

WELCOME MARCH!



March is <u>Irish Heritage</u>
month and <u>Francophonie</u>
month with March 20 being
Francophonie Day. Not to
mention March Break for the
HRCE schools!

In 1922 the House of Commons designated March as Irish Heritage Month to celebrate the contribution of <u>Irish Canadians</u> to Canada's story while providing an opportunity to learn more about Irish Canadian history.

Canada has worked actively within the international Francophonie since its inception and was one of the first countries to promote La Francophonie.

Keep reading for more information on a private well groundwater assessment study, deadlines for the Community Garden and Community Grants programs, information on the Extra Care accessible taxi service, increase in Parks & Rec fees, and much more!

If you wish to discuss a municipal program or service, please contact me at Billy.Gillis@halifax.ca or call me at 902.471.6906.

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MARCH MEETING DATES

Regional Council, Budget Committee and Northwest Community Council meetings will be held on:

Budget Committee:

Wednesday, March 19 at 9:30 a.m. Friday, March 21 at 9:30 a.m.

Regional Council:

Tuesday, March 18 at 10 a.m. Tuesday, March 25 at 10 a.m.

North West Community Council:

Monday, March 3 at 6 p.m.

Standing Committees:

Appeals Standing Committee

• Thursday, March 6 at 10 a.m.

Audit & Finance Standing Committee

Monday, March 24 at 10 a.m.

Special Events Advisory Committee

TBD

DID YOU KNOW....

March is Irish Heritage month and Francophonie month.

March 1 is the start of Ramadan

March 1 is World Candle Day

March 1 is World Music Therapy Day

March 2 is World Teen Mental Wellness Day

March 3 is World Wildlife Day

March 3 is World Hearing Day

March 4 is Shrove Tuesday

March 4 is Mardi Gras

March 5 is Ash Wednesday

March 7 is World Plant Power Day

March 8 is International Women's Day

March 9 Daylight Saving Time Starts

March 11 Canadian Women Physicians Day

March 13 is World Kidney Day

March 14 is Pi Day

March 14 is Commonwealth Day

March 15 is International Day to Combat

Islamophobia

March 17 is St. Patrick's Day

March 19 International Read to Me Day

March 20 is World Oral Health Day

March 20 is French Language Day

March 20 is First Day of Spring

March 21 is International Day for the Elimination

of Racial Discrimination

March 21 is International Day of Forests

March 22 is World Water Day

March 26 is Purple Day

March 27 is World Theatre Day

March 29 is Earth Hour

March 30 is Last Day of Ramadan

March 31 is International Transgender Day of

Visibility

March 31 is National Indigenous Languages

Day

RAMADAN 2025: A HOLY MONTH OF GRATITUDE!



This year, the holy month of Ramadan begins at the first sighting of the crescent Moon on Saturday,

March 1.

In practicing the self-restraint and gratitude that Ramadan involves, adult Muslims fast from dawn until dusk at this time and exhibit goodwill through acts of kindness and charity.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Muslim calendar and begins and ends with the appearance of the crescent moon. Ramadan is expected to last from March 1 to March 29 in

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2025. However, these dates can vary slightly depending on the crescent moon's appearance.

Ramadan Mubarak – Blessed Ramadan!

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME STARTS



Don't forget that on Sunday, March 9, when local standard time is about to reach 2 a.m., clocks are turned forward 1 hour to 3 a.m. local daylight time.

Sunrise and sunset will be about one hour later on March 9 than the day before. There will be more light in the evening and less light in the morning.

POP-UP FOOD MARKET



MARCH IS FRANCOPHONIE MONTH

March is Francophonie Month

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Mars est le Mois de la Francophonie

March is Francophonie Month, a time to commemorate the French language and diverse Francophone cultures here at home and around the world.

As part of Francophonie Month celebrations, International Francophonie Day is observed annually on March 20.

You can learn more about the valuable role the Acadian and Francophone population plays in contributing to the cultural, social and economic development in our region by joining celebrations throughout the month!

<u>Click here</u> for more information as event details are finalized.

BUDGET 2025/26



Please be advised of the following key dates for the 2025/26 municipal budget process.

The municipal budget funds all costs associated with servicing a growing municipality. This includes day-to-day municipal operations, capital priority initiatives approved by Regional Council, and capital projects and investments to



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purchase, construct, rehabilitate and replace municipal assets.

There are several milestones in the annual municipal budget process. Below are the key dates for the 2025/26 municipal budget process:

Wednesday, March 19

Budget Adjustment List (BAL) Review:
 The BAL includes all additional items that business units have presented beyond their proposed budgets, including addons ("overs") and subtractions ("unders").

Tuesday, April 8

Budget Approval

Please note these dates are subject to change. For the most up-to-date information, click here.

Residents will have the opportunity to speak directly to the Budget Committee during the budget process. During each meeting, time will be set aside for the public to provide insight and comments.

For more information on the 2025/26 municipal budget process, visit <u>halifax.ca/budget</u>.

EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION DAY



Employee Appreciation
Day is a day dedicated
to recognizing and
expressing gratitude for
the hard work,
dedication, and
contributions of

employees within an organization.

Celebrated annually on the first Friday in March, this day serves as an opportunity for employers to show appreciation and acknowledge the efforts of their staff.

Thank you to those serving our municipality. Your work assists in making our communities thrive and a better place to live, work and play!

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RECREATION REGISTRATION DATES



Ready to get active?

There are 1000s of recreation programs and services to help

you and your family play, learn, move and stay active.

It's as easy as R-E-C!

Registration dates for Spring 2025: Wednesday, March 5 beginning at 10 a.m. for Recreation Programs

Thursday, March 6 beginning at 10 a.m. for Swimming & Skating Monday, April 14 beginning at 10 a.m. for Summer Camps

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY – MARCH 8



The Government of Canada's theme for International Women's Day 2025 is Strength In Every Story. This year's theme highlights the importance of amplifying the voices of all women, particularly those who continue to face barriers to success.



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This International Women's Day, celebrate the women and girls in your life and share their stories. Click here for more information on local events that celebrate womanhood.

SOCIAL MEDIA SURVEY



Social media is constantly evolving, and the municipality is looking to better understand where residents are most active.

By completing a <u>short survey</u> (will take less than 10 minutes), you can help ensure we're sharing municipal information and engaging with you, and other residents, in the most effective way.

The survey will remain open until Monday, March 10 at 11:59 p.m.

MARCH BREAK - MARCH 10 to 17



Looking for something to do during the March Break? Check out the local community centres and Sackville Public Library for ideas!

Here is a list of community recreation facilities servicing Lower Sackville - Beaver Bank and surrounding areas:

- Acadia Centre*
- Beaver Bank Kinsac Community Centre
- Sackville Heights Community Centre
- Sackville Sports Stadium*
- Springfield Lake Recreation Centre
- Upper Sackville Recreation Facility
- Wallace Lucas Community Centre

NEW DATA SETS ON OPEN DATA

The Halifax Regional Municipality has released one new dataset on <u>Open Data</u>, as part of an ongoing commitment to provide public access to data created and managed by the municipality.

The new datasets include:

PPL&C Inspections

The addition of this dataset brings the total number of Open Data datasets to 255.

As well, the following datasets have been updated with more current information:

Cityworks Work Orders

The dataset is being updated to include two additional fields: Work Order Cause and Work Order Resolution.

Legacy Building Permits

A new field, titled Certificate of Occupancy, will be incorporated into this dataset. This addition aims to assist external agencies in identifying when the occupancy permit has been issued.

PPL&C Halifax Water Permits

Two new fields will be added to the dataset, titled Net New Residential Units and Net New Commercial Space. These additions will enable external agencies to access essential information regarding units.

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PPL&C Halifax Water Permits Geolocated -

Two new fields will be added to the dataset, titled Net New Residential Units and Net New Commercial Space. These additions will enable external agencies to access essential information regarding units.

<u>Traffic Calming Assessments</u> - A new field is being added to this dataset called Assessment Year, to identify the year the speed assessment was conducted.

A wide range of data can be sourced for free through the catalogue, such as transit routes and schedule data, solid waste collection schedules, and area rates. New data releases occur several times throughout the year, with the most recent release on Nov. 27, 2024.

The Open Data initiative was launched in early 2014 to help improve resident engagement and enhance transparency on municipal data. The program was formalized by Regional Council later that year through the adoption of <u>Administrative Order 2014-006-ADM</u>
<u>Respecting Open Data</u>.

For more information on the municipality's Open Data program, and to access all the datasets, click <u>here</u>.

EXTRA CARE ACCESSIBLE TAXI SERVICE



Halifax Regional Municipality supports an accessible taxi service, Extra Care Taxi, that operates vehicles 24 hours a day, 7 days a week across the municipality. Passengers pay

the standard taxi rate for trips.

Bookings can be made by phone at 902.334.0334, <u>online</u>, or through the <u>Extra</u> <u>Care Taxi App</u>, found at the Google Play store or the Apple Store.

In March 2022, Regional Council <u>approved a staff recommendation</u> to grant a three-year contract to Extra Care Taxi. The municipality provides funding to Extra Care Taxi to support the extra cost of accessible service. Extra Care Taxi is part of <u>SeniorsTransit</u>.

The municipality's support for an accessible taxi service is based on feedback from:

- residents and visitors citing the lack of accessible vehicles, making spontaneous trips a challenge.
- service providers about the high costs of providing accessible taxi services
- The municipality's Accessibility
 Strategy, which mandates the creation of
 an inclusive environment for individuals
 with disabilities and acknowledges the
 need to create accessibility for all,
 regardless of ability.

HALIFAX TRANSIT SERVICE CHANGES



The Halifax Transit <u>service changes</u>, effective as of February 24, are part of Halifax Transit's

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2024/25 Annual Service Plan, approved by Regional Council on April 23, 2024. These service changes also include the latest installment of the Moving Forward Together Plan (MFTP), Halifax Transit's long-term plan to better align the transit network with the needs of the municipality's residents now and into the future.

Q: Why are there 25 trips being reinstated?

A: In February 2023, Halifax Transit announced ongoing service reductions due to staffing challenges. With these service changes, 25 previously cancelled trips on 11 routes will be reinstated, four of these routes returned to full service on February 24.

Q: How can I find out more information about the changes?

A: <u>Visit our website</u> for up-to-date changes to routes and schedules, including maps.

Q: Was there any consultation to inform these changes?

A: Halifax Transit regularly tracks route performance to improve service quality and ontime performance. Halifax Transit presents an Annual Service Plan as part of the public budget and business planning process. This includes opportunities for public input. Halifax Transit also receives feedback from residents through 311 and from Regional Council to determine where improvements can be made. The changes that took effect on February 24 for Route 196 are part of the Moving Forward Together Plan, Halifax Transit's long-term plan to better align the transit network with the needs of residents now and into the future, which included extensive public consultation. To view recent reports on Halifax Transit services, visit our website.

Q: Will trip planning apps (ex. Google Maps, Transit App) provide new route and scheduling information?

A: Yes, service changes are reflected in trip planning apps. In addition, routing changes and new bay assignments associated with the reopening of Scotia Square terminal in December 2024 are also reflected in trip planning apps. While Halifax Transit provides transit data for public use, the municipality does not have a standalone trip planning app.

Q: When was the last service change to Halifax Transit?

A: The last service changes came into effect November 18, 2024.

ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY APPROVED



Halifax Regional
Council has approved
the 2025/28
Accessibility Strategy,
representing an

important step in our continued commitment to a more accessible region.

The 2025/28 Accessibility Strategy focuses on how we can improve accessibility throughout the municipality by identifying, removing and preventing barriers for persons with disabilities. In line with the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act, the 2025/28 Accessibility Strategy has 30 recommendations with five key focus areas:

- Transportation and Transportation Infrastructure
- Built Environment
- Information and Communications
- Goods and Services
- Employment

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Through deliberate and conscious planning and with this strategy as our guide, the municipality will work diligently to make our municipality a more inclusive place. For more information, click here to read the staff report.

COMMUNITY MEDIATION PROJECT



I'm excited to share that Regional Council has approved

funding for a <u>Community Mediation Project</u> established to promote public safety, improve community wellbeing and further the civilian delivery of non-core policing functions. Trained community mediators can help neighbours, relatives, and others resolve conflicts peacefully.

Staff propose a one-year community mediation pilot (with the possibility of year-by-year renewals).

Once approved in the 2025/2026 Operating Budget, Council has directed the Chief Administrative Officer to provide a contribution of \$100,000 to the United Way of Halifax to create and implement this pilot program.

For more information, read the staff report.

COMMUNITY GARDENS PROGRAM DEADLINE MARCH 30



The Community Garden program is now accepting applications for 2025. For more information about the community garden program review the Community Garden program handbook and the fillable application forms or contact <u>Jasmine Du</u>, Community Developer.

Community gardens can include vegetables, fruit, herbs, flowers, native and/or ornamental plants established and operated within existing municipal regulations, by-laws and assessments.

COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM DEADLINE MARCH 31

Community Grants Program

A guide to different types of Community Grants, eligibility criteria and how to apply.

Applications deadline: March 31, 2025.

HRM's <u>Community Grants Program</u> is accepting applications from registered non-profits and charities located within HRM for the 2025-2026 program. The application deadline is March 31st.

Application forms and program guidebooks are available here or by:

- Visiting one of our <u>Customer Service</u> Centres
- Contacting 311
- E-mailing nonprofitgrants@halifax.ca

For further information, please email nonprofitgrants@halifax.ca or call 902.497.0479.



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ACTIVE PLANNING APPLICATIONS



The following is a current list of active planning applications in the District 15 area. For more information on planning applications throughout the municipality, <u>click here</u>. Please note that not all planning applications may be listed.

PLANAPP 2023-00287: 893 Sackville Drive, Lower Sackville

Sightline Planning and Approvals Inc., on behalf of property owner Rysco Properties Inc., is applying to enter into a development agreement to allow a mixed-use development at 893 Sackville Drive, Middle Sackville.

PLANAPP 2023-00368: 70 First Lake Drive, Lower Sackville

Application by Upland Studio requesting substantive amendments to an existing development agreement for lands at 70-80 First Lake Drive, Lower Sackville, to allow for two 6-storey residential buildings on a shared podium and a new commercial building.

PLANAPP 2023-00656: 400 Sackville Drive, Lower Sackville

Fathom Studio is applying to enter into a development agreement to allow a mixed-use development at 400 Sackville Drive, Lower Sackville.

PLANAPP 2023-00943: 498 Sackville Drive, Lower Sackville

An application by Paul Skerry Architects Limited to enter into a Development Agreement to allow for a 7 to 8-storey mixed use building containing 70 residential units and main-level commercial

facing Sackville Drive at 498 Sackville Drive, Lower Sackville.

PLANAPP 2023-01594: 153 Sackville Drive, Lower Sackville

Application by Stephen Adams Consulting Inc. on behalf of property owners to construct a 14-storey mixed-use building with 294 residential units and ground floor commercial.

PLANAPP 2024-00312: 229 Beaver Bank Road, Beaver Bank

Application for a development agreement to permit the construction of townhouse-style multi-unit buildings at 229 Beaver Bank Road.

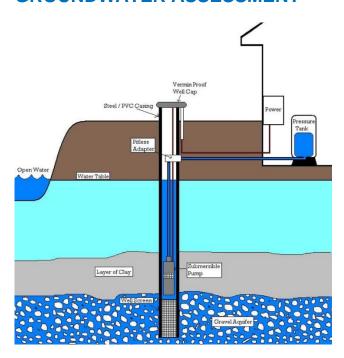
MARCH 17 - ST. PATRICK'S DAY



"May your home always be too small to hold all your friends." Irish saying.

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PRIVATE WELLS – RURAL GROUNDWATER ASSESSMENT

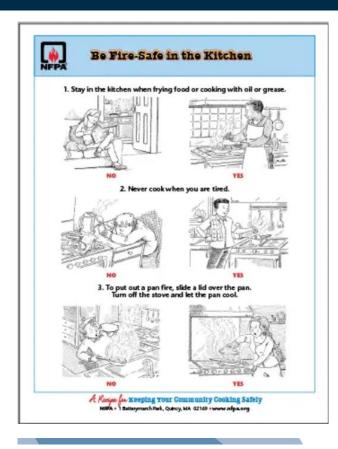


The municipality is inviting residents to participate in a survey about private wells as part of a rural groundwater assessment study. Your input will help us understand potential impacts and risks on well water quantity and quality. This data will support resilient rural growth by informing decisions on development density and climate adaptation.

Take the survey by clicking <u>here</u> to help shape a sustainable future for the municipality's rural communities.

FIRE PREVENTION SAFETY TIPS

The <u>National Fire Protection Association</u> (NFPA) website advises that "We can all help make the world a safer place by learning more about how and why fires start. NFPA offers a variety of resources, tips, and information to help keep you and your family safe from fire and related hazards."



ANTI-BLACK RACISM GRANTS PROGRAM



Regional Council has approved funding for 13 projects under the 2024 Anti-Black Racism Grants Program.

The Halifax Regional Municipality's Anti-Black Racism Grants Program offers project-specific funding to eligible registered non-profit



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organizations and charities within the municipality. Grants range from \$500 to \$10,000 and focus on five key categories:

- 1. Racial segregation
- 2. Historic omission
- 3. Lack of recognition
- 4. Systemic expropriation
- 5. Negative portrayal in media and literature.

Out of 28 submissions, 13 projects were selected for their strong commitment to addressing systemic challenges faced by Black communities while aligning with the municipality's commitment to equity and inclusion.

For more information, read the staff report.

IN THE COMMUNITY



Here I am at City Hall about to enter another day of Budget Committee discussions.



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What a privilege it was to attend the 2025
African Heritage Gala on Saturday, February
22! Pictured above, along with members of the
RCMP are: The Honourable Mike Savage,
Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, Councillor
Cathy Deagle Gammon, Councillor John Young,
me, and Councillor Jean St.Amand.



Mayor Andy Fillmore, Councillors David Hendsbee Trish Purday, Tony Mancini, John Young (standing) Laura White, Kathryn Morse, Jean St.Amand, Janet Steele, Cathy Deagle Gammon, me, and Virgina Hinch enjoying the evening at the African Heritage Gala.



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Thanks to all who came out in support of the 11th annual Sackville Snow Days! This year's event was a huge success with fun had by all.









BEAVER BANK KINSAC – CROCHET FUNDAMENTIALS



SACKVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY EVENTS



Start the March Break off right with a Crafternoon at the Sackville Public Library on March 7 from 2 to 3:30 p.m.! Bring your creative juices and join the fun! Click here for more activities at the Sackville Public Library.



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CANADA VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX PROGRAM

Canada Volunteer Income Tax Program is back at the BBKCC!

TAX INFORMATION CAN BE DROPPED OFF TUESDAYS BETWEEN 3:30PM-7:00 PM AND WEDNESDAYS 9:00AM-12:00PM March 4 – April 23

NOTE: ALL TAXPAYERS MUST BE PRESENT WHEN FORMS ARE DROPPED OFF

You cannot drop tax information for someone else, or a spouse who is not with you. Government issued ID is required for anyone dropping tax info off

We cannot complete returns if you:

- Have self employment income
- Have business or rental income and expenses
- Have capital gains or losses
- File bankruptcy; or
- Have passed away in the year

Please bring:

- All information slips (T4'S, T5, T5007'S etc) and receipts
- Medical expense receipts (must be totaled)
- Charitable donation redceipts (must be totaled)
- Tuition receipts

Eligible income levels:

Family size	Total family income
1 person	\$35,000
2 persons	\$45,000
3 persons	\$47,500
4 persons	\$50,000
5 persons	\$52,500
more than 5 persons	\$52,500 plus \$2,500 for each additional person

For more information contact the BBKCC at bbkcc@eastlink.ca or 902-865-5114

PARKS & RECREATION FEES CHANGING APRIL 1



In 2022, changes to the Parks & Recreation fee structure for recreation programs, services,

rentals, drop-ins and membership fees were announced. In accordance with the five-year fee structure changes, Parks & Recreation fees, including membership fees, will be increasing effective April 1, 2025.

The fee changes will provide more clarity and predictability for residents:

 New user categories will be based on the age group and type of organization.

- Consistent subsidization for fee categories. For example, the fee structure will ensure all youth programs across the municipality receive the same subsidy.
- Reduced risk of unexpected fee increases. The new fee structure accounts for inflation, helping to reduce unexpected and potentially significant fee increases.
- Predictable five-year review cycle. New requirement to review fee structure every five years.
- No user charge for Parks that are rented for public events that are open to the public, non-exclusive and free of charge.
- Overall standardization, consistency and transparency of fees across the municipality.

If you have any questions regarding how the Parks and Recreation fee changes will affect you, please email myREC@halifax.ca.

RECREATION FUNDING ACCESS PROGRAM







Access Program
provides recreation
opportunities to
children, youth and
adults in financial

need. Depending

The Funding

Affordable access program

Learn about the Affordable Access Program

on the need, the cost of recreation programs could be 50% or 100% covered by the program.

To qualify, you must:

- Live in HRM
- Show proof of financial need
- Apply before registering for a program



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All Halifax Recreation programs are eligible except private swim lessons, birthday parties, third-party programs, and rentals.

Proof of financial need must accompany <u>your</u> <u>application</u>. You must include the following as applicable to your application request.

- <u>Canada Child Benefit Statement</u> for children and youth under 18 years of age
- <u>Notice of Assessment for individuals 18</u> years of age and over
 - Sample Notice of Assessment
- Letter from the <u>Department of</u> <u>Community Services</u>

If you are applying to the Affordable Access Program and would like to provide feedback, please fill out and submit our <u>Feedback Survey</u>.

PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVES

Provincial Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) representing the Lower Sackville – Beaver Bank area are:



Paul Wozney Sackville-Cobequid

Unit 104, 445 Sackville Drive Lower Sackville NS B4C 2S1

Phone: 902-864-6271

Email: paulwozneymla@gmail.com



Brian Wong Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank

1265 Fall River Road Suite 101 Fall River, NS B2T 1E6 Phone: 902-576-3411

E-mail: brianwongmla@gmail.com

Federal Members of Parliament (MPs)

representing the Lower Sackville-Beaver Bank

area are:



Darrell Samson

Liberal

Sackville-Preston-Chezzetcook Nova Scotia Page

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2-2900 Highway 2 Fall River, Nova Scotia B2T 1W4

Telephone: 902-861-2311

Fax: 902-861-4620

HALIFAX WATER



STRAIGHT from the SOURCE

Between 2019 and 2049, Halifax Water plans to invest about \$4 billion to upgrade infrastructure to ensure the continued delivery of high-quality water, wastewater and stormwater services to benefit customers and the environment.

To see a list of major Halifax Water projects, click here.

24-Hour Emergency Service

Call 902-420-9287 for water, sewer, and flooding emergencies.



LOWER SACKVILLE - BEAVER BANK

Customer Care Centre

902-420-9287

Hours of Operation: Monday to Friday from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Email: customercare@halifaxwater.ca

(please allow up to three business days for a reply)

Head Office Address

Mailing Address

450 Cowie Hill Road Halifax, NS Halifax Water PO Box 8388, RPO CSC Halifax, NS B3K 5M1

Head Office Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

As a regulated public utility, Halifax Water must conduct business in accordance with the Halifax Water Regulations as approved by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board. These can be used to help you determine if we have applied an approved practice. Halifax Water will respond to concerns and complaints about:

- Billing
- Metering and meter reading
- Application of standard charges
- Misuse of water resources, sanitary, or stormwater systems
- Halifax Water staff or service delivery

Formal complaints can be sent to: Halifax Water Complaints Department P.O. Box 8388, RPO CSC Halifax, NS B3K 5M1

Email: customercare@halifaxwater.ca.

If you are not happy with Halifax Water's response, you may make an appeal to the <u>Dispute Resolution Officer</u> (DRO).

The Dispute Resolution Officer is an independent officer (not an employee of

Halifax Water or the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board) who manages regulationbased customer issues.

HRM'S LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Land Acknowledgement

The Halifax Regional Municipality is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and traditional lands of the Mi'kmaq people. The municipality acknowledges the Peace and Friendship Treaties signed in this Territory and recognizes that we are all Treaty People.

Halifax is committed to strengthening its relationship with Indigenous communities and honouring the significant contributions of Indigenous peoples. Another way the municipality has demonstrated this is by formalizing the official Land Acknowledgement.

In Nova Scotia, we are all Treaty People; with that comes roles and responsibilities.

COUNCILLOR BILLY GILLIS



I am a member of Halifax Regional Council and the North West Community Council and serve on the following boards and committees:

- Appeals Standing Committee
- Audit & Finance Standing Committee
- Special Events Advisory Committee