



# Colchester Newsletter

## Hello Colchester!

Welcome to the Summer 2025 edition of Colchester's newsletter, where we share exciting news, helpful tips and much more with our residents!

Photo by Dianne Fortnum

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

### Hello from Mayor Blair! **2**

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

### Department Updates

Recreation - Pg. 3  
Solid Waste - Pg. 4  
Community Development - Pg. 5  
Public Works - Pg. 10  
Tax Office - Pg. 12

### Dates to Remember! **6**

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

### Odds & Ends

2025/26 Budget - Pg. 8  
Wildfire Resilience- Pg. 9  
2025 Colchester Historical Society Heritage Awards - Pg. 11  
Electric Vehicle Test Drive Event - Pg. 11

*Be centred here.*



## CHECK THIS OUT!

Thanks to Ted Martin for submitting this photo! He was one of the winners from our most recent photo contest.

Want to be a winner?

Submit your photos and you will be entered to win a Colchester swag bag and could be featured in our next newsletter edition.

Visit [colchester.ca/photo-contest](https://colchester.ca/photo-contest) or email [photos@colchester.ca](mailto:photos@colchester.ca) to enter!

# From the Mayor's Desk

Photo by Cindy Ryan

2025/26 Budget: Colchester has finalized its 2025–26 budget and I wanted to emphasize Council's diligence as we face some very challenging and difficult times. Approximately 43% of our budget of \$45 million goes directly to the province for mandatory payments such as education and policing, leaving the remaining 57% to deliver county-wide services such as solid waste management, environmental, planning, infrastructure and recreation services. Nonetheless, our tax rate has been held at the same level for 7 of the past 8 years.

Debert Business Park: The Debert Business Park remains a priority of Council. We have seen impressive growth over the past three years, with 2024 being no exception. Colchester has entered agreements for the sale of land to support new warehousing, transportation services and housing developments. Looking ahead, 2025 is shaping up to be another strong year, with all of this boosting our local economy and jobs, as we continue to support our local businesses.

Public Transit Study: A regional public transit study has been initiated, in partnership with the Town of Truro, to explore transit solutions for the area. We are looking forward to input from our residents throughout the County, including engagement sessions and surveys, to learn the transportation needs and challenges of our rural residents.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility: Colchester County has launched a committee focused on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), emphasizing staff training, policy review, and strategic planning. This aligns with provincial requirements under the Dismantling Racism and Hate Act, which mandates municipalities to develop equity and anti-racism plans. The Municipality is committed to creating a more welcoming, diverse, and inclusive environment. Additionally, Council approved a Regional Accessibility Plan in collaboration with Truro, Stewiacke, Bible Hill, and Tatamagouche.

Wind and Solar Energy: After two years of extensive review and public consultations, Colchester County submitted its new Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw, for provincial approval. However, just before approval, the Province introduced new maximum wind turbine setback rules that overruled Colchester's more stringent, community-developed standards (2 km and 36 db noise vs. the Province's 800 m and 40 db). Despite the County's request to reconsider, the Minister confirmed the provincial rules would stand.

Meanwhile, Colchester continues to expand its solar energy initiatives. A new 500-kilowatt solar garden was installed at the Central Colchester Wastewater Treatment Plant, aiming to lower costs and support the community's move toward a sustainable, carbon-free future.

DEER...Oh, dear!!!: Deer overpopulation remains a concern in Colchester's urban areas, leading to more vehicle collisions, property damage, and health risks like Lyme disease. Deer population research has resumed in partnership with the Department of Natural Resources, expanding to include Salmon River, Lower Truro, Truro Heights, and Hilden, in addition to Bible Hill, Valley, and Brookside. As planting season begins, resident concerns are growing. The public is urged not to feed the deer, as it worsens the problem.

Not Since Moses: The Not Since Moses 5 km, 10 km and Youth Run is scheduled for Saturday, July 13, 2025, beginning at 8:30 am (Youth 10:45 am), at the Five Islands Lighthouse Park (5 km); Soley Cove Road (10 km). It's muddy and it's rough - racing the tides in only 90 minutes. Mark your calendars for this memorable experience!

In Closing: Sincere congratulations to the Colchester East Hants Regional Library, Tatamagouche Branch on celebrating 75 years.

Until next time, my kindest regards to all.

Christine Blair, Mayor

# Recreation



## COLCHESTER BIKE WEEK

The 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Bike Week takes place May 31st – June 9th with fun, free events, and helpful tips to cycle safely!

Follow us on Facebook or visit [colchester.ca/colchester-bike-week](http://colchester.ca/colchester-bike-week) for details.



## FUN IN THE SUN

Fun in the Sun Day Camps take place in July and August. Each week is packed with fun outdoor games, activities, sports, and theme days to keep your kids active this summer.

For locations and schedule, check [colchester.ca/fun-in-the-sun-day-camps](http://colchester.ca/fun-in-the-sun-day-camps).



## COBEQUID TRAIL RUN

It's our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! Join us on August 24th for beautiful scenery and a fast, flat, and fun run on the Cobequid Trail!

Register for the 5K, 10K, or Half Marathon at [raceroster.com](http://raceroster.com)

## Enjoy a Walk at Stewiacke River Park

A new bridge was installed along the walking trail at Stewiacke River Park over the Winter. The aluminum structure is 24.5 m long and crosses a tributary of the Stewiacke River. The new bridge is wider and has handrails, making it more accessible. The Municipality wishes to thank the Province of Nova Scotia for supporting this project through a \$62,102 grant from the Department of Community, Culture, Tourism and Heritage's Recreation Trail Expansion Program.

Stewiacke River Park, in East Stewiacke, is a beautiful, forested park with mature pine, hemlock and spruce. It is a popular place to walk along the 2km trail, enjoy a picnic near the river, play on the playground, relax in a hammock, or simply sit beside the river and enjoy a quiet moment. Why not plan to visit the park and go for a walk? When enjoying your visit, please stay on designated trails, respect all posted signs, respect other park users, and keep your dog on leash. Enjoy your visit!

For more information on Stewiacke River Park, visit [colchester.ca/stewiacke-river-park](http://colchester.ca/stewiacke-river-park).



## Contact

**Website:** [colchester.ca/recreation](http://colchester.ca/recreation)  
**Phone:** 902-897-3150 Option 5  
**Email:** [recreation@colchester.ca](mailto:recreation@colchester.ca)  
**Facebook:** @MunColRec

# Solid Waste

## Recycling your Lights

Lightbulbs are no longer accepted in the garbage and now have to be disposed of at select Enviro-Depots or the Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off.



### ✓ ACCEPTED PRODUCTS

- Compact fluorescent lights (CFLs)
- Fluorescent tubes (straight, curved, U, circular, square, etc.)
- High-intensity discharge (HIDs) and special purpose bulbs
- Incandescent and halogen bulbs
- Miniature bulbs
- Light emitting diodes (LEDs)
- Ultra High Performance (UHP) (replacement projector lamps)
- UV and germicidal bulbs

### ✗ NON ACCEPTED PRODUCTS

- Ballasts and light fixtures
- Lamps integrated into products that are not intended for easy removal/replacement by end users
- String lights

## PARTICIPATING ENVIRO-DEPOTS INCLUDE:

**Subway Bottle Exchange** 25 Pictou Road, Bible Hill

**TNT Recycling** 20711 HWY #2, Shubenacadie East

**Clean Harbors** 640 MacElmon Road, Debert  
First Saturday of every month,  
9:00 am to 1:00 pm

## Curbside Collection

### COLCHESTER RESIDENTS

Residents can place up to three (3) bags of leaves each garbage collection day as long as the leaves are in PAPER leaf and yard waste bags.

### IMPORTANT UPDATES

- If your collection is scheduled for Tuesday, July 1st, this collection will take place the Monday AFTER on July 7th.
- If your collection is scheduled for Tuesday, September 30th, this collection will take place the Monday AFTER on October 6th.
- All materials should be curbside before 7:00 am on your collection day, to ensure it is collected.
- All garbage taken to the Balefill Facility, whether residential or business, MUST BE in clear bags or you will be asked to re-bag into clear bags.
- Cash, personal cheques or INTERAC are accepted as payment. Credit cards are NOT accepted.

## Solid Waste Closures

Kemptown Solid Waste Facilities will be closed the following days:

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>Tuesday, July 1st</b>       | Canada Day                                |
| <b>Monday, August 4th</b>      | Civic Day                                 |
| <b>Monday, September 1st</b>   | Labour Day                                |
| <b>Tuesday, September 30th</b> | National Day for Truth and Reconciliation |

## Contact

**Website:** [colchester.ca/garbage-and-recycling](http://colchester.ca/garbage-and-recycling)  
**Phone:** 902-897-3150 Option 1  
**Email:** [helpline@colchester.ca](mailto:helpline@colchester.ca)  
**Instagram:** @colchesterwrm

# Community Development

## New Online Permit System

The Municipality of Colchester has launched a new Online Permit System, making it easier to apply, pay, and track permits, all in one place!



Submit documents, message staff, and check your status all online.

Visit [colchester.ca/permits](https://colchester.ca/permits) to learn more!

## Changes to Building Codes

Nova Scotia adopted the 2020 National Building Codes on April 1, 2025, enhancing building accessibility and energy efficiency. The changes align the provincial building code with the latest National Building Code standards and improve safety for Nova Scotians.

Building permit applications submitted after March 31, 2025, must comply with the new 2020 codes.

## Plan It Colchester Update

Council approved the adoption of the Draft Municipal Planning Strategy and Draft Land Use By-law during a Public Hearing held on Thursday, March 27th. The Municipality is now awaiting ministerial approval.



Visit [colchester.ca/plan-it-colchester](https://colchester.ca/plan-it-colchester) to read the approved planning documents and stay tuned for updates on when they take effect!

## Protect Yourself and Your Family From Extreme Heat

If your home has poor insulation and lacks air conditioning, indoor air temperatures could reach hazardous levels during a heat wave. If this happens:

### WHAT TO DO

1. Find somewhere to cool off for a few hours, like a shady green space, a neighbour's house, the mall or library, or another air-conditioned location.
2. Try sleeping in a cooler part of the house.
3. Take a cool bath or shower.
4. Stay hydrated and learn the signs of heat-related illness.

Air conditioning can be lifesaving for groups vulnerable to heat, like seniors, young children, and people with certain chronic illnesses.



If you are at risk without the cash to install AC or better insulation, call the Cozy Colchester program at 902-920-0615 to see what options might be available for you!

## Carbon-Free Colchester Progress Update

Interested in learning about Colchester's climate action efforts? Visit the new Carbon-Free Colchester project tracker at [colchester.ca/carbon-free](https://colchester.ca/carbon-free).

### Contact

**Website:** [colchester.ca/community-development](https://colchester.ca/community-development)  
**Phone:** 902-897-3150 Option 4  
**Email:** [comdev@colchester.ca](mailto:comdev@colchester.ca)



Colchester

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Municipal Dates & Meetings

June 2025

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

07 Household Hazardous Waste Event  
SAT Clean Harbors, Debert - 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

12 Council Committee Meeting 6 PM  
THURS

14 Mobile Household Hazardous Waste Event  
SAT RECC parking lot, 9:00 am - 12:00 noon

25 Council Meeting 6 PM  
WED

July 2025

01 Municipal Office Closure  
TUES Canada Day

05 Household Hazardous Waste Event  
SAT Clean Harbors, Debert - 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

13 Electric Vehicle Test Drive  
SUN RECC, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm (Learn more on pg. 11)

August 2025

04 Office Closure  
MON Civic Holiday

**05** **Council Committee Meeting** 6 PM  
TUES Presentation Meeting, on as needed basis

---

**09** **Household Hazardous Waste Event**  
SAT Clean Harbors, Debert - 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

---

**14** **Council Committee Meeting** 6 PM  
THURS

---

**24** **20th Annual Cobequid Trail Run**  
SUN

---

**28** **Council Meeting** 6 PM  
THURS

---

## September 2025

**01** **Municipal Office Closure**  
MON Labor Day

---

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

---

**06** **Household Hazardous Waste Event**  
SAT Clean Harbors, Debert - 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

---

**11** **Council Committee Meeting** 6 PM  
THURS

---

**13** **Community Paper Shredding Event**  
SAT RECC, 9:00 am to 12:00 noon

---



# 2025/26 Budget

Photo by Kimberly Shaw

## COUNCIL APPROVES BUDGET

### Colchester County Council Approves 2025/26 Operating Budget – No Increase in Tax Rates

Colchester County Council has officially approved its 2025/26 operating budget with no increase to residential or commercial tax rates. This marks the seventh time in eight years that the Municipality has held tax rates steady, with only a modest half-cent increase occurring in 2019.

Residential property owners will continue to pay \$0.885 and commercial property owners \$2.28 per \$100 of assessed value, as determined by Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC), the independent, not-for-profit agency responsible for all property assessments in Nova Scotia.



**Residential Tax Rate**  
\$0.885 per \$100 of Assessed Value



**Commercial Tax Rate**  
\$2.28 per \$100 of Assessed Value

## BUDGET INCREASE

### The 2025/26 budget totals \$45 million, up from \$42 million last year.

This year’s balanced operating budget totals just over \$45 million, up from \$42 million last year. The increase is supported by strong local growth, including new builds, resulting in a 7.63% rise in residential tax revenue and a 2.27% rise in commercial revenue, allowing the Municipality to expand services without raising rates.

The 2025/26 budget maintains support for core programs and services, while investing in critical infrastructure, economic development, and community wellbeing. Funding continues for the County’s grant programs supporting local not-for-profit and volunteer organizations.

*“Council reviews requests from many dedicated community groups each year. These organizations—often volunteer-run—are the backbone of our communities, providing vital services and facilities. We’re proud to continue our support for their incredible work.”*

– Mayor Christine Blair

*“This budget is a reflection of smart planning, strong growth, and a deep commitment to our residents. Holding the line on tax rates—while still expanding services and supporting vital community initiatives—is no small achievement.*

*I’m proud of the work Council and staff have done to ensure we’re not only meeting today’s needs but preparing for a stronger, more resilient future.”*

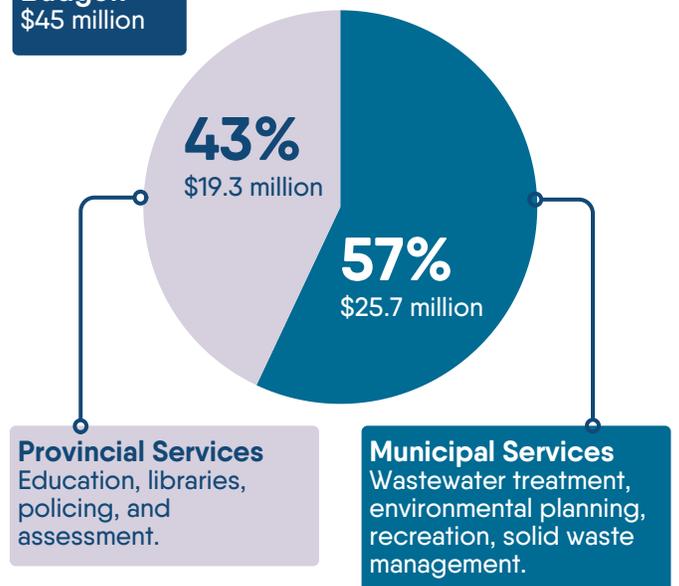
– Mayor Christine Blair

## BUDGET BREAKDOWN

Despite increasing financial pressures, including rising mandatory contributions to the Province, Council has delivered a responsible, forward-looking budget. This year, over 43% of the Municipality’s tax revenue (\$19.3 million) will be transferred to the Province to fund services such as education, libraries, policing, and assessment. Education costs alone rose by \$828,000, following last year’s \$973,000 increase, while policing costs increased by \$434,000, building on a \$670,000 rise in 2024.

That leaves \$25.7 million to fund essential local services such as wastewater treatment, environmental planning, recreation, and solid waste management.

**Budget:**  
\$45 million



# Wildfire Resilience

Photo by Larry Burt

## Are You Prepared for Wildfire Season?

The risk of wildland fires is growing across Canada. That can spell danger for our homes and communities – but there are steps we can take to protect them. We know that for 90% of homes that catch fire, the cause is falling embers.

Those embers can blow kilometres ahead of a wildland fire and ignite materials on or near your home. So, if you can prevent the spark from reaching your home, there's a good chance you can save it.

This fire season, you can help stop the spread of dangerous wildfires by taking simple steps that reduce the risk to your home and help keep your family and your neighbours safe. And remember, don't feed the wildfires.

Wildfire season in Nova Scotia runs from March 15 to October 15, 2025. Do you know how to protect your home and property from wildfires?

FireSmart™ Canada is a national program that helps Canadians increase neighbourhood resilience to wildfire and minimize its negative impacts. It was founded in 1993 to address common concerns about wildfire in the wildland urban interface.

Check out FireSmart Canada's "FireSmart Begins at Home" guide for useful information about how wildfires start and spread, what you can do to protect your home and property, and how to assess your property for wildfire risk.

Visit [www.firesmartcanada.ca](http://www.firesmartcanada.ca) to learn more!



Are you prepared to protect your home from wildfires this season?

Scan the QR Code below to take Home Ignition Zone Self-Assessment

FireSmart, Intelli-feu and other associated Marks are trademarks of the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFCC)

# Public Works

## Sewer System Guide

Did you know that Colchester County has a fully separated Sewer System? This means that there are separate pipes for Stormwater and Wastewater. It also means that our Sanitary Sewers are designed to only carry wastewater and not rainwater or groundwater.

## SEWER BACK-UP RISK REDUCTION

Two major causes of sewer back-ups are:

### Blockages

Often caused by flushing items that do not belong in the sewer system, such as “flushable wipes” and grease.



### Excess Water Volume

Typically occurs during or just after a heavy rain fall in locations where rainwater and groundwater are being directed into the sanitary sewer.

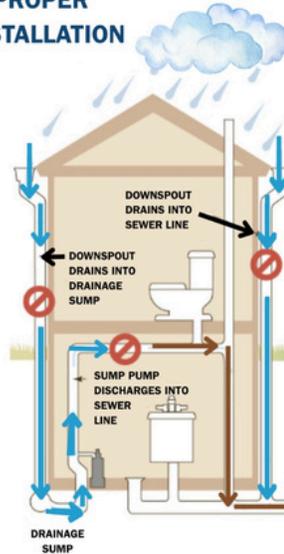


No one wants to deal with the mess of a Sewer Back-up. By taking the following steps, you can reduce your risk:

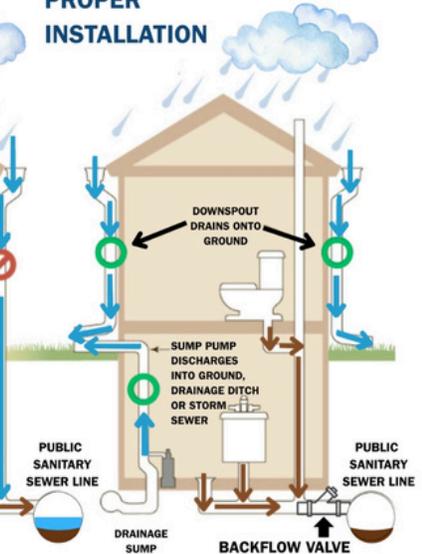
- Disconnect your sump pump from the Sanitary Sewer
- Disconnect your roof gutters from the Sanitary Sewer
- Inspect your sewer lateral for cracks and tree roots
- Install a backflow check valve on your sewer lateral in an accessible location
- Reduce your risk of blockages by only flushing the three P's: toilet Paper, Pee, & Pool!

## PROPER INSTALLATION

### IMPROPER INSTALLATION



### PROPER INSTALLATION



## WHAT DOES “FLUSHABLE” MEAN?

Well, for advertisers it can mean anything because there are no restrictions on the use of the word “flushable” in advertising. Products marketed as “flushable” do not break down in the sewer system and are a common source of sewer pipe blockages and expensive plumbing repairs.

Recently we’ve seen pea husk and tofu cat litters sold as “flushable” litter in Canada. These products should never be flushed, instead they should be disposed of in the Green Bin just like traditional clay-based cat litter.



## Contact

**Website:** [colchester.ca/public-works](http://colchester.ca/public-works)  
**Phone:** 902-897-3150 Option 2  
**Email:** [engineer@colchester.ca](mailto:engineer@colchester.ca)

# Odds & Ends

## 2025 Colchester Historical Society Heritage Awards

The Municipality was pleased to nominate the Springside Community Centre Association for a Colchester Historical Society 2025 Heritage Award! We are excited to congratulate the Association as a recipient of this award, in recognition of their tireless work to promote the significance of this historical former United Church site.

The Springside Community Centre Association continues to serve the Upper Stewiacke community by offering a welcoming and vibrant gathering space for a multitude of events.



Members of the Springside Community Centre Association from L to R: Michael Graham, Darryl Deyarmond and Beth Ellis, here with Mayor Christine Blair

Photo by Shannon Berry



Darryl Deyarmond accepting the award

Photo by Ian McGrath

Find the community centre on Facebook:  
@springsidecommunitycentre

Interested in visiting? Take a drive out to 7072 Highway 289, Eastville in Upper Stewiacke and enjoy the Centre!

## Electric Vehicle Test Drive Event

Nova Scotia's largest electric vehicle test drive event, Electric Avenue, is coming to Truro! Interested in learning more about EVs? Join Next Ride on July 13<sup>th</sup>!

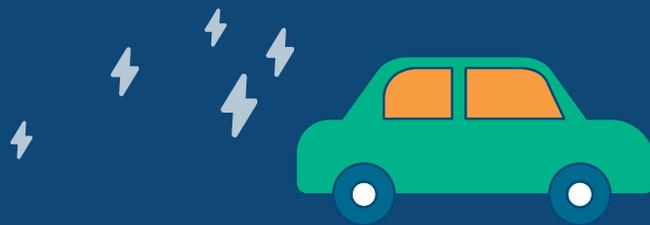
Bonus: Next Ride will be joined by Colchester's Carbon-Free team to answer your questions about municipal sustainability initiatives and programs like Cozy Colchester.

Book your test drive:  
[www.NextRideNS.com](http://www.NextRideNS.com)

**Sunday, July 13, 2025**

10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Rath Eastlink Community Centre  
625 Abenaki Rd, Truro



## Finance

### PROPERTY TAX BILLS

Your 2025/26 Property Tax Bill(s) will be mailed out in mid-June and are due by August 29th, 2025.

If you do not receive your bill(s) by the end of June, please contact the Tax Office at 902-897-3150 Option 3.

## Contact

**Website:** [colchester.ca/finance](http://colchester.ca/finance)  
**Phone:** 902-895-3150 Option 3  
**Email:** [taxoffice@colchester.ca](mailto:taxoffice@colchester.ca)



## Connect With Us Online



Website: [Colchester.ca](http://Colchester.ca)



Facebook: [@ColchesterNS](https://www.facebook.com/ColchesterNS)



Instagram: [@ColchesterCounty](https://www.instagram.com/ColchesterCounty)



Linkedin: [@Municipality-of-Colchester](https://www.linkedin.com/company/Municipality-of-Colchester)

## 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\*\*](mailto:dtrefry@colchester.ca) to discuss ways that we may be able to accommodate or assist.

## Contact

**Phone:** 902-897-3150  
**Hours of Operation:** Monday to Friday  
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM  
For evening and/ or weekend emergencies, call 902-897-3175