



Colchester

Newsletter

Hello Colchester!

Welcome to the Winter 2023 edition of Colchester’s newsletter, where we share exciting news, helpful tips and much more with our residents!

Photo of Winding River by Donna Andrus

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Hello from Mayor Blair! **2**

Read about what's happening in Colchester, straight from the Mayor's office!

Seasonal Reminders **3**

Department Updates

Public Works Pg. 4 Solid Waste Pg. 5
Community Development Pg. 8 Recreation Pg. 9

Dates to Remember! **6**

Mark your calendars - here's a list of all the things happening in Colchester this Winter

Tax Office **10**

Odds & Ends **11**

Stay in the Loop! **12**

Follow us on Social Media to see real-time updates on what we're up to!



CHECK THIS OUT!

Thanks to Larry Burt for submitting this photo of a fox at golden hour! He was one of the latest winners of our photo contest. For more information on how to win a Colchester Swag Bag, and have your photo featured in our newsletter, see the back page!

Be centred here.



From the Mayor's Desk

With the end of 2023 approaching and as we move forward into 2024, Colchester's Council and staff are working to conclude several projects, begin the budgeting process, and continue the daily obligations of a rural municipality in Nova Scotia with 38,000 residents.

Nova Scotia Bravery Awards: By invitation from the Hon. Tim Houston, Premier of Nova Scotia, it was my privilege to attend the Nova Scotia Bravery Awards presentations in the Red Chamber of Province House, Halifax, on November 8th. The Medal of Bravery was awarded to Colchester resident Robert McGregor of Economy. Mr. McGregor is a worthy recipient of this award for his exceptional bravery exhibited in a life-threatening house fire.

NSFM Public Safety Committee: Earlier this month, as your representative and spokesperson, I was named to the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities Public Safety Committee.

Remembrance Day 2023: On behalf of the Municipality, I laid a wreath to honour the Fallen at the Cenotaph, Truro, at the Five Islands Fire Hall. I also attended the Debert Legion's Remembrance Day dinner. Attendance at these events was remarkable and I appreciated families bringing their children to learn and provide succession to continue honouring those who fought and died in war to maintain the freedoms we have in Canada. We Will Remember Them.

Rath Eastlink Community Centre: The RECC, now 10 years old, continues to be a centre for recreation and special events in Colchester County. The RECC Board of Directors has Councillor Wade Parker and me as the elected representatives from Colchester, and staff person CAO Dan Troke. We are updating our five-year strategic plan for the facility, recognizing the many positives this facility has for our communities, including financial spinoff from its many events.

Be centred here.

Scotia Pool – Glen W. Smith Community Pool: Congratulations to Scotia Pool on celebrating its 50th Anniversary on October 26th. It was opened by the Right Honourable Pierre Elliott Trudeau in 1973. It is a warm water pool operated by a volunteer organization and is located in the Village of Bible Hill.

Colchester's 35th Annual Art Acquisition Program: Congratulations to Brea Askew, Great Village, the artist whose painting of the Great Village Elementary School, had her art chosen to be added to Colchester's collection. The school is a historic building synonymous to Colchester County and will be a great addition to the collection.

In closing: A letter of condolence was sent to Mayor Carl Sheline, Lewiston, Maine, with regards to the shooting of 18 residents and wounding of 13 others.

November 25 marked the International Day of Elimination of Violence Against Women.

My very best wishes to you for a wonderful Holiday Season 2023, and a Healthy, Happy New Year 2024. Merry Christmas! Season's Greetings! Happy Holidays!

Kindest regards to all,
Christine Blair, Mayor

The Nova Scotia Medal of Bravery was awarded to Robert (Bob) McGregor, Economy, Colchester County, at a ceremony held in the Red Chamber of Province House, November 8, 2023. (L to R) Premier Tim Houston, Robert McGregor, MLA Tom Taggart, Mayor Christine Blair





Seasonal Reminders

Will Your Property be Vacant over the Winter?

If you are connected to our public water system in Debert or Tatamagouche and plan to keep your property vacant over the winter, you should consider a temporary water shut off. Even though you might shut the water off inside your home, pipes can still freeze between your shut off and your foundation wall, leaving you open to major water damage.

The cost for a utility shut off is \$50 in Debert and \$60 in Tatamagouche, and there is no fee to have the water turned back on in the spring during our regular working hours. Please call our Public Works Office at (902) 897-3175, Option 2, to arrange to have your water turned off at the street.



Winter Green Cart and Garbage Tips

- Collection trucks may be passing your home at different times because of winter road conditions. To ensure your material is not missed you **MUST** have your garbage and green cart to the curb by 7:00 am on your collection day.
- Please remember that plastic and bio-degradable plastic bags are **NOT** permitted in the green cart. Paper bags are welcomed.
- To keep your organics from freezing to the inside of your compost bin, wrap moist organics in newspaper or boxboard (ie: cereal boxes) and try lining the bottom with a pizza box, newspapers or leftover fall leaves.
- With the increase of snow in driveways and roadsides, please use caution when placing garbage and recycling bags curbside for pick up. Uneven snow piles may cause the bags to fall onto the road and cause traffic hazards.



- Please remember that all bags and bins must be ten feet or less from the road and in a safe location.
- To ensure collection; please ensure that garbage bins, bags and green carts are visible and not buried in snow on your collection day.

Shop Local in Colchester County this Holiday Season

When it comes to gift giving this Holiday Season remember to think local! While rising costs may be on the minds of many Nova Scotians this year, locally owned shops across Colchester County make it easy to find unique and thoughtful gifts, while still being mindful of any budget.

Visit places like Main Street in Tatamagouche, Great Village, and Earltown to find one-of-a-kind giftable items. Attending upcoming Holiday artisan markets in your area is convenient way to shop local for gifts, with a large selection of unique, handmade finds- all in one place!

We've partnered with Truro Buzz to create Colchester Shop Local Holiday Gift Guides. They are hitting the road to find fabulous gift ideas for anyone on your list from businesses all over Colchester County. Keep an eye on trurobuzz.com and follow @trurobuzz on Instagram and Facebook to get inspired for your Holiday shopping.

Remember to look for the "Live Local" sticker on shop windows and doors to know you're shopping at locally owned businesses. The "Live Local" campaign was created by the Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce with a committee who are dedicated to encouraging consumers to shop local in the Truro/Colchester region. Why shop local? For every dollar spent at independently owned businesses, almost 70% is returned to the local economy vs 45% at national chains.

Happy Holiday shopping!





Public Works

Snowplowing – Roads and Sidewalks

Did you know that the Municipality, Province, and Villages share the responsibility for snow removal on roads and sidewalks?

The Municipality is responsible for snow removal on 32 kms of roads throughout the County. These roads are all within subdivisions in Valley, Bible Hill, and Debert. Our crews also clear snow from 33 kms of sidewalks throughout Brookfield, Debert, Hilden, North River, Onslow, Salmon River, Truro Heights, and Valley. If you have a snowplowing concern in one of these areas, please contact our Public Works Office at 902-897-3175, Option 2.

The Village of Bible Hill clears snow from all sidewalks in Bible Hill. If you have a concern with snow removal on a Bible Hill sidewalk, you can contact their office at 902-893-8083. The Village of Tatamagouche is responsible for snow removal on all sidewalks in Tatamagouche. Please contact their office at 902-657-3696 with any concerns.

Lastly, the provincial Nova Scotia Public Works Department clears snow from over 200 kms of roads throughout the County. Please reach out to their Operations Centre at 1-844-696-7737 with any concerns.

We all work diligently throughout the winter to keep our roads and sidewalks safe for everyone. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and patience this winter season.



Keeping Foundation Drains Clear of Snow & Ice

With snowplowing season upon us, snow from roads will end up in the ditches along your property. With the accumulation of snow and wet winter weather, backups can occur if you have your foundation drains piped into the ditch. Foundation drains should be laid at the proper grade, have a backflow valve installed and be kept free of any sags to prevent the ponding and freezing of water. We often get calls in the winter for backups caused by frozen foundation drains. Homeowners are responsible for keeping these drains free of snow and ice.

Issues can also arise if your sump pump is connected to your foundation drain and water can't get to the ditch. We recommend that you have a separate pipe that allows sump pump water to be discharged above ground and not tied into your foundation/footing drains. We don't allow sump pumps to be connected to sewer lines.

Solid Waste



Snow Days



Winter weather is unpredictable. If collection is missed on your road due to icy or snowy conditions, hold on to your material until your next collection day. The drivers will collect up to twice the allowable amount.

An alternate collection will be scheduled only if collection is cancelled across the entire County. If an alternate collection is necessary, residents will be informed by public service announcements placed on the local radio stations and our website. Residents will also receive reminders by email or telephone if they have signed up for service alert messages.

Want to know the moment winter weather affects collection in your area? Sign up for a service alert messages at colchester.ca/garbage-and-recycling or download our 'Colchester Waste' app and you will be notified by phone, email or Twitter the moment decisions affecting collection are made!

Holiday Tree Collection

Municipality of Colchester - January 11 - 19, 2024

Town of Truro - January 8 - 12, 2024

Town of Stewiacke - January 5, 2024

To ensure your tree is collected, please have trees curbside by 7:00 am on or before the first tree collection day in your Municipal jurisdiction.

Please Note: All trees must be visible (not buried under snow) and free of lights, tinsel, ornaments, stands and must be de-bagged to ensure collection.

For more information on Holiday Tree Collection please visit our website at colchester.ca/special-events and click holiday tree collection for details.



Colchester Balefill Facility

188 Mingo Road, Exit 18 Highway 104 Kemptown

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 Kemptown

Hours of Operation:

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

Reminder: All visitors must report to the Scalehouse prior to unloading materials. The Scalehouse operator can accept cash, a personal cheque, or Interac as payment for disposal. The Scalehouse 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.

Important Holiday Collection Changes

Please note the following changes to solid waste pick up due to the holidays:

The Balefill and Materials Recovery Facility will be closed on Monday, December 25th and Tuesday, December 26th for Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

If your regular collection day is scheduled to be Tuesday, December 26th, this collection will take place on Saturday, December 30th.

As always, material must be placed at the curbside by 7:00 am on your collection day.

Engage with us on Social Media!



Solid Waste Contact:
902-897-3150 Option 1



Colchester

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Municipal Dates & Meetings

December 2023

05 Council Committee Meeting 6 PM
TUES Presentation Meeting (on an as needed basis)

14 Council Committee Meeting 6 PM
THURS

22 Municipal Office Closure @ Noon
FRI In lieu of Christmas Eve

25 Municipal Office Closure
MON Christmas Day

26 Municipal Office Closure
TUES Boxing Day

January 2024

01 Municipal Office Closure
MON New Years Day

02 Council Committee Meeting 6 PM
TUES Presentation Meeting (on an as needed basis)

11 Council Committee Meeting 6 PM
THURS

25 Council Meeting 6 PM
THURS

26 Funding Program Deadline
FRI Community Trail Program



Colchester



31

WED

Funding Program Deadline

Grants to Non-Profit

February 2024

06

TUES

Council Committee Meeting

6 PM

Presentation Meeting (on an as needed basis)

15

THURS

Council Committee Meeting

6 PM

19

MON

Municipal Office Closure

Family Day

23

FRI

Funding Program Deadline

Community Park Funding Program

29

THURS

Council Meeting

6 PM

March 2024

05

TUES

Council Committee Meeting

6 PM

Presentation Meeting (on an as needed basis)

14

THURS

Council Committee Meeting

6 PM

To apply for one of our community grants, or for more information, please visit

colchester.ca/grants-and-funding



Community Development

Solar Colchester + Cozy Colchester



Thinking about completing a home energy efficiency upgrade? The Cozy Colchester and Solar Colchester financing programs relaunched this fall and are currently open to the public!

- Loans up to \$30,000
- No credit checks
- 4.75% interest rate
- Free Home Energy Assessments
- Access to an energy concierge to help you throughout the process, and more!

Contact us today to learn more:

(902) 920-0615
info@cozycolchester.ca
info@solarcolchester.ca

Solar Permits

Going forward, the Municipality of Colchester will require Building Permits for all new roof-mounted solar systems. For ground-mounted solar systems located in areas covered by a Land Use Bylaw, a Development Permit is required.

For more information, call 902-897-3170 or visit www.colchester.ca/permits



Plan It Colchester

The initial community engagement phase of Plan It Colchester, County Wide Planning, has wrapped up. The project team hosted a series of engagement activities between March and early August 2023, where participants were invited to share their perspectives and insights on land use and their vision for the future of Colchester. As a result, the Municipality has released an Engagement Summary and Recommendations Report.

This document includes a thematic analysis of information that was received throughout the formative engagement phase and also contains a draft Vision Statement and Goals for the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use By-law (LUB). The draft Vision Statement and Goals provides a comprehensive overview of community land use issues and perspectives related to current and emerging areas of interest. The report also identifies any information or knowledge gaps that need to be filled in before the drafting of the planning documents.

To view the report, visit:
colchester.ca/plan-it-colchester

Next Steps

The information gathered during the engagement phase will be used to create draft Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law documents which will reflect the feedback we received. Drafting the documents will take place during Fall/Winter 2023/24. The drafts will coincide with a new round of public engagement where the public will have more opportunities to share their thoughts.



Plan It Colchester

Stay Up To Date

To learn more and get the latest updates on the Plan It Colchester Project or Colchester's sustainability initiatives, visit the department webpage:

colchester.ca/communitydevelopment



Recreation

Snowshoe Loan Program

Individuals and groups can borrow child and adult sizes

\$25 deposit required



To reserve, call 902-897-3185 or email recreation@colchester.ca.

Visit colchester.ca/equipment-loan for more information.

Equipment Loan Program

Individuals and Groups can borrow a variety of games and recreation and sports equipment

\$25 deposit required

To reserve, call 902-897-3185 or email recreation@colchester.ca.

Visit colchester.ca/equipment-loan for more information.

Free Holiday Skating

Follow Colchester Recreation on Facebook as we will be posting free skating times during the holiday season at the following arenas:

West Colchester United Arena in Debert, Don Henderson Memorial Sportsplex in Brookfield, and the North Shore Recreation Centre in Tatamagouche.



Mi'kmawey Debert Interpretive Trail

On October 25th, Mi'kmawey Debert hosted a celebration of the 20th Anniversary and re-opening of the trail. The warm autumn day included songs and drumming, words, atlatl throws, walks, and cake.

Visitors to the Mi'kmawey Debert Interpretive Trail can learn about the history of the Debert Ancestral sites through panels featuring the beautiful artwork of Dozay Christmas. The trail has varied forested terrain and crosses several brooks. It is located near the future site of the Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre.

The trail was closed in fall 2022 after significant damage from post-tropical storm Fiona. The Municipality of Colchester is pleased to have supported the recapitalization of the trail including the replacement of bridges and boardwalks by providing a \$50,000 grant through the Community Trail Funding Program.

We are blessed to have this wonderful trail in our community. Mi'kmawey Debert invites everyone to enjoy the wonders of the trail and please respect this very special ancestral place. "Take only memories, leave only footprints."



Trailhead: 1952 Plains Road, Debert
Trail length: 4.4 km loop
Permitted uses: Walking, dogs on leash
For more information, visit mikmaweydebert.ca



Tax Office

Property Taxes

The Municipality of Colchester 2023/2024 property tax bills were due on August 31, 2023. Outstanding balances are accruing interest at 1.00% per month.

What Happens When Property Taxes Are Not Paid?

Unpaid taxes are a first lien on the property and will be charged interest of 1.00% per month. Legislatively, the Municipality of Colchester is required to eventually take properties with an outstanding balance to tax sale.

To avoid your property going to tax sale, you can enter and honour a payment arrangement to repay the outstanding taxes. If you would like to set up a payment arrangement or discuss payment options, you can contact our property tax office at 902-897-3162 or email cveling@colchester.ca.

Change of Address

If you have not received your 2023 tax bill, please update your mailing address now. It is the responsibility of the homeowner to ensure that the correct mailing address is on your property tax account.

Where there is more than one owner or more than one address for a property, the Municipality will only issue one bill to one address. To update your mailing address please contact the tax office at 902-897-3162, email your updated address to taxoffice@colchester.ca or fill out an address change form on our website at colchester.ca/address-change-form.

It is also important to ensure that your mailing address is up to date with Property Valuation Services to ensure that you receive your Notice of Assessment.

Tax Office Contact: 902-897-3150 Option 3

Notice of Assessment

Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC) assesses every property in Nova Scotia and mails the Property Assessment Notices to property owners every January.

When you get your Property Assessment Notice:

- Read every section.
- Note the deadline to appeal your assessment. PVSC must receive your appeal within 31 days of the date on your Notice. The appeal form is on the back of your Notice.
- Contact PVSC if you have questions about, or disagree with, your Property Assessment Notice you can call 1-800-380-7775 or email inquiry@pvsc.ca.

Remember the Notice of Assessment is not your tax bill, we will mail our tax bills separately in June 2024.

To learn more about property assessments in Nova Scotia please visit www.pvsc.ca.





Odds & Ends

Alert Truro Colchester Discontinued

The Municipality has discontinued its use of Alert Truro Colchester for emergency alerting and will now use Alert Ready. Alert Ready is the emergency alerting system currently used across Canada to deliver critical and potentially life-saving alerts through television, radio, and LTE-connected and compatible wireless devices. It reaches a broader audience than the Municipality's previous system which required residents to first subscribe to receive notifications. Messages from the new system will be received automatically without a subscription.

Alerts issued by the Municipality will relate to emergencies that threaten life and property in Colchester such as hurricanes, floods, blizzards, wildfires, chemical spills, etc. Other Alert Ready notifications may also be issued to the public by the RCMP and the Nova Scotia Emergency Management Organization.



No action is required for those who had previously subscribed to Alert Truro Colchester.

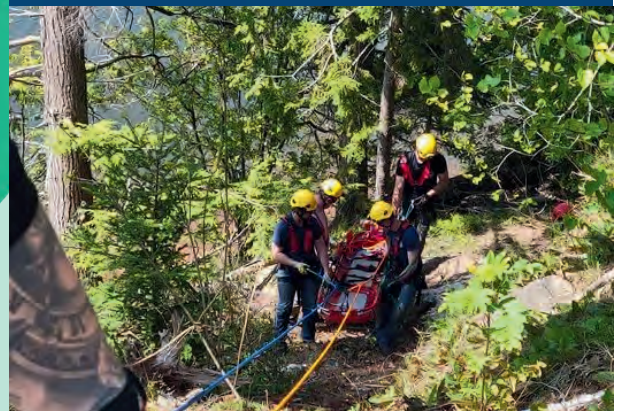
For more information on Alert Ready visit www.alertready.ca or contact Dave Westlake, Protective Services Coordinator, at dwestlake@colchester.ca or 902-893-8511.



Fire Department Profile



Name	Tatamagouche Fire Department
Established	1947
Chief officers	Fire Chief Mark Langille, Deputy Chiefs Jeremy Russell and Matt Forbes
Number of Firefighters	28
Number of Calls for 2023 to Date	93
Number of Apparatus:	5 and an off road UTV
Communities Served:	Tatamagouche, Earltown, Denmark, Balfron, Brule, Bayhead, West New Annan, The Falls, Sand Point, Byers Lake, French River, Waughs River, Mattatall Lake, Barrachois, Kavanaugh Mills
Services Provided:	Fire Protection, Medical First Response, Ice Water Rescue, Rope Rescue, Vehicle Rescue
Membership Inquiries:	email tatamagouchefiredept@gmail.com



2023 Art Acquisition

Congratulations Brea Askew on winning the 35th Annual Colchester County Art Acquisition held on November 14th at the NSCC Library. Her piece will be added to our growing collection at the Municipality of Colchester Office at 1 Church Street.



Engage With Us

Photo Contest

Are you an amateur photographer in the making? We are looking to feature local photos of what's happening in Colchester!

Submit your photos to photos@colchester.ca and you will be entered to win a Colchester swag bag and could be featured in our next newsletter edition. All photos must be submitted by February 1, 2024 to be entered to win!

Connect with us online!

-  @ColchesterNS
-  @colchestercounty
-  @MunColchester
-  colchester.ca

Accessibility & Inclusion

Do you, or someone you know, have challenges accessing municipal information or services, or participating in programs or community engagement opportunities (for example a visual or hearing impairment, mobility, or cognitive challenge)? Please contact Devin Trefry by calling 902-897-3182 or email dtrefry@colchester.ca to discuss ways that we may be able to accommodate or assist.