

News from our Provincial Capital - Tom Taggart
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includes the 2 Nurse Practitioners in Bass River, a nurse Practitioner and a Family Practice Nurse in Masstown along with a soon to be arriving Doctors as one Collaborative Care operation. This allows all Health Care Professionals within that clinic access to all patients and according all patient's access to these Health Care Professionals. I am very proud of these accomplishments. Additionally, the Northern Zone of Nova Scotia Health has announced a program to provide free transportation to your Health Care appointments. Please note that 24-48 hrs notice is required.

To contact call 902-893-5820 or go to PublicHealthTransportation@nshealth.ca or as always call the office.

I apologize here as I will most likely repeat some of what I spoke about last month. However, as the discussion about the proposed two private wind farms in Colchester North continues. Given that these wind farms are not to provide energy to Nova Scotia Power, but to supply power to produce Green Hydrogen here in our Province and export to world markets. I have attempted to get a better understanding of what this means for Colchester North and Nova Scotia in terms of Economic Development.

As I stated previously, this does not mean I support at all cost! Clearly, we must protect the environment and any direct impact on our resident's quality of life. However, as Nova Scotians, if we want to ensure Governments can provide the services we desperately need, such as Health Care, Housing, Schools and an improved transportation system we must pursue Economic Opportunities!

What does this mean for Colchester North? For starters, it is my understanding if both projects, Nuttby Mountain and Windy Ridge go forward they will have invested close to \$900 Million Dollars in construction Costs When was the last time that kind of money was invested in Colchester North.

Undoubtedly, a significant amount of this will go to cost of supplying the turbines. However, there will be a tremendous amount spent on site construction roads and overall infrastructure. On this point I will be arranging a meeting with the project proponents

to ensure in advance of start of construction they will hold an open house / job fair with all local business and contractors and to ensure as much construction as possible is completed by Colchester North business and residents. Additionally, as I read the Legislation with respect to taxation on wind energy, it appears they pay what is called a grant in lieu of taxes based on the annual production capacity. I am told the Municipalities share of this will be near \$1,500,000 annually. The Colchester North benefits can not be ignored!

Provincially, economic benefits could very well be very, very significant. I understand the \$900-million being spent on these two wind farms is pale in comparison to the overall construction of the infrastructure to support this Green Energy industry. To date I am not aware of any significant amount of Provincial investment. This is all primarily private equity money being spent in NS. Two final quick points. I am told there are over 3,000 different jurisdictions around the world working to become producers and exporters of Green Hydrogen. Nova Scotia and Newfoundland have an advantage in their availability of deep water ports, proximity to Europe and abundance of onshore and offshore wind. I have also been told by a SUPPORTER / PROPONENT of this industry that just the construction of infrastructure will create over 2,000 well paying jobs and overall the industry has the potential to make Nova Scotia and Newfoundland the Fort MacMurry of Hydrogen. Again, this is early days but when I see the amount of private money invested, there must be something there.

To finish up, All Nova Scotia, a Nova Scotia online news source is reporting this morning that the Conservative Party of Canada is opposing what the Liberal Government is billing as "Clearing the way for the Multi-Billion Dollar offshore wind energy industry" This article is titled "Mud Slinging in Ottawa" so what the real story or the real facts are is unclear. Regardless, I will be letting my Federal Colleague know of the value I place on this potential Green Energy Industry.

Tom Taggart, MLA Colchester North can be reached at: tom.taggartmla@gmail.com or (0) 902-641-2335

News from our Provincial Council - Dave Ritcey
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site: <https://beta.novascotia.ca/apply-help-household-costs-seniors-care-grant> ; by email: seniorsgrant@novascotia.ca or by phone: 1-800-670-4357. Print applications are available at Access Nova Scotia Centres and MLA offices.

Another change this year is direct deposit for seniors who are signed up for direct deposit with the Canada Revenue Agency. All other eligible applicants will continue to receive their payment by cheque. Seniors who previously opted in to receive the seniors care grant when applying for the property tax rebate for seniors will need to submit a separate application for

the grant beginning this year. Applications close on March 31.

Minister Morrow and I were joined by representatives from Perennia Food and Agriculture Corporation, Christmas Tree Council of Nova Scotia, Horticulture Nova Scotia, TransCoastal Adaptations and Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities. Other funding recipients include NSCAD University and Agri-Commodity Management Organization.

Dave Ritcey is MLA, Truro-Millbrook-Bible Hill-Salmon River. He can be reached by telephone at 902-897-0884 or by e-mail at mrlaritcey@bellaliant.com

Government Supports Trail Expansion, Upgrades

Nova Scotians can enjoy smoother, more accessible recreational trails across the province thanks to a government investment of close to \$1 million through the Recreational Trail Expansion Fund.

The funding includes more than \$580,000 in capital grants for 27 trails. For example, the Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre received \$50,000 toward trail improvements on its 4.4-kilometre interpretive trail. In October, the centre will celebrate 20 years since the interpretive trail was designed and built by Mi'kmawey Forestry with local Mi'kmaw foresters.

More than \$400,000 in operating funding will support groups managing 23 trails on the provincial rail bed. The operational grants started as a three-year pilot program but

are now a permanent part of the trail expansion fund.

Projects are eligible for up to one-third of total capital costs, to a maximum of \$150,000; trail operational funding is available to not-for-profits managing trails built on provincial rail corridors and eight trails will benefit from both capital and operating funding. A list of the projects receiving funding is available at: <https://ech.novascotia.ca/trail-funding-programs>

Here is a listing of Cumberland and Colchester trails receiving funding: Chignecto Glooscap Snowmobile Assoc - \$5,000.00; Cobequid OHV Club - \$5,000.00; Cumberland Snowmobile Club - \$40,000.00; Cumberland Trails Association - \$10,924.51; Fundy Trail Snowmobile

5,000.00; Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre - \$50,000.00; Oxford & Area Trails Association - \$84,150.00; Route 6 Snowmobile Club -

\$19,250.00; Sutherland's Lake Trail Association - \$11,750.00; Tatamagouche Area Trails Association - \$9,519.34 and Town of Stewiacke - \$25,000.00.

Portapique Market OCTOBER SCHEDULE

The Portapique Market is held Saturday's at 30 Portapique Loop, Portapique. The following is the schedule and theme of October events:

- Oct 7: Portapique Market, 30 Portapique Loop, Portapique held Saturday's, 9 am to 12 pm. Theme: Thanksgiving and Fire Prevention with visit from Bass River Fire Brigade.
- Oct 14: Portapique Market, 30 Portapique Loop, Portapique held Saturday's, 9 am to 12 pm. Theme: World Egg day, (breakfast).
- Oct 21: Portapique Market, 30 Portapique Loop, Portapique held Saturday's, 9 am to 12 pm. Theme: Kids Music Day.
- Oct 28: Portapique Market, 30 Portapique Loop, Portapique held Saturday's, 9 am to 12 pm. Theme: Hallowe'en Fun, Costume contest at 11 am

The Shoreline Tid-Bits

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Seniors Care Grant Opening for Applications

Starting Friday, September 1, seniors started applying to the annual Seniors Care Grant program, which helps with expenses to allow them to stay in their homes longer and improve their quality of life. The grant has been increased to \$750 and now includes home heating as an eligible service. To qualify, Nova Scotians must be 65 years or older by March 31, 2024, live in a home they own or rent, and have an annual household income of \$37,500 or less.

The grant helps seniors cover the costs of a range of health-care and household services, including physiotherapy, medication and grocery delivery, phone services and home repairs. The grant may also be used for home heating costs, such as furnace oil, natural gas and electricity.

More information about the grant, including how to apply, who is eligible and eligible services is available at the program website: <https://beta.novascotia.ca/apply-help-household-costs-seniors-care-grant> ; by email: seniorsgrant@novascotia.ca or by phone: 1-800-670-4357. Print applications are available at Access Nova Scotia Centres and MLA offices. Applications close on March 31.

WCB Nova Scotia announces 2024 employer assessment rates

Backed by a new rate framework that will help ensure a financially sustainable system and transparency for employers, WCB Nova Scotia is holding the average employer assessments rate stable for 2024, at \$2.65 per \$100 of assessable payroll.

Based upon the overall financial health of the system, the new framework provides clear parameters for when changes would be considered to employer rates, and for when benefit changes might be recommended to Government. In 2020, after years of being underfunded, the WCB's unfunded liability was eliminated. In the years since, the funded percentage has fluctuated, due mostly to market conditions. The percentage measures the amount of funds on hand to pay benefits already committed to in the future. The year-end 2022 funded percentage, which is used in rate-setting for 2024, was 92.9 per cent.

In 2024, 57 per cent of employers will see their rate decrease, or stay the same, while 43 per cent will see an increase. Notably, rates are decreasing in the long-term care, home care and disability support sectors, a key indication that collaborative efforts to improve outcomes through workplace safety initiatives and investments by Government are paying off.

Nova Scotia's rate model is structured so that industries with high claim costs pay more, and industries with low claim costs pay less. For more information about 2024 WCB employer assessment rates and how they're calculated, visit wcb.ns.ca/rates

Employers with consistently and significantly higher claims costs experience relative to their rate group over several years may face a surcharge, under the WCB's surcharge program. There are 119 employers who are being surcharged in 2024.

Surcharges collected by the WCB are set aside, and impacted employers may be eligible for a refund. Appropriate investments in safety or return to work, such as training or safety equipment, can be refunded, up to the amount of the surcharge an employer has paid.

Colchester County District RCMP investigating fatal crash

Colchester County District RCMP is investigating a fatal collision that occurred on Hwy. 289 in Middle Stewiacke. On August 31, 2023, at approximately 9:05 p.m., Colchester County District RCMP, fire and EHS, responded to a report of a single vehicle crash on Hwy. 289 in Middle Stewiacke. RCMP officers learned that a motor home had been travelling on Hwy. 289 when it left the road and came to rest in a ditch.

The driver, and lone occupant, of the motor home, a 58-year-old Lower Sackville man, was transported to hospital by ambulance, but sadly, he was later pronounced deceased. A collision reconstructionist attended the scene and the investigation is ongoing.

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The Deadline for the November issue of **Shoreline** Journal is October 17

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Todd MacKinnon, Pharmacist Owner

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