

# Emergencies - Any time, Any where! Let's get Prepared!



## West Hants' Emergency Management Organization

**EXCITING NEWS!** EMO will have its own newsletter mailed out twice a year; April and October.

Don't worry, you will still receive this quarterly newsletter as well but it won't have as much EMO info in it.

**REMINDER** - For all things WHRM Emergency Management related, visit [www.westhants.ca/emo](http://www.westhants.ca/emo)

Did you know that leaving brush piles, wood piles, grass clippings, piles of sticks, twigs, fuel canisters and debris close to your home and/or outbuildings can pose a huge risk of embers igniting them, in the event of an adjacent fire?

Reduce the risk by cleaning up around dwellings or outbuildings, and safely disposing of any threats where embers can gather and ignite.

If possible, try to have any wood piles, compost, brush, debris etc., 10-30 meters away from any structure on your property.

Visit: <https://novascotia.ca/natr/forestprotection/wildfire/> and <https://firesmartcanada.ca/about-firesmart/the-home-ignition-zone/>

~ West Hants Regional Fire Prevention Working Group ~





### Learn to Be Prepared for the Next Emergency

September 22, 2024 - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Summerville Fire Hall,  
59 Summerville Wharf Road, Summerville, NS

Registration is NOT required, join us for a FREE BBQ after each session. We will have activities to engage all ages.

- Do all cell phones receive Alerts?
- What should you do in case of a hurricane, ice storm, power outage, flood, and more?
- Unsure about prepping your Emergency Kit?
- Where do you get local info during an emergency?
- And so much more!

*Learn from emergency personnel and experts, tour a fire station, and enjoy the BBQ. And, the first 20 families in attendance each receive a basic 72-Hours Emergency Preparedness Kit (some items excluded).*

## WHRM Planning & Development Department

- Received a commitment of over \$1.08MM from the Government of Canada through the Housing Accelerator Fund. It is to be used toward influencing policy changes supporting new housing development. WHRM submitted a Housing Action Plan as part of the program application outlining seven actions it would take to help support this goal. Council approved Action #4, to remove development and building permit fees for secondary suite applications for the next three years (May 29, 2024, to 2027).
- Recently purchased a 2024 Hyundai Ioniq 5 for the Building / Fire Officials to determine the feasibility of transitioning WHRM fleet to non-emitting vehicles. It is estimated to reduce emissions by 28% (926 kg) in its first year, compared to a gas-powered vehicle of similar size. A step forward in combating climate change.



## 2024-25 Assistance Rebate Programs - Forms Now Available!

- Residential Property Tax Assistance
- \*NEW\* Utility Assistance (sewer, bulk water purchases)

If household taxable income does not exceed \$46,000 for 2023, property owners, sewer customers and bulk water purchasers may be eligible for a rebate. Additional qualifiers apply. Look for this icon at [westhants.ca](http://westhants.ca) for more information and to download the application form.

Questions? Call 902-798-8391, Ext. 138 or email [jdrysdale@westhants.ca](mailto:jdrysdale@westhants.ca).

**Application Deadline is July 31, 2024**

### REBATES & EXEMPTIONS



# WHRM 2024-2025 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS



Operating, \$33.6 Million    Capital, \$26.9 Million    Debt Repayment, \$2.3 Million

Council approved the budget on May 29th, 2024. here are some of the highlights:

- Reducing the residential tax rates.
- Establishing a Utility Assistance Policy to help qualifying residents with sewer and bulk water purchase costs.
- Creating funding agreements that will support Hants Shore Community Health, West Hants Ground Search and Rescue, and the Windsor Township.
- Municipal reserves are healthy and meet financial levels determined by the Province.
- Continued support for the Residential Property Tax Assistance Program.
- Maintaining the cost reduction of recreational programming for residents by 75%.
- Eliminating fees for public skates at the West Hants Sports Complex.
- Allocating close to \$1.51 million in community support as non-profit tax exemptions and grants, residential rebates, student bursaries, in-kind, and heritage property grants.

## TAXES

- Residential - one-cent decrease.
- Commercial - maintained from the previous year.

## OPERATING BUDGET

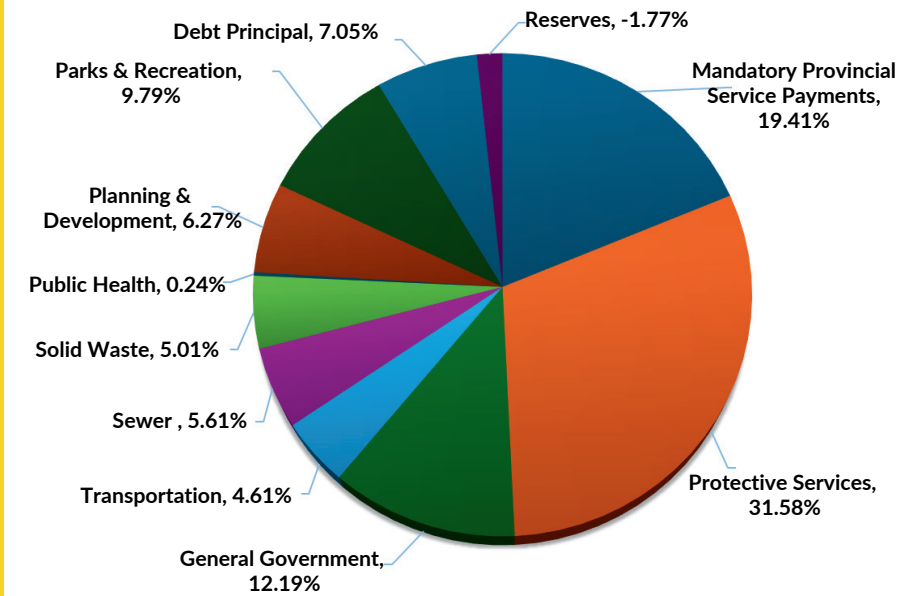
- Total is \$33.6 Million.
- Provincial services payments represent 46% of general tax rates. The remaining tax dollars are used to maintain municipal service levels.

## TAX BILLS ARE DUE SEPTEMBER 1, 2024

RATE SUMMARY		
COMMERCIAL	2023-2024	2024-2025
General Rate	0.98	0.98
Communities Combined Area Rate*		
West Hants Rate	1.78	1.78
Hantsport Rate	3.75	3.75
Windsor Rate	3.85	3.85
RESIDENTIAL	2023-2024	2024-2025
General Rate	0.5314	0.6972
Communities Combined Area Rate*		
West Hants Rate	0.9823	0.9723
Hantsport Rate	1.3637	1.3537
Windsor Rate	1.6564	1.6464

\*Combined area rates means all rates applicable to that community.

## 2024-2025 DISTRIBUTION OF TAX DOLLARS

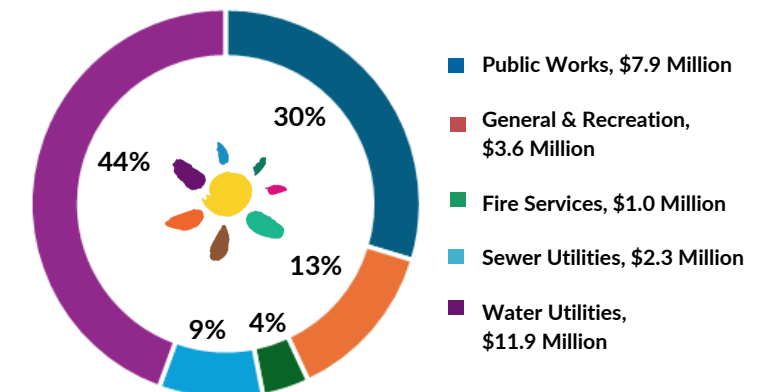


## CAPITAL INVESTMENT

**Capital Projects** – projected at \$26.9 million funded through Gas Tax, Reserves, General Operations, Long-Term Debt, and Provincial/Federal Funding.

Council continues to ensure the Municipality is in stable financial condition, monitoring long-term borrowing and ensuring reserves are well-funded.

A complete list of rates as well as the detailed budget can be accessed online at: <https://www.westhants.ca/municipal-finances.html>



# GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR COUNCIL



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## Message from the Mayor, "Time for Family and Friends!"

Summer is a time to get outside, do some gardening, hike your favourite trail, visit a lake, go camping, or just enjoy time with family and friends.

Council has been busy reviewing municipal operations and approving the 2024/2025 budget, focused on ensuring tax rates remain as low as possible. The budget supports core services such as key priorities, capital projects, operational needs, future growth, community development and recreation among many other things.

Despite facing increases in provincially mandated costs like education, housing, transportation, and library services, and increasing municipal costs including fuel, insurance, utilities, and maintenance, Council reduced the residential tax rate by \$0.01/\$100 of assessed value bringing the West Hants rate to \$0.9723/\$100, the Hantsport rate to \$1.3537/\$100, and the Windsor rate to \$1.6464/\$100.

Investment in our utilities, infrastructure, cyber security, volunteer and community organizations remains a priority. Council is expanding the free equipment loan program to include e-bikes, removed all fees associated with family or individual skates at the sports complex; funded the new sewer, bulk water and home flood protection programs; along with many additions and upgrades to our parks and trails. The municipality is in a healthy position with over \$32 million in various reserve accounts.

Municipal elections will once again take place in October '24. We have faced many challenges over the past four years that the next group of councillors must reflect upon and refocus their attention. If you or anyone you know is interested in getting involved, please reach out to West Hants administration, the returning officer, or a sitting councillor and ask questions. It is a demanding responsibility to be involved in municipal politics but one that is also very rewarding.

I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to residents and ratepayers for the kindness and compassion that continues to be a source of strength and INSPIRATION within our region. Council and staff at the West Hants Regional Municipality remain committed to making our communities safe and welcoming; a diverse place to live, work, and explore.

On behalf of Council, I thank you all for everything during the past four years. It has been a pleasure. I wish you all the best of success and great health.

~MAYOR ABE~



In June, the groundbreaking ceremony for the replacement of Dykeland Lodge was held on College Road, Windsor. With the golden shovels, from the left are Lisa Barkhouse, Glenn Robinson, Peter Murray, MLA Melissa Sheehy-Richard, Mayor Zebian, Krista Beeler and Ed Sherman.

## Betty Cox inspires as West Hants Provincial Volunteer



Each year West Hants and Nova Scotia celebrate our volunteers during the month of September. This year, our WHRM Provincial Volunteer Nominee is Betty Cox.

For more than 70 years Betty has been involved in every volunteer effort on the Hants Shore. She has volunteered with the New Horizon's Hall, the Hants Shore Community Health Centre, the Cheverie Salt Marsh Society, 4-H, and as a local youth group leader. Additionally, when someone gets sick and needs help, she organizes fundraisers to help them with expenses. Betty helped raise over \$28,000 with the last two fundraisers!

Betty goes above and beyond to welcome newcomers by connecting them to local farmers and resources. She believes that through kindness and taking care of your neighbours, you build a better, stronger community.

**THE INSPIRE FUND**  
is a funding program that assists with the cost of recreation opportunities within West Hants Regional Municipality  
[www.westhants.ca/inspirefund](http://www.westhants.ca/inspirefund)

**West Hants Welcome Network**  
Volunteers are needed to welcome and assist newcomers to West Hants.  
To learn more about this program, contact Holly Ross, Committee Chair, at hollyross@hotmail.com or call 902-798-6102.

**West Hants Phone Tree**

Who doesn't love a shortcut?  
Here is a quick reference if you need to call us!

**West Hants Municipal Offices 902-798-8391**

General Inquiries	Ext. 201	Public Works Inquiries	Ext. 125
Water Inquiries	Ext. 107	Waste Services Specialist	Ext. 128
Property Tax Inquiries	Ext. 106	Community Development	Ext. 124
Administration Inquiries	Ext. 134	Economic Development	Ext. 213
Planning Inquiries	Ext. 115	Community Centre	Ext. 215
By-law Enforcement	Ext. 112	West Hants Sports Complex	Ext. 217

Facebook

- West Hants Regional Municipality
- West Hants Parks and Rec
- West Hants EMO
- Inspire West Hants

Website - [www.westhants.ca](http://www.westhants.ca)  
Twitter @RegMunWWH  
Instagram @whrm\_ns  
YouTube - West Hants Regional Municipality

**October 2024 Municipal and CSAP Elections**

**Advance Poll Dates:**

- First Advance Poll Day, **Tuesday, October 10**
- Second Advance Poll Day, **Thursday, October 15**
- Ordinary Poll Day, **Saturday, October 19**

**Alternative Voting:**  
You choose when and how you want to vote!

- Electronically via computer/tablet or cell phone (anywhere, anytime)
- Landline phone (anywhere, anytime)
- In-person during Advance Poll Day or Ordinary Poll Day

**Find your polling location**  
[www.westhants.ca/elections/](http://www.westhants.ca/elections/)