

The Shoreline Journal Tid-Bits

Continued from page 6

Changes announced to Pensions Act

Government has introduced changes to the Pension Benefits Act to support greater flexibility in managing defined-benefit plans and remove barriers for employers so they can continue to offer them. "Government values the security that workplace defined-benefit pension plans provide and wants them to continue so Nova Scotians can have peace of mind in their retirement years," said Finance and Treasury Board Minister Karen Casey. About 92,000 Nova Scotians belong to defined-benefit pension plans registered under the Nova Scotia Pension Benefits Act, with about 132 defined-benefit plans registered under the act. The legislative changes will: introduce reserve accounts; remove limits on the use of letters of credit and allow for the discharge of liability for annuity buyouts. There are also some administrative changes to: improve language regarding deemed trust provisions and clarify information provided to the superintendent of pensions may not be disclosed except as permitted by the act. The changes reflect the feedback received from employees, employers and other interested parties who responded to a regulatory framework review in September 2017. Feedback received has been summarized in the What We Heard document, released in April 2018.

Coastal Protection Act changes announced

Environment Minister Margaret Miller has introduced a new Coastal Protection Act that will ensure clear province-wide rules for what can and cannot be done on Nova Scotia's vulnerable coastlines. "Climate change means rising sea levels, greater risk of flooding and coastal erosion. We need to protect the natural ecosystems that help defend our coasts, and this legislation will help us do that," said Ms. Miller. "We want to ensure that any new coastal construction is built in locations safer from storm surges and sea level rise. This legislation will do that as well." Salt marshes, dunes and other coastal features filter water, shelter birds and sea life, and allow the coast to naturally adapt to the impact of climate change. A report on the results of the consultation is available here, novascotia.ca/coast.

Trade Mission to Proceed Without Maud Lewis Exhibit

The works of Maud Lewis will not be travelling to China this spring. The Guangdong Museum of Art in China advised the province the art exhibit launch will be postponed. The Maud Lewis/Terror exhibit, celebrating the works of Maud Lewis and other contemporary female Nova Scotian artists in China, was scheduled to be launched during the Nova Scotia cultural trade mission this spring. The remainder of the mission will explore cultural economic opportunities in Japan and the United Kingdom. Further details around the mission will be released later this year.

Student safety and protection to be strengthened

Student safety and protection will be strengthened with amendments to the Education Act introduced by Zach Churchill, Minister of Education. This is about standardizing and strengthening reporting requirements for employees. Specific changes to the act include: mandatory criminal record checks for regional centre and Conseil scolaire acadien provincial employees on a regular and ongoing basis during their employment; all employees having to sign a declaration each school year indicating they have not been convicted of a criminal offence; all employees being required to report to their employers if they have been charged or convicted of a criminal offence immediately and additional amendments to standardize pre-employment checks including the vulnerable sector check and the child abuse registry check.

Pilot program to help for autism spectrum disorder

A new pilot program is being launched to help young people with autism spectrum disorder who are experiencing serious behavioural issues. Eight new specialists are now being hired as part of the Brief Intensive Outreach Service program. They will make up two teams - one based out of Cape Breton, the other in Halifax. Both teams will have a social worker, speech language pathologist, occupational therapist and psychologist. The new Brief Intensive Outreach Service will be able to respond more quickly to the unique needs of children with autism spectrum or other developmental disabilities and their families who are experiencing a serious behavioural situation. The teams will work with children and youth under 19, as well as their families, for six to eight weeks. Professionals will provide a specialized assessment, care plan and treatment for challenging and difficult situations. The program will be run by Nova Scotia Health Authority and IWK Health Centre. The teams are expected to be up and running this summer and will be accessed through existing mental health and addictions services. The province is investing \$800,000 annually. The provincial funding for these positions comes from the Canada-Nova Scotia Home and Community Care and Mental Health and Addiction Services Funding Agreement. Announced in December 2016, the federal government is providing Nova Scotia with close to \$290 million over 10 years for targeted incremental investments in home and community care and mental health and addiction services.

Prompt Payments for Construction Industry

Legislation introduced on March 15, will ensure Nova Scotia's construction businesses and workers get paid on time for the work they do. Proposed amendments to the Builders' Lien Act will establish prompt payment rules so that contractors, subcontractors and suppliers in the construction industry are

continued on page 20

GARDENS & OUTDOOR LIVING

Expanded Programs to Keep More Waste from Landfills

Nova Scotians will be able to recycle used oil and glycol and more electronics next year through expanded extended producer responsibility programs. "Nova Scotians are national leaders in keeping unnecessary waste out of our landfills and we want it to stay that way," said Environment Minister Margaret Miller. "That's why we are requiring industry to recycle more products."

With changes to the Solid Waste-Resource Management Regulations, industry must be ready with programs to recycle new products by January 1, 2020.

In addition to the industry recycling programs, effective March 1, 2020, the following products will be banned from landfills: microwaves, e-book readers, GPS devices, video

game systems and controllers, external hard drives, optical drives, and modems; used oil, oil filters, and oil containers and glycol, which is a coolant, and glycol containers

The affected industries

must develop or expand recycling programs for these products. The Electronic Products Recycling Association has been running Nova Scotia's electronics recycling program for the past 10 years. It will expand its

program to recycle the new products. The Used Oil Management Association runs a used oil and glycol program in other provinces. It will expand its program into Nova Scotia to recycle these products.



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Grant Program improves accessibility

This year, through the Business ACCESS-Ability Program, government has invested more than \$1 million to help 41 businesses increase their accessibility. Government is partnering with businesses across Nova Scotia to make locations, products and services more accessible.

Under the program, businesses based in Nova Scotia can apply for grant funding to make upgrades and improvements. This includes removing physical barriers, providing accessible communication and information, accessible transportation, assistive devices, and education and training programs.

Businesses interested in the program are encouraged to visit the program website. A complete list of grant recipients and more information are available at <https://cch.novascotia.ca/business-access-ability-grant-program>

Go Green, Get Calcium

By Chris Urquhart

Are you getting enough calcium? If dairy foods are off the menu, how can you be sure you're getting enough calcium? Try going green. Broccoli and dark green vegetables, such as spinach, kale, and turnip and collard greens, are good sources of calcium.

Also look for calcium-fortified foods, such as soy milk and fruit juices. If you can eat dairy foods, be sure to include yogurt, cottage cheese, cream cheese and all other forms of cheese in your diet!

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