

## Is it time to Update your Electrical system?

The invisible systems in a home often are taken for granted. When such systems are working as expected, daily life moves along smoothly. However, when a system goes awry, it can negatively impact routines and may create a dangerous home environment. This is especially true when something goes wrong with a home's electrical system.

Faulty wiring is a leading cause of residential fires. Many homeowners, particularly those who live in older homes, might be living in properties that have outdated electrical systems. The experts at Lowes ProServices state that having old wiring and/or insufficient amperage in a house can endanger residents. It also may damage appliances and make it difficult to sell a property in the future.

It can be difficult to gauge exactly when to overhaul an electrical system. Unless circuits routinely trip or lights often dim, homeowners may put off the work. But degrading wires or overextended circuitry can pose a fire risk, so it is best to address electrical systems promptly.

Home inspections may uncover electrical problems. Some homeowners may discover potential trouble while making renovations that require opening up walls or tearing them down, exposing the wires. Still other homeowners learn about electrical systems when they're adding new, large appliances or other gadgets that consume more power than existing items. These devices may continually cause power outages in the house,



such as tripping the circuit breaker or popping a fuse.

When it comes time to update the electrical system, it is always best to work with licensed and bonded electricians who have the expertise to work with electrical wiring without getting injured. This is not a do-it-yourself type of job since it requires specialized training.

Electricians likely will recommend upgrading the electrical panel to bring more power from the utility poles into the home. This can include replacing the existing meter and circuit breaker box to allow it to handle more power or replacing items that are obsolete or dangerous.

Many older homes are only capable of handling a minimum number of amps, utilizing just a few circuits. But nowadays, when homeowners have far more electronics in their homes than they once did, increased demand on electricity can overload a circuit (all of the outlets linked on one wire). Tripping a circuit

breaker is a safety measure to prevent the wire from becoming overheated and causing a fire. However, in some old systems, the circuit breaker will not trip, and this can be problematic.

Rewiring a home is another step. Wire insulation can deteriorate over time, and new wires may be needed. This can be messy and time-consuming, but it's a small price to pay for safety. When rewiring an electrician also may suggest new outlets. Many home building codes now require outlets with ground fault interrupters, or GFIs, in kitchens, bathrooms and other rooms exposed to moisture. Some older homes may not even have three-pronged outlets, so this will necessitate an update as well.

Electrical systems are the heart of a home, delivering power where it is needed. It is essential to keep such systems up-to-date so they can handle the power demands of every-day life.

## Correspondence from January 25th Council

By Maurice Rees

Several items of correspondence were presented to Colchester Council on January 25th, but unfortunately with a lot of space allocated to Colchester's Bio-Solids and province-wide solid waste tonnages, we ran out of room.

We've presented a brief outline of each of the items of correspondence:

Rachel Pring, a Grade 12 student from East Mountain asked council for financial assistance to attend the Council for Young Canadians forum in Ottawa January 28-February 3. The Council meets three times a year. She was seeking assistance to help cover the \$895 costs for the trip. Council indicated it did not have a policy, but agreed to develop one and to include in the 2018/2019 budget. Council then agreed to contact Ms Pring and provide \$200, which will be taken out of next year's budget.

Rolf Hoetten, has submitted an application to change zoning of a former church at 115 Main Street, Tatamagouche so he can convert the property into two apartments. The zoning change would be from it current "I" Institutional to "VR-1" Village Residential to meet zoning requirements.

Karen Ewing, indicated residents in Little Dyke are frustrated at the lack of a noise by-law with regard to the OSCO-Glenholme Aggregates operation. She cited noise monitoring was a condition of approval by Department of Environment and the Auditor General's report saying the government's record to hold proponents to account for conditions of approval is abysmal. She asked for reinstatement of a noise by-law and concluded her letter by stating, "Elected officials are failing us on every side. We need assistance. If you know of another avenue of recourse, we are not. Please advise". Ewing also copied Mayor Blair and councillors on a letter sent to MLA Karen Casey asking for assistance to get NS TIR to further investigate lowering the speed below 80km/h. She provided examples other roadways in the area are posted at 70 & 50 km/h.

Richard J. Huggard, Chair, Farm Equipment Museum sent council a "thank you" letter for waiving the tipping fee for de-

bris collected from demolition and general clean up around the museum.

Mayor Karen Mattatall, Town of Shelburne send a letter regarding the Rural Nova Scotia Health Care Crisis. Council agreed to accept the letter for Information.

Lisa Patton, President Colchester County 4-H Council's letter asking for the 4-H Council be considered for an annual operational funding grant received considerable discussion, with council suggesting the group make a presentation to council and apply for funding through the non-profit grants program.

Colchester Community Workshops submitted a letter to council asking for waiving of the tipping fees for donated items, which are of no value and must be disposed. In nine months the workshop shipped 197 tonnes to the landfill costing approximately \$17,500. Council agreed to waive the tipping fees, but during lengthy discussion it was noted on many occasions people drop off furniture and other items, which are broken, of no value and are considered garbage. Wayne

Wamboldt informed council his Solid Waste staff are working with the workshops and will help with additional signage stating what is not acceptable.

Raging Crow Distillery, North River requested council to agree to NSLC holding a plebiscite in the North River area to change from "dry" to "wet". Council's approval was needed before NSLC would proceed. In the letter, Kris Pruski, Vice President, indicated the change to "wet" was required before the craft distillery could be licensed for retail sales. Council endorsed holding a plebiscite.

Sugar Moon Farm operators Scott Whitelaw and Quita Gray submitted a letter to council concerning a lack of a noise by-law and in support of their neighbours in West Earlton upset with excessive noise from Moto-Cross Track on Ferguson Brook Road. Mayor Blair had replied on December 20th stating consideration is being given to all sides of this complex issue; and decisions will be made once staff have completed their work.

## Enhanced Family Support Waitlist Eliminated

Children and adults with disabilities and their families who qualify for more support at home will receive it without having to wait as of an announcement on February 21st. Direct Family Support for Children, Flex Support for Adults and the Enhanced Family Support for Children and Adults help families hire support workers who have specialized training, education or experience related to the needs of their family members. The programs help families who care for loved ones with a range of physical or intellectual disabilities.

Currently, children or adults and their families applying for support, and who meet income eli-

gibility, receive up to \$2,200 per month for respite services. Under the enhanced program, qualifying applicants, who are assessed as having greater needs, may receive up to \$1,600 in additional support, bringing the total to a maximum of \$3,800 per month.

Effective immediately, the enhanced programs will no longer have a waitlist. As of Feb. 20, there were 18 people on the waitlist for enhanced support, including five children. This brings the total number of people receiving Enhanced Family Support to 60 adults and 14 children.

## Grading and Gravelling for Hub Centre

By Maurice Rees

Two decisions by Hub Centre Drive businesses in 2016 & 2017, refusing to co-pay for the paving of the county owned road is coming back to haunt them. The county has owned the road since 2013 and with fluctuations of temperatures this winter has resulted in poor conditions with lots of potholes.

Colchester's Public Works office has received

several complaints and in an effort to resolve the issues. On February 8th council committee was advised on February 11th they would be hiring an external contractor to grade and provide gravel replacement at a cost of \$11,000. The road had been graded in spring and fall 2017. Staff will continue to monitor road conditions through the remainder of the winter.

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### Municipality of the County of Colchester Low Income Municipal Tax Assistance Program

SUBMISSION DEADLINE - MAY 11, 2018

Residential property owners may be eligible for an exemption on their 2018/2019 property taxes, up to a maximum of \$ 320.17. To qualify, applicants must own and occupy the property as your principal residence and fall into one of the categories in the table below:

Family Size	Gross Income	Exemption
Single	Less than \$25,431	\$192.10
Family of 2	Less than \$33,589	\$256.13
Family of 3 or more	Less than \$40,306	\$320.17

Gross Income refers to the total gross income from all sources for the calendar year ending December 31, 2017. This must include the income of all members of the household, except full-time students. You should not include income from the following sources:

1. War Veterans Allowance Act (Canada);
2. Veterans Affairs Canada, Pension;
3. Child Tax Benefit; or
4. GST/HST Rebate

Application forms will automatically be mailed to last years eligible applicants. If you have not received your application form by April 1st, please call 902-897-3162.

Late applications will not be accepted.

Applicants must reapply annually. If you did not receive the exemption last year, you may obtain an application from the Municipal Tax Office, 1 Church Street Truro, or by calling 902-897-3162.

For income verification purposes, please bring your 2017 INCOME TAX RETURN, which you submit to Revenue Canada. Notice of Assessments will NOT be accepted.

Rob Simonds  
Chief Administrative Officer