

## Changes to Winter Operations Aim to Improve Service

The Halifax Regional Municipality has made some changes to its Winter Operations Program this season that aim to improve service for residents.

Last winter was among the worst in decades with above average snowfall, colder than normal temperatures, flash-freezing, multiple-day storms, freezing rain and drifting snow, all of which seriously hampered snow and ice management in all areas of the Halifax region.

As a result, the municipality spent the off-season reviewing the Winter Operations Program, both internally and through an independent consultant, with an eye to incorporating lessons learned in order to deliver better results. The changes are expected to improve service and accountability internally, and ensure contractors have the experience, equipment and capacity to better deal with both typical and extraordinary winter conditions.

Street clearing contracts awarded this summer expanded the geographic area to be covered by fixed-cost contractors, helping to stabilize expenditures. Those contracts are designed to deliver better coordination between street and sidewalk operators, particularly in areas with limited space for snow storage. This change is intended to reduce instances of street plows depositing snow on sidewalks that were recently plowed.



The municipality has also secured access to more equipment, including graders, sidewalk machinery

and backhoes. With more equipment on retainer and a smaller geographic area to clear, our in-house crews should be better positioned to improve service delivery in the areas they are responsible for – primarily downtown Halifax and Dartmouth, Clayton Park and the surrounding areas, and the Burnside Industrial Park.



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Monitoring and measuring plays an important part in improving service delivery and accountability. This season vehicle tracking technology will be used on all municipal equipment to provide real-time information for staff. Among other things, this will enable supervisors to track where our equipment has been and where it is currently, which is useful for identifying the nearest piece of equipment when a call comes in from emergency services.

The municipality has also assigned more of its staff to oversee contractors and ensure timely, safe and efficient clearing in all neighbourhoods.

Last winter reinforced the importance of securing off-street parking during the winter months so that operators can properly clear the streets and sidewalks. The overnight winter parking ban will be in place again this season and the city is stepping up efforts with ticketing and towing vehicles, with a greater focus on areas like bus routes, streets around hospitals and schools, and typically problematic areas for snow equipment and emergency vehicles.

Finally, to help ensure a timely response to public inquiries, 311 Halifax now has a designated Winter Operations role that will handle all email and online service requests during the winter months. This position will also serve as a centralized dispatcher for snow-related calls that require follow-up action. Residents are reminded that if they contact 311, whether electronically or by phone, about snow or ice removal during a weather event or while we are still within the timelines identified in the service standards, their concern will be recorded but not dispatched, as it's expected crews will get to all areas as they're able.

Residents are encouraged to report any issues once the timelines have expired. They can call 311, email [contact@halifax.ca](mailto:contact@halifax.ca) or fill out an online service request at [apps.halifax.ca/311](https://apps.halifax.ca/311). This will help reduce contact volume and ensure that residents trying to reach 311 with urgent issues aside from snow are able to get through to an agent in a timely fashion.



The Fairview Community Association invites everyone to join them on Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup> from 3 to 4 pm for the Christmas Tree Decorating at Titus Smith Park. This is a free community event which includes treats, games & Santa.



Open 7 days a week from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. (except Christmas Day & New Year's Day)

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### Preparing for the Winter Season

The Halifax Regional Municipality is prepared for the arrival of winter weather and is encouraging residents to do the same before the snow starts to fall. No one knows for sure what this winter has in store, but by working together, we can ensure we're all better prepared for whatever the season may bring. Here are some simple steps that everyone can take to help protect your property and ensure clearing goes as safely and smoothly as possible:

- Trim any tree branches and shrubs that originate from your property. These can obstruct access and visibility for snow-clearing equipment.
- Remove planters, lawn decorations and any other portable objects near the sidewalk before the winter.
- Business owners should refrain from placing sandwich boards and other portable signs on the sidewalk, as these obstruct snow clearing and salting.
- Items like sports equipment that may still be used during the winter should be safely stored when bad weather is in the forecast.
- Mark any permanent structures or objects too big to move with a reflector that will be visible above the snow. This helps crews identify obstacles.

Preparing your property also means preparing your vehicles. This is the time of year when motorists should consider tires that have better traction for winter driving. Make an appointment now to change your tires, before you get caught in that first

storm. It's also a good idea to carry a winter survival kit in your vehicle when travelling during the winter months.



Last winter taught us the importance of securing off-street parking so that

operators can safely and efficiently clear the streets. The overnight winter parking ban will be in place again this season, starting December 15<sup>th</sup>. Even when the parking ban is not enforced, residents are asked to think before you park. Ask yourself:

- By parking here, is my car causing a safety issue?
- Is it making the road impassable?
- Is it obstructing snow clearing?

If you've answered yes to any of these questions, don't park there. The city is stepping up winter parking enforcement, so those in violation will be ticketed or towed at the owner's cost. Officers will focus especially on areas like bus routes, streets around hospitals and schools and typically problematic areas for snow equipment and emergency vehicles.

Vehicles on the street are not the only issue. Residents are also reminded that vehicles hanging out of a driveway or parked on the sidewalk during a storm or clearing operations are prone to damage and become a dangerous obstacle for crews. Such obstacles prevent crews from clearing the sidewalks





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properly, which can quickly become an issue for pedestrians, including seniors, people with mobility issues and parents pushing strollers.

The easiest way to know when the overnight parking ban will be enforced is to [sign up](#) for notifications. Residents can also email a request to [contact@halifax.ca](mailto:contact@halifax.ca) or call 311. For those who signed up last season, you will continue to receive notifications when the ban will be enforced.

Please remember that winter safety is a shared responsibility. For more information on snow-clearing operations and the overnight winter parking ban, please visit [halifax.ca/snow](http://halifax.ca/snow).

### HRM Volunteer Awards

Each year the Halifax Regional Municipality, the Mayor and Regional Council recognize the extraordinary contributions of individuals and groups who volunteer their time and skills to provide services and programs in our communities.

If you know someone who should be receiving one of these awards, check out the full criteria and nomination information on our [website](#).

Make sure to have your nominations in by December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015 for consideration.

### 2016-17 Budget Deliberations

Regional Council will be holding 10 Committee of the Whole meetings dedicated to the 2016-17 budget and business planning process, where

individual departmental budgets and plans will be presented and discussed. Residents are encouraged to attend these meetings in person and provide comment to council during the public participation time or watch online with the [live stream](#).

Date	Presenting Department	Date	Presenting Department
<b>02 December 2015</b>	Capital Budget	<b>27 January 2016</b>	Transportation and Public Works, Operations Support
<b>09 December 2015</b>	Halifax Transit	<b>03 February</b>	Fiscal and Consolidated Accounts
<b>06 January 2016</b>	Parks and Recreation, Halifax Libraries	<b>10 February 2016</b>	Follow Up Date (if necessary)
<b>13 January 2016</b>	Administration Services Bundle and Auditor General	<b>08 March 2016</b>	Full Budget Review
<b>20 January 2016</b>	Halifax Regional Police, Fire & Emergency and Planning and Development	<b>22 March 2016</b>	Follow Up Date (if necessary)

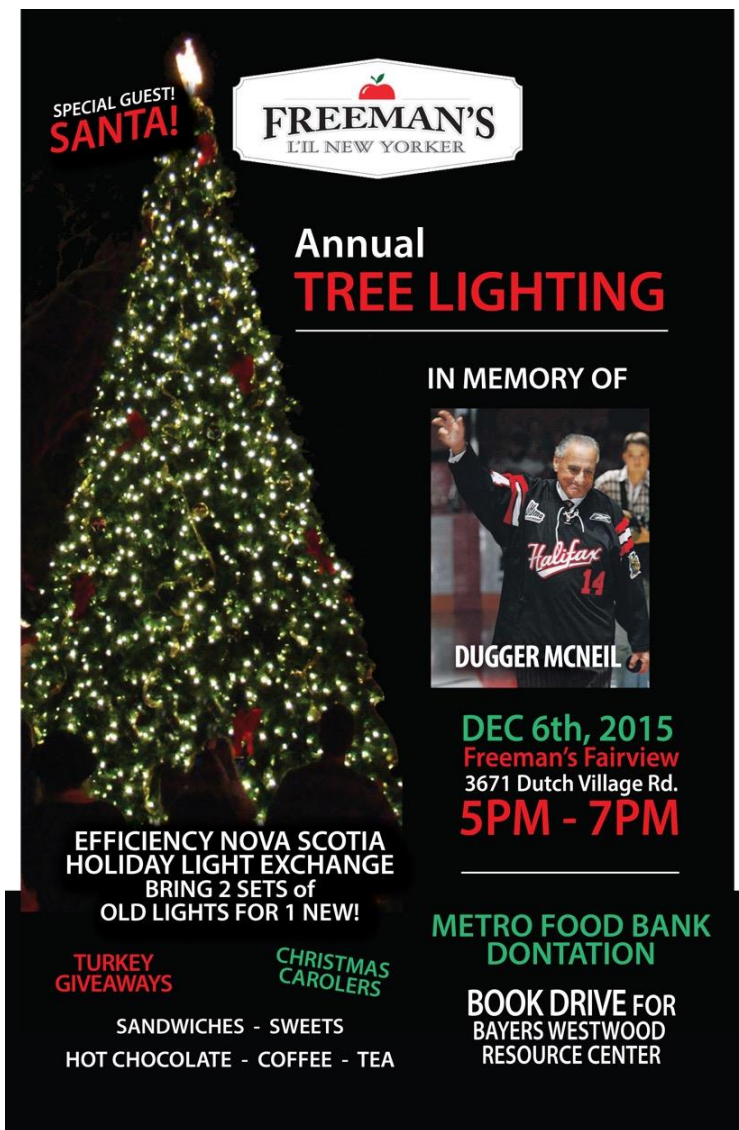
You can also participate in the budget process by sharing ideas on program and service priorities with our online [budget allocator](#) or by emailing the [Clerks office](#) with your comments prior to the sessions.

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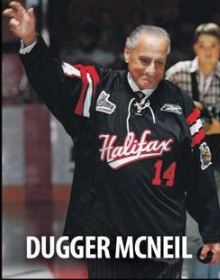


**SPECIAL GUEST! SANTA!**

**FREEMAN'S**  
L'IL NEW YORKER

**Annual  
TREE LIGHTING**

**IN MEMORY OF**



**DUGGER MCNEIL**

**DEC 6th, 2015**  
Freeman's Fairview  
3671 Dutch Village Rd.  
**5PM - 7PM**

**EFFICIENCY NOVA SCOTIA  
HOLIDAY LIGHT EXCHANGE**  
BRING 2 SETS of  
OLD LIGHTS FOR 1 NEW!

**TURKEY  
GIVEAWAYS**

**CHRISTMAS  
CAROLERS**

**METRO FOOD BANK  
DONATION**

**BOOK DRIVE FOR  
BAYERS WESTWOOD  
RESOURCE CENTER**

SANDWICHES - SWEETS  
HOT CHOCOLATE - COFFEE - TEA

Earlier this year residents voted to name the fifth harbour ferry in the fleet "Craig Blake" in honour of the first Canadian sailor to be killed in the line of duty in Afghanistan. He was part of an elite navy group that specialized in neutralizing bombs, underwater and on land. Blake was based at Fleet Diving Unit Atlantic in Halifax.

Until Sunday, December 13, residents can submit their name idea for the new vessel online at [halifax.ca/surveys](http://halifax.ca/surveys).

Halifax Transit and Corporate Communications staff will review all submissions and narrow it down to a short list based on appropriateness, originality, cultural significance and diversity. A selection committee comprised of Mayor Mike Savage and one member from each of the three community councils will then develop a final list of five names from which residents can vote for their favourite.

The name receiving the most votes will adorn the new ferry, subject to final approval by Transport Canada. The resident who submits the winning name will receive a one-year conventional transit pass courtesy of Halifax Transit and the municipality.

Residents are encouraged to submit as many name suggestions as they wish and to check [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) over the coming weeks for the opportunity to vote for a winner.

### Halifax Transit invites Residents to Name New Harbor Ferry

Halifax Transit is once again asking residents to submit suggestions to name its newest replacement harbour ferry, expected to go into service in 2016.

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### Changes to Animals and Responsible Pet Ownership Bylaw

In November Regional Council approved a new animal bylaw that will simplify the administrative framework for registering a pet, and includes amendments to help keep animals and the public safer.



One of the biggest changes in the new bylaw (A-700 – Animals and Responsible Pet Ownership), is a restriction on the leash length for pets. Leashes can now no longer exceed three metres (10-feet). The leash also must be held securely by a person. There was previously no limit on the length of a leash.

The municipality is also introducing the option of a lifetime licence for an animal with a microchip. The one-time cost is \$200, with a reduced rate of \$75 for spayed/neutered animals, and a 50 per cent discount for seniors. The option still exists to renew pet licences annually. The annual licence will now expire 12 months from the date of purchase, rather than expiring every year at the end of March and being charged at a pro-rated cost if the licence is purchased throughout the year.

Registering your pet provides the peace of mind in knowing compliance officers will attempt to return lost pets to their owners before resorting to dropping the animal off at a shelter, which comes with an added cost and stress to the animal.

Other changes adopted in the updated animal bylaw include new rules for tethering, muzzles, noise, and the issue of stray livestock, including poultry. Specifically, wherever livestock is currently permitted in the municipality, the owner must ensure the animals are prevented from running at large. Bylaw A-700 also gives authority to issue orders to build and/or repair a structure to contain the livestock.

The new bylaw came into force on Saturday, November 28, 2015. For more information on Bylaw A-700, and how the new rules affect you, please go to:  
[halifax.ca/legislation/bylaws/hrm/documents/By-LawA-700.pdf](http://halifax.ca/legislation/bylaws/hrm/documents/By-LawA-700.pdf)

### Heating Assistance Rebate Program

The Heating Assistance Rebate Program (HARP) provides help to lower-income Nova Scotians with the cost of home heating. You qualify for this program if you pay a heating bill at your current address and meet ONE of the following criteria: live alone with an income of \$27,000 or less; live with others and have a combined income of \$42,000 or less; receive Income Assistance from the



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HALIFAX - BEDFORD BASIN WEST

Department of Community Services; or, receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement from Service Canada. HARP applications are now available! Please find the HARP 2015-16 application form [here](#).

**You must apply by March 31, 2016 to receive a rebate.**

### New Year's Eve 2015 at the Grand Parade



Ring in 2016 in Halifax! Halifax is celebrating New Year's Eve 2015 with extra sparkle this year!

Make us part of your night and come experience Atlantic region's largest New Year's Eve gathering at this free, family event in Halifax's Grand Parade from 10:30 pm to midnight. For more details on New Year's Eve celebrations in HRM, check out our website at [halifax.ca/newyeareve/](http://halifax.ca/newyeareve/)

### New Year's Eve Family Extravaganza at the Canada Games Centre



Ring in the New Year a few hours early with a special event designed for families, where you can celebrate together and the kids get tuckered out with games and activities – just in time for the babysitter!

#### Featuring:

OnTree zip lines  
Bouncy castles  
Water Slides & Inflatable Obstacle Course  
The BOUNCE Street Team  
Fundamental Movement Skills zone  
...Snacks & more!

#### EARLY BIRD SPECIAL – BUY TICKETS IN ADVANCE AND SAVE

Adult – Member \$7, Non-member \$9  
Youth (2-17) – Member \$4, Non-member \$6  
Senior (60+) – Member \$6, Non-member \$8  
All prices are plus tax

For more information about the event or to purchase tickets call 902-490-2400 or visit [canadagamescentre.ca/special-event/new-years-eve-family-extravaganza-2015/](http://canadagamescentre.ca/special-event/new-years-eve-family-extravaganza-2015/)

# HALIFAX





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HALIFAX - BEDFORD BASIN WEST

### Efficiency Nova Scotia Holiday Light Exchange



Join Efficiency Nova Scotia at tree lighting ceremonies across the province for our annual LED Holiday Light Exchange. You're encouraged to visit one of the events listed near you and trade two sets of old, incandescent holiday lights for one set of brand new, energy efficient LEDs. Our friendly experts will be on site, handing out lights, spreading holiday cheer, and ready to answer any questions on energy efficiency and more ways you can save this season and all year long. Please note, due to a limited supply of LED lights, the exchange is limited to one per family. To find an event near you visit [efficiencyns.ca/holiday-light-exchange/](http://efficiencyns.ca/holiday-light-exchange/)

### Halifax Transit Offers Free and Extended Bus Service on New Year's Eve



This New Year's Eve, Halifax Transit is pleased to offer free and extended bus and ferry service in support of MADD Halifax Region.

On the evening of New Year's Eve (starting at 6 p.m.) all bus and ferry service will be free for the evening. In addition, many of Halifax Transit's bus routes and the Alderney ferry will extend their service later into the evening to ensure that our

passengers have a safe trip home after ringing in the New Year. This free and extended service is offered to support MADD Halifax in their mission to stop impaired driving and to support victims of this violent crime. Donations to MADD Halifax are used to support MADD Halifax programming areas including educating schools on the perils of impaired driving and hosting candlelight vigils for victims.

We encourage you to contribute to MADD Halifax [online today](http://online.today) or directly to a MADD Halifax volunteer at the Halifax/Dartmouth Ferry Terminals on New Year's Eve. For more information on the extended service and schedules visit [halifax.ca/transit/newyarseve.php](http://halifax.ca/transit/newyarseve.php)

### Contact

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Email: [russell.walker@halifax.ca](mailto:russell.walker@halifax.ca)  
HRM website: [halifax.ca/District10/index.php](http://halifax.ca/District10/index.php)

Please click the link to [UNSUBSCRIBE](#).



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