

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WEEK

2024 Emergency Preparedness (EP) Week will be from May 5 to 11. Everyone should be prepared and able to take care of themselves for a 72-hour period from any potential harm caused by a significant weather event or incident. Our district is very fortunate to have three Joint Emergency Management (JEM) Teams: Preston, Eastern Shore JEM (Cole Harbour to Ship Harbour) and Sheet Harbour JEM (East Ship Harbour to Ecum Secum). All of our JEM Teams are looking for volunteers. For more details, please visit www.halifax.ca/fire-police/fire/emergency-management/volunteer-during-emergency. The annual parade of EP Partners at the 'JEM Jamboree' will be on Saturday, May 4 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Porters Lake Atlantic Superstore parking lot.

Here are a few EP websites you can learn from this month: www.getprepared.gc.ca, www.publicsafety.gc.ca, <http://novascotia.ca/dma/emo>, or stay up to date on X/Twitter by following @nsemo. Visit the municipality's website at www.halifax.ca/fire-police/fire/emergency-management/emergency-preparedness-checklists to learn more, or follow us on X/Twitter @HRM_EMO.

HFXALERT NOTIFICATIONS

hfxALERT is the municipality's mass notification system for informing residents about emergencies and operational updates. hfxALERT will send urgent and non-urgent notifications. You must sign up with hfxALERT to receive certain notifications. This will ensure the municipality can reach you to share important information quickly based on set locations, such as your home or workplace. Residents can sign up for notifications via the municipality's website at www.halifax.ca/hfxalert.

VOLUNTARY VULNERABLE PERSONS REGISTRY

The Voluntary Vulnerable Persons Registry (VVPR) is a self-referral list for HRM residents who may require support during emergency situations. The VVPR provides important information to Emergency Management staff, volunteers and first responders to help appropriately respond to resident needs in situations such as sustained power outages, severe storms, and more. The Voluntary Vulnerable Persons Registry is for residents without 24-hour support who experience severe difficulty with any of the following: mobility, vision impairment, hearing impairment, developmental disabilities, cognitive impairment, mental health conditions, or any resident who requires electricity for life-sustaining equipment such as oxygen, dialysis, etc. The VVPR is not for all residents. Those receiving 24-hour support or homecare aide, in long-term care or supportive housing facilities are not eligible. Residents under the age of 18 with intensive needs that require electricity for life-sustaining equipment may be considered for the program. Registering for the VVPR is voluntary and easy and starts by completing an intake form. Visit www.halifax.ca/vvpr or call 311 to get started.

RECOGNIZING LOCAL VOLUNTEERS

Each year HRM recognizes the extraordinary contributions of individuals and groups who volunteer their time and skills to provide services and programs in our communities. This year so many nominations were received by the municipality, HRM had to limit the list to 100 names. Here is the complete list of the local honourees from our district for 2024. These nine individuals

were honoured at the Annual Volunteer Recognition Reception on Wednesday, April 17 in Burnside:

- Grayson Abbott (Youth)
- Parker Keddy (Youth)
- Elle Viktoria Peters (Youth)
- Gregory Cross
- Wendy Pehrsson
- Edward Anthony Probert
- Jacqueline Sanford
- Barbara Victor
- Marianne Nash **

**HRM Volunteer of the Year

Congratulations & many thanks to all of the amazing volunteers making a difference in our communities.

MARKETING LEVY BYLAW AMENDED

The Province has made amendments to the Tourism Accommodations Act concerning the ability of municipalities to charge a hotel marketing levy on the purchase price of hotel and other accommodations for the purposes of promoting tourism. The changes included: (1) the ability to apply the hotel marketing levy to accommodations consisting of 20 rooms or less and (2) increasing the cap on the hotel marketing levy from two percent to three percent onto the room rate.

The municipality acknowledges there were some tourism accommodation operators unaware of recent changes to the HRM Marketing Levy By-Law and/or they didn't know that they were supposed to report if they had no rental revenues from their accommodations during the off-season. A fine of \$25 per day was accumulating over the period of time that they did not report when required. Regional Council has amended Section 14 of By-Law M-400 to forgive fines and issue refunds for fines charged under this section for operators who had \$0 to remit, per monthly remittance, for the reporting periods of October 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024. Municipal staff are currently creating a process guide to provide parameters around when the HRM Treasurer can consider waiving, removing, or reducing an assessed fine. For more information about these ByLaw M-400 changes, please refer to the following links:

Presentation on ByLaw M-400 Amendments:
<https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/240326rc1512pres.pdf>

Staff Report on ByLaw M-400 Amendments:
<https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/240326rc1512.pdf>

The Province has extended the deadline for all current tourist accommodation registrations to September 2024. For properties with a valid 2023/2024 registration number, no action is required. New tourist accommodations must register. A property that isn't currently registered may register under the current system and regulations, with the assurance that these registrations will remain valid until September 2024. Anyone who has deactivated their registration must re-register as a new tourism accommodation with the Nova Scotia Government: <https://beta.novascotia.ca/register-your-tourist-accommodation>.

The Short Term Rental (STR) Association of Nova Scotia meets bi-weekly to build plans for STR community engagement, website and social media development and documenting concerns and/or action items from the STR community. They will have a Facebook page but in the meantime, can be contacted at strscanada@gmail.com.

SETTLING CLAIMS FROM HURRICANE FIONA

If you have suffered damage from Hurricane Fiona (Sept. 2022) and have not settled your claim with your insurance company, there is free, independent, and impartial help available from the General Insurance OmbudService (GIO) <https://giocanada.org/>. GIO is an independent body set up to help Canadians find a fair resolution to disputes with insurance providers. GIO can provide advice on dealing with your insurance company as a first step. If you are not satisfied with the decision from your provider on your claim, GIO can help resolve your claim. Contact them by visiting <https://giocanada.org/contact/>.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR LAKEWATCHERS

LakeWatchers is a community-based lake monitoring program. They gather water quality data to help us understand the health of our lakes and how they are changing. The program brings volunteers together with consultants to conduct community-driven science with the goal of collecting data that will be used to promote sustainable development in the municipality.

Residents can participate by collecting data for a local lake. If you live on or near one of the 72 lakes in the municipality selected for the program, we encourage you to start a LakeWatchers Monitoring Team to collect water quality samples. Please contact the Program Coordinator at water@halifax.ca to find out more about roles and expectations of LakeWatcher monitoring teams and when the next round of training and sampling will take place.

For more information about the municipality's LakeWatchers program, please visit www.halifax.ca/lakewatchers.

They are looking for volunteers in our district for Lake Echo, Porters Lake (North, Middle, South) Lake Petpeswick, and Lake Charlotte. Property owners around Lake Echo and Lake Charlotte will be getting a request in the mail asking them to participate in a Love Your Lake Values Survey. You can also participate online by visiting the website at <https://loveyourlake.ca/values-survey>.

By completing the survey, you will be entered into a contest to win a custom Lake Map pillow! Volunteers are welcome to learn more by emailing loveyourlake@rah2050.ca. Your cooperation and participation will be appreciated.



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