

1. Nova Scotia Housing Needs Assessment Public Survey

The Provincial government continues to seek feedback from Nova Scotians on housing needs.

An online public survey is still open and is part of a province-wide housing needs assessment that will help identify gaps in current and projected housing requirements and guide future housing policy and initiatives.

The survey will remain open until December 4 and is available at: <https://www.nshousingneeds.ca/>

The project team is asking municipalities across Nova Scotia to leverage their communications networks to help get the word out. If you have not received a communications package, or are having challenges accessing materials sent by the project team, please contact the Engagement Manager for the project, Ryan MacLean at ryan@uplandstudio.ca.

2. Payment of Fire/Sewer/Wastewater Charges by Regional Centres for Education

Over the past few years, some of the Regional Centres for Education have been refusing to pay charges relating to fire, sewer and wastewater services, citing Education Act amendments made in 2018. For the past two years, we have been petitioning the government to pay these charges as we have had a substantial amount owed to us.

Earlier this month, we finally received the official decision of the Departments that a long-term approach is under development; however, as it is not ready at this time, outstanding invoices for municipal charges such as fire, sewer and wastewater will continue to be paid by RCEs without interest charges and, until a long-term approach is in place.

The letter will be added as correspondence on the agenda of our Regional Council meeting but it can also be viewed here: https://nsfm.ca/doclink/dm-2022-email-rces-municipalities-fire-sewer-wastewater-003/eyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLCJhbGciOiJIUz11NiJ9.eyJzdWUiOiJkbS0yMDIyLWVtYWIsLXJjZXMtbXVuaWNpcGFsaXRpZXMtZmlyZS1zZXdlci13YXN0ZXdhZGVyLTAwMyIsImIhdCI6MTY2Nzg0Mjg4MiwiaXhwljoxNjY3OTI5MjgyfQ.rAtSXU_ibO_ksKH8qHKp_f0kKn-r4vJ31NLRUIcEoTI.

3. Proposed Changes to the Agricultural Weed Control Act

From the Department of Agriculture

The Agricultural Weed Control Act protects agricultural land from the introduction and spread of noxious weeds. Noxious weeds can have a significant impact to farmland and in some instances can lead to animal injury and mortality. These weeds can reduce local crop production affecting

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accessibility and affordability for Nova Scotia consumers and processors. In consultation with the Weed Control Advisory Committee, which consists of members from the Department, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Perennia, and Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture, the Department is proposing to completely replace the Act to modernize its approach.

The proposed changes include:

- Streamlining to one list of noxious weeds, which would be removed from the Weed Control Regulations and placed on the Department’s website. This will make accessing the list more user friendly and allow the Department to update the list in a timely manner.
- Clarifying that the responsibility for the control and cost of destruction of noxious weeds are the responsibility of the person responsible for the land. This is the current practice, but not accurately reflected in the Act. The Department will continue to provide education and support in the control of noxious weeds through identification and recommended control methods.
- Providing the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture with the ability to recommend to the Minister any plant for designation as a noxious weed on behalf of a municipality or producer.
- Authorizing inspectors to investigate and provide enforcement regarding noxious weed issues that may impact agriculture. The Department will use enforcement as a last resort to protect the Nova Scotia agricultural industry, continuing to focus on education and support through identification and recommended control methods.

The proposed changes will allow the Department to better respond to potential risks of noxious weeds, while allowing the flexibility to address the use of weeds for future economic purposes.

Our Development Officer/Building Inspector reviewed the proposed changes and believes the impact to us will be minimal as we do not have many large commercial farms.

If we have any concerns or comments related to these changes, we can submit them to Karen Nelson, Senior Policy Analyst, Department of Agriculture or by mail at 60 Research Drive, Suite A, Bible Hill, Nova Scotia, B6L 2R2 by November 25, 2022.

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A reminder that Monday Memos are sent each Monday to NSFM members by email. The memo has noteworthy items, event highlights, upcoming meeting reminders, media mentions and member messages in one weekly package. Articles and updates from the NSFM Monday Memos can also be found here: <https://www.nsfm.ca/table/news/monday-memo/>.