants provides grants of up to **\$500** per eligible kid, per year (January 1st - December 31st) towards sport registration fees through a confidential application process. Registration can be found online by visiting www.kidsportcanada.ca or, for more information, please contact Craig Burgess at 902-897-3181 or cburgess@colchester.ca.





From **April 24th** to **April 30th** communities across Canada will celebrate **National Volunteer Week**, a time to honour and thank volunteers. If you are a volunteer – thank you! If you know someone who donates their time to help others and their community, please take a moment to thank them. Visit <https://www.colchester.ca/volunteers> to find information about nominating local volunteers - individuals, groups, youth, families and businesses – for recognition during National Volunteer Week each year. Deadline for all Volunteer Award Nominations is **April 4, 2022**.

Spring is in the air! Get ready to **Step into Spring** with Colchester Recreation!

Step into Spring is Colchester Recreation's 8-week walking program. It is an easy and fun way to improve your activity level. Simply register for the program, wear a pedometer or fitness/activity tracker, record your daily step counts, and submit your weekly total to Colchester Recreation by email or phone. The registration fee (\$10 for a pedometer, \$5 if you have your own device) gets you a reusable bag and incentives to keep you motivated. Send us your weekly step count total for a chance to win prizes each week!



Step into Spring begins March 26th and runs until May 23rd. Registration begins **March 21st** in Recreation offices at the Municipality of Colchester, Town of Truro, Village of Bible Hill, and Town of Stewiacke. For more information contact Colchester Recreation at 902-897-3185, follow our Colchester Recreation Facebook page or visit our website at www.colchester.ca/spring for daily updates and tips.

Employee Recognition

The Municipality's Service Recognition Policy acknowledges employees reaching service milestones. Employees recognized for years of service to the end of 2021 were:

5 Years: Kelsey Laking, Sarah Lynds, Jamie MacQuarrie, Mark McIntyre, Tim Naugle, Jared Pentz, Tiffany Rudderham-Yuill and Rob Simonds.

10 Years: Christian Mejorda

15 Years: Wayne Colborne, Sharon Hart, Scott Morrison, Dawn Rafuse, Blaise Watson, Luanne Whidden and Dave Willemsen

25 Years: Shirley Cameron, Therin Smith and Sean Sutherland

30 Years: Paul Smith



Public Works

Permits

Public Works is responsible for approving and issuing permits related to sewer, water, driveways, and frontage culverts. Please contact the Public Works Office at 902-897-3175 or by email at engineer@colchester.ca if you require additional information.

Installing a New Driveway?

A permit is required for the construction of a driveway on properties located on any County Owned Road (blue street sign). The Engineer will issue this no-fee permit which includes construction details on how the work is to be completed. No inspections are required.

How Can I Connect to Municipal Sewer?

All new connections to the sewer system require a permit from our Community Development Office. Permits cost \$150 of which \$50 is refundable after inspection is complete. For residential properties (single family and duplex), if there is no lateral extending from the main line to the property line, owners are required to pay \$3,500 to have Public Works install the new lateral to the property line.

Don't forget when making your connection, you need to install a clean-out at the property line and a backflow check valve within the building service connection.



How Can I Connect to Municipal Water?

All new connections to the municipal water systems in Tatamagouche and Debert require a permit from our Community Development Office. Permits cost \$150 in Debert and \$160 in Tatamagouche.

For residential properties (single family and duplex), if there is no lateral extending from the main line to the property line, owners are required to pay \$5,500 to have Public Works install the new lateral to the property line.

Can I Fill in My Ditch?

Residents living along a County Owned Road (blue street sign) can apply for a permit to fill in the ditch in front of their home with a buried culvert. This no-fee permit will be issued by our Engineer and will include details on how to carry out the work. Contact the Public Works Office for an application.

French River Watershed – Protected Water Area

On January 24, 2022, the French River Watershed was designated as a Protected Water Area pursuant to Section 106 of the Nova Scotia Environment Act. The Municipality of Colchester requested this designation from the province as a way to protect water quality in the watershed, which serves as the main supply for the Tatamagouche Water Utility.

There are new regulations which apply to certain activities within the watershed such as farming, mining, mineral exploration, waste disposal, sediment control and quarries.

The Tatamagouche Water Utility is responsible for enforcing these new regulations and members of the public are encouraged to report any activities of concern within the watershed to the Colchester Public Works Office at 902-897-3175 or to engineer@colchester.ca.

Please visit our website at <https://www.colchester.ca/french-river-designated-as-protected-water-area> to read the regulations in detail or use our interactive map to see where your property is located in relation to the watershed boundary.

A Message From the RCMP



ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

JACINTO (JUN) ABEGENCIA Colchester District RCMP

How long have you worked for the RCMP? *3 months*
 Where were you born? *Talibon, Bohol Philippines*
 How many languages can you speak? *4 languages (Tagalog, Bisaya, Mandarin, English)*
 If you could travel anywhere where would you go? *My home country*
 What was your first job? *Kitchen helper*
 Best advise you have been given? *Work hard and get rewarded*
 Weirdest food you have ever eaten? *Fried frog*
 Who is your hero? *My mother*
 If you had one superpower what would it be? *Power to make the people's heart soft so that no more fighting and no more hatred.*
 Kids? Furbabies? *2 kids and 2 cats*
 The zombie apocalypse is coming, who are three people you want on your team? *My wife and kids*
 Why did you become a member/employee of the RCMP? *I became a member of the RCMP because of my motivation base on my experience with the police back in the Philippines. People here in Canada are lucky to have RCMP.*
 If you could have dinner with anyone who would it be? *My mother*
 What does red serge mean to you? *For me red serge is symbol of respect courage and bravery.*
 Favorite Movie? *Superman movies*



Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Gendarmerie royale
du Canada

Canada

Community Development

We're celebrating EARTH DAY in a BIG WAY!

GROWING GRATITUDE

Thanks to you, we completed our *Community Energy & Emissions Plan*, and our Cozy Colchester & Solar Colchester programs are thriving. "Thank you" doesn't quite cut it, so we are going to GROW to SHOW our appreciation!

Earth Day is April 22, 2022, and we will PLANT A TREE for every Like and Share of our Earth Day Facebook post, up to 2222 trees! Follow the Municipality of Colchester on Facebook to participate now! The number of trees to be planted will be announced on Earth Day. Also, check out Colchester WRM's Earth Day Challenge on their social media!

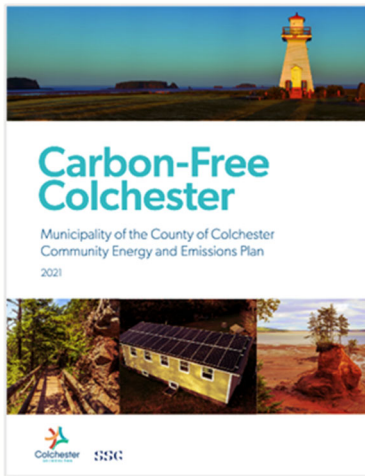
Not on Facebook? Visit www.colchester.ca/carbon-free and select "PLANT A TREE".



BE EARTH'S BIGGEST FAN AND DESIGN A PLAN!

Earth Hour is an annual international non-essential lights-out event organized by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to raise awareness about the need for urgent climate change action on MARCH 26th from 8:30-9:30PM.

Tell us what you can do to contribute to a healthier planet for a chance to win \$150 towards your green goals. TO ENTER, visit www.colchester.ca/carbon-free today. Two winners will be announced after Earth Hour on March 26th!



COMMUNITY ENERGY & EMISSIONS PLAN

The Carbon-Free Colchester *Community Energy & Emissions Plan* was approved by Municipal Council in February. The Plan describes a long-term strategy for Colchester to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The Plan outlines the measures the Municipality, businesses, and residents must take to achieve deep emissions reductions. These include things like "Retrofit all existing buildings for deep energy savings" and "Electrify personal, municipal, and commercial vehicles." Implementing the Plan will be a challenge, but will result in significant social and economic benefits to the community. For example, with this Plan, annual energy expenses are projected to fall by 80% to \$1,000/household per year by 2050.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Plan, including our committed Advisory Committee. To read the Community Energy & Emissions Plan, visit www.colchester.ca/carbon-free, and stay tuned for information about the CEEP launch party!

Carbon-Free Colchester is on Instagram! Join the conversation at [@CarbonFreeColchester](https://www.instagram.com/CarbonFreeColchester).

Waste Resource Management

Waste Reduction Helpline: 902-895-4777

Website: www.colchester.ca

Twitter: @ColchesterWRM

Facebook: Colchester WRM

Colchester Balefill Facility

188 Mingo Road, Exit 18
Highway 104 Kempton

Hours of Operation:

Monday to Friday
8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Saturday
8:00 am to 12:00 pm

Materials Recovery Facility

185 Mingo Road, Exit 18
Highway 104 Kempton

Hours of Operation:

Monday to Friday
8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Reminder: All visitors must report to the scale house prior to unloading materials. The scale house operator can accept cash, a personal cheque, or Interac as payment for disposal. The scale house is **not** equipped with a credit card machine. All loads must be tarped to prevent litter problems. Untarped loads will be subject to a \$20 surcharge.

The Balefill and Materials Recovery Facilities will be **closed** on April 15th for Good Friday and April 18th for Easter Monday.

Important Holiday Collection Change Notice

Residents whose normal collection would have been scheduled for Good Friday April 15th – Due to the holiday, your collection will take place on the PREVIOUS Monday April 11th. Please refer to your waste collection schedule for details or download our FREE Colchester Waste app. Material must be curbside by 7:00 am on your collection day.



Want to Know the Moment Winter Weather Affects Curbside Collection in Your Area?

Sign up for service alert messages at www.colchester.ca/garbage-and-recycling or download our free 'Colchester Waste Management' app and you will be notified by phone, email, or Twitter the moment decisions affecting collection are made!

Information will also be posted on our website at www.colchester.ca.

What Do I Need to Know Before Buying a Home?

If you are thinking of buying a new home, you may want to consider the following before finalizing your transaction:

Who owns the road I will use to access my house?

Roads can either be owned by the Province, by the County or by private individuals or companies. Who owns the road will affect how it is plowed and maintained, and could affect your services such as garbage pick up, bus routes, and access by emergency vehicles. Call the County Office to find out more on road ownership before buying.

Does my home have access to water?

If your home is using well water, then any related questions can be answered by Nova Scotia Environment at 902- 893-5880. If you are located in Debert or Tatamagouche, you may have access to a public water supply. Contact us to find out more about your water connection, including setting up a water account, cost for water and making a connection.

Does my home have access to a sewer system?

The County operates several public sewer systems in areas such as Tatamagouche, Debert, Great Village, Brookfield, Hilden, Valley, Bible Hill, Salmon River and Truro Heights. If you want to know more about an existing sewer connection, connecting to our sewer and related costs, please contact the Public Works Office. If you are located outside of a sewer serviced area and have any questions about on-site septic fields, please contact Nova Scotia Environment

For additional information, please contact the Public Works Office at 902-897-3175.

Where is my organics green cart, I can't find it?

Every home has been provided with a green cart and remains a part of the residential property. If there isn't a green cart you may need to purchase a new one from the Municipality or make it a part of your real estate transaction to have one replaced.

I have a green cart, but it is broken?

Some of the older green carts are starting to break and need replacement or repairs. Contact us to learn about your options.

Where can I get a small kitchen green bin?

You can purchase a small mini bin from the County Tax Office, 1 Church Street, Truro.

How do I find out when garbage collection takes place and what are the rules?

You can download the free Colchester Waste App, visit our website at <https://www.colchester.ca/collection-schedules> or call the Colchester Solid Waste Helpline.

For additional information on the purchase, delivery or repair of a green cart or garbage pickup details, please contact the Colchester Solid Waste Helpline at 902-895-4777.

The house I want to buy has a second unit or in-law suite, is it legal?

Permits are always required to add apartments and in-law suites to existing homes as they require fire separations and other code requirements to be met for safety purposes. Contact the Building Inspection Office and check before purchasing the property. Once the sale is final, you are the new owner and are required to bring the unit up

to code which may have substantial associated costs. Also, some zones in Colchester County do not permit additional units so be sure to speak with the Development Officer.

A house is and always was a house, right?

In the age of tiny houses and trying to avoid code requirements, sheds and garages sometimes are turned into homes without the required permits. Although we do catch some of these properties during routine inspections, be sure your lawyer checks to ensure this is not the case for your new cottage or home. Permits and code requirements are not the same for sheds and garages as they would be for a new home/cottage. The cost of bringing these buildings up to code can be substantial and is one that is the responsibility of the current property owner.

Can I keep animals on my property?

Some zones in Colchester County require large setbacks for buildings and fenced areas to house animals that cannot be met due to lot size. Be sure to speak with the Development Officer to see if the home you are considering can meet these setbacks.

Can I expand my house or build other buildings on my property?

Zoned areas in Colchester County may have increased setbacks compared to the fire safety setbacks required under the building code. To review the setbacks needed for any planned addition or change to the house, please contact a Building Inspector and Development Officer to ensure you have the space required for an addition.

Can I run a business out of my home?

Some zones in Colchester County do not permit businesses, home occupations, or commercial uses. Be sure to speak with the Development Officer to see if you can utilize the home in the way you have been planning.

What are the rules surrounding dog licensing in Colchester County?

It is the law in Colchester County to register your dog annually for a fee of \$12.00. Tags can be purchased at numerous locations throughout the County for the convenience of our residents. For a list of tag vendors please contact our office or visit our website at www.colchester.ca/animal-control.

Please contact the Community Development Office at 902-897-3170 for additional information related to building permits, zoning and animal control services.

Are there outstanding taxes on the house I want to buy?

Having your realtor or lawyer order a tax certificate from the County is a great way to protect yourself from unwanted expenses. For a fee of only \$25, you can find out about any outstanding taxes, outstanding utility account balances or liens on your future property. If you are buying a new home that has an existing water connection, be sure that a final meter reading has been recorded by the water utility before taking ownership of the new property.

How much will my taxes be and when are taxes due?

Each year Council sets a residential and commercial base tax rate to be applied towards a taxable properties assessed value. The majority of properties in Colchester also have area tax rates depending on the location and services available. Please contact the Tax Office if you have any questions regarding to the current tax rate or area rate that apply to your property. Annual tax bills are mailed out in June and due August 31st of each year.

For more information, please contact our Tax Office at 902-897-3150.



Colchester

1 Church Street
Truro, Nova Scotia
B2N 3Z5

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
Planning

Property Information - 902-897-3178
Colchester Recreation - 902-897-3185
recreation@colchester.ca

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

Waste & Recycling Helpline:
902-895-4777
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
Materials Recovery Facility/
Waste Reduction - 902-897-0453
Regional Balefill Facility - 895-2307

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Upcoming Commemorations and Observances

Sharing in traditions and celebrating differences is an important part of building strong, welcoming and inclusive communities. Here are a few special dates to take note of in the weeks ahead:

March 26	Purple Day (Epilepsy Awareness)
April 2	Ramadan begins (ends May 2) World Autism Awareness Day
April 15	Good Friday
April 17	Easter Sunday
April 22	Earth Day 2022
May	Gaelic Awareness Month in Nova Scotia Asian Heritage Month
May 8	Mother's Day
May 17	International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia & Biphobia
May 23	Victoria Day
May 30	World Multiple Sclerosis Day

Animal Control

Please be advised the Colchester SPCA is now looking after animal control for the Municipality of Colchester full time. To log a complaint about animal control or fencing and detention of stray livestock please phone the SPCA at 902-893-7968 and choose the option to speak with a by-law officer.

For domestic animal abuse and neglect please contact the SPCA head office at 1-888-703-7722.

For farm animal abuse and neglect please phone Farm Animal Welfare at 1-877-936-8476.



Be a Responsible Dog Owner

When enjoying parks and trails, please keep your dog on leash and remember to pick up after your dog.