



# Town News

THE BLUE MOUNTAINS NEWSLETTER

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-  Town Hall, 32 Mill Street  
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-  Hours of Operation:  
Monday to Friday  
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
-  [www.thebluemountains.ca](http://www.thebluemountains.ca)

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After Reading

## Celebrate Volunteers in The Blue Mountains

The Volunteer Recognition Awards are returning in 2025 to celebrate the exceptional individuals and organizations that make The Blue Mountains a vibrant and welcoming community.

This year's awards ceremony will take place on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, during National Volunteer Recognition Week. Launched in 2022, the Town's annual Volunteer Recognition Awards aim to celebrate and honour outstanding residents, community groups and organizations who work to enhance the quality of life in The Blue Mountains.

Nominations are open until March 14, 2025, for six categories including:

1. Arts and Culture
2. Blue Mountains Community Builder (Youth & Adult)
3. Heritage
4. Outstanding Community Group
5. Sports and Recreation
6. Sustainability



The awards ceremony is held in conjunction with a Volunteer Fair, an event where interested individuals can meet with local organizations and community groups that are looking for volunteers. If your group is interested in having a booth at the Volunteer Fair, the Vendor Information Package is available on the Town's website.

Mark your calendars for April 30, and join the Town in celebrating the great volunteers of The Blue Mountains!

For more information, visit the Town's website at [www.thebluemountains.ca/volunteer-awards](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/volunteer-awards) or contact Community Services at (519) 599-3131 ext. 254.

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## READ MORE

To stay up to date on all Town  
news and notices, please visit:

[www.thebluemountains.ca/news](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/news)



## Message from the Mayor

It's been a snow-filled start to the year, but spring is around the corner and I'm happy to share updates on Town plans and projects. Please enjoy learning more about the Town, and join me in looking forward at what's to come in 2025.

In December, the Town released the results of its Resident Satisfaction Survey. The full results are available to the public on the Town's website. I'd like to thank the 700+ residents who completed the survey and gave the Town feedback we can use to inform decision-making, budgeting and priorities for the Town. The results have been reviewed in detail by the Town's senior management team and will be used to track and implement measures to strengthen service delivery.

Town Council has been working closely with Town staff on the 2025 Budget. I'd like to thank our Finance Chair, Deputy Mayor Peter Bordignon, for guiding us through the process. We have worked to prioritize core services, maintain fiscal responsibility and strategically invest in the Town's future, while limiting the impact of inflation and growth on our residents. Public participation has been emphasized throughout the budget process and we appreciate the feedback and comments received.

Finally, I want to encourage everyone to get involved with our Volunteer Recognition Awards. Volunteers are the backbone of our community and the hours they contribute are vital to making The Blue Mountains such a great place to live. Nominations are open until March 14, and though I know none of the volunteers do it for the recognition, their contributions deserve praise, and this is our chance to show our appreciation. Please join us April 30 for the Volunteer Awards and Fair.

Enjoy the newsletter and remember to visit the Town's website for additional information, news and updates. Here's to 2025 being another great year for The Blue Mountains.

*Andrea Natrosow*

# 2025 TAX BILL INFORMATION

The enclosed 2025 Interim Tax Bill is based on 50% of 2024 total taxes and is payable in two instalments dated March 21, 2025 and May 21, 2025. The 2025 Final Tax Bill to be mailed in July will indicate the annual taxes for 2025 less the interim tax amount.

Tax payment options are noted on the reverse of the Tax Bill.

## PLEASE NOTE:

If tax is paid by pre-authorized withdrawal (PAP), the interim Tax Bill is for your records only – no payment is required.

## ASSESSMENT INQUIRIES?

For information on your property assessment, please contact the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC). Please call: **1-866-296-6722** or visit: [www.mpac.ca/en/contact](http://www.mpac.ca/en/contact)

## ONLINE INFORMATION:

To view your tax and utility account detail online, or to receive future bills by email, please visit:

[www.thebluemountains.ca/VCH](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/VCH)

To sign in and activate an online account, you will need the customer ID and your name exactly as it appears on your tax or utility bill.

Example: Customer ID: SMITH0001

Name: SMITH JOHN

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

[www.thebluemountains.ca/property-taxes](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/property-taxes)

email: [tax@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:tax@thebluemountains.ca) or

call: (519) 599-3131 ext. 221

## Trust and Transparency: The Blue Mountains' Lobbyist Registry

Last fall, the Town of The Blue Mountains introduced a Lobbyist Registry to enhance transparency and accountability in government decision-making. This initiative ensures that lobbying, a legitimate and important form of communication, is conducted openly. Lobbying allows individuals, businesses and organizations to share their views with elected officials and Town staff on decisions that impact the community.

The Registry catalogs details of lobbying activities, including who is lobbying, who they are lobbying for, and what they are lobbying for. This information then becomes part of the public record.

Registering yourself as a lobbyist is easy to do. If you've communicated with an elected official or Town staff seeking a direct or indirect financial benefit, you have ten business days to record your activities. Registration is free and can be done



through the Town's website. Activities such as casual conversations or requests for general information do not require reporting.

We encourage everyone to view the Registry as a positive step toward maintaining open and transparent communication between the public and our elected officials and Town staff. For more information, including how to register, visit:

[www.thebluemountains.ca/lobbyist-registry](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/lobbyist-registry)

# Infrastructure Project Preview

2025 is shaping up to be a busy year for infrastructure projects in the Town of The Blue Mountains. Construction is scheduled to begin or continue on six significant municipal projects within the Town's boundaries.

## THORNBURY WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT EXPANSION

Construction at the Thornbury Wastewater Treatment Plant is on track to be completed in 2025. Installation of the new outfall pipe on Grey Street will see the plant's capacity increase to 5,330 m<sup>3</sup>/day from its original rated capacity of 3,580 m<sup>3</sup>/day.

## THORNBURY WEST PHASE 1B RECONSTRUCTION

With the construction tender closing in February, the Town plans to complete Phase 1 of the Thornbury West Reconstruction project in 2025. This work includes Lorne Street, Park Lane, Elma Street from Louisa to Alfred, Louisa Street from Bruce to Elma, and Alice Street from Bruce to the Phase 1A limits. Much of the existing underground infrastructure in this area of Thornbury is approaching 100 years old, and is well beyond its expected service life.

## NEW CRAIGLEITH FIRE HALL #2

The Town's Fire Department has outgrown its existing facility in Craigleith, and requires a larger space to meet the needs of the growing year-round and seasonal population in the service area. A pre-qualification for contractors was released in January, and work is expected to begin with brush cutting and clearing on the site before the end of March 2025.

## PEEL STREET NORTH RECONSTRUCTION

With development completed on High Bluff Lane and Timber Lane, the Town is looking to reconstruct Peel Street in accordance with the Development Charges Background Study. Trees were removed and utilities were relocated in 2024, and construction will continue in 2025. When completed, Peel Street North will have a 7 metre road surface, 2.7 metre multi-use trail and street lighting to meet the Town's standards.

## BAY STREET EAST RECONSTRUCTION

The existing watermain and gravity sewer on Bay Street East are approaching end of life, and a secondary forcemain is required between the Mill Street Sewage Pumping Station and the Thornbury Wastewater Treatment Plant to handle planned growth in the community. Work in 2025 is planned to be completed on Bay Street from Mill Street to Elgin Street, and on Grey Street from Bay Street to the wastewater treatment plant.

## SUBSTANDARD WATERMAIN REPLACEMENT PHASE 3

The final phase of the Town's Substandard Watermain Replacement program is scheduled to be completed in 2025. Work will be completed on Peel Street South from Highway 26 to Baring Street, Baring Street from Peel Street to Alice Street, and Alice Street West from Baring Street to Lansdowne Street/Beaver Street. The project will improve water movement and firewater flow and will provide operational savings.

You can learn more about the Town's major capital infrastructure projects, and sign up for project-specific email lists, on our website at:

[www.thebluemountains.ca/capitalprojects](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/capitalprojects)



# Online Services: Simplifying Life in The Blue Mountains

In an increasingly digital world, the Town of The Blue Mountains is committed to enhancing customer service by bringing Town services directly to your devices. Let's take a look at some of the convenient online services you can access from the comfort of your home!

## STREAMLINE BUILDING PERMITS WITH CLOUDPERMIT

New in 2025, the online Cloudpermit system transforms how residents, builders, and members of the business community apply for and track building permits. The cloud-based system offers the flexibility to start an application, complete it later, and receive email updates regarding its status, all online! Cloudpermit offers a more transparent and user-friendly experience by enhancing efficiency, reducing administrative burdens and streamlining communication with Building Services. To learn more about Cloudpermit, visit:

[www.thebluemountains.ca/building](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/building)

## CONVENIENTLY MANAGE BILLS WITH VIRTUAL TOWN HALL

Managing your Town bills has never been easier with the Virtual Town Hall service portal. Property owners and residents can securely access and manage their tax and utility accounts from anywhere, at any time. By signing up for e-billing, you will receive your bills and statements directly in your inbox—eliminating excess paper and the wait for postal delivery. It's a convenient, eco-friendly way to stay on top of your accounts. To get started with Virtual Town Hall, visit:

[www.thebluemountains.ca/VCH](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/VCH)

## EFFORTLESS REGISTRATION WITH DIGITAL PARKING PERMITS

As the Town transitions to a more efficient, fully digital parking permit system in 2025, physical parking passes are no longer being issued. The easy-to-use system allows residents to skip the trip to Town Hall and register vehicles online. In just a few clicks, residents can park for free at any paid parking location owned by the Town, including beaches, parks, and trails. Stay tuned for future updates as the new digital



system will also offer the option to purchase Friends and Family Parking Passes. Please remember that parking passes are valid for one year, so registration is required annually. To register for a 2025 parking pass, visit: [www.thebluemountains.ca/parking](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/parking)

# The Blue Mountains 2024 Annual Water Report

In accordance with Ontario Regulation 170/03, please be advised that the Annual Water Report prepared for the Blue Mountains Drinking Water System is available for viewing at Town Hall or by visiting [www.thebluemountains.ca/water-services](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/water-services)

**Rob Gilchrist**, *Water Supervisor*  
Thornbury Water Treatment Plant

**DOG LICENCE REMINDER**

**Don't forget to licence your pet!**

All dogs must be licensed within the Town. The licensing requirement applies to all residents including those that stay in the community full-time or seasonally.

 

[thebluemountains.ca/dog-licence](http://thebluemountains.ca/dog-licence)

# Be on the Lookout for Wild Chervil This Spring!

When you're driving in the Town this spring, be on the lookout for Wild Chervil. Commonly found along field edges, roadsides, stream edges and pastures, Wild Chervil is an invasive species that out-competes native plants and has a negative impact on agricultural lands.

Wild Chervil is a biennial or short-lived perennial that produces numerous compound Umbel-shaped clusters of white flowers. These flowers bloom from May to June, with seeds appearing late June through July. The seeds spread easily through human activity, wind and wildlife and can spread aggressively along ditches, road right-of-ways, fence lines and pasturelands.

## HOW TO IDENTIFY

Chervil resembles other plants in the carrot and parsley family, such as Queen Anne's Lace. The plant has alternately arranged, compound, fern-like leaves and its stems are entirely green, ridged and hollow. Portions of the stem are smooth while the lower portions are hairy. Chervil can grow up to 1.5 metres in height and is easily recognized as it's the first species in the carrot/parsley family to flower in late spring.



## HOW TO REMOVE

If you suspect or identify Wild Chervil growing on your property, there are actions you can take to eliminate its spread.

- Mowing Wild Chervil weekly and removing its roots can prevent the plant from going to seed.
- If the Wild Chervil has already flowered, cut and bag the plants and leave them in direct sunlight for several days. Then dispose of the plant by burning or burying deep underground.
- Once the plant is removed, be careful not to move the infected soil and remember to thoroughly clean equipment, vehicles and footwear before leaving the infested site.

## HOW TO REPORT

The Town of The Blue Mountains Operations Department will remove Wild Chervil that has grown on the Town's Road Allowance. If you suspect or identify Wild Chervil on municipal roads, please contact the Town at: [operationsinfo@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:operationsinfo@thebluemountains.ca) or (519) 599-3131 ext. 276.

If you suspect Wild Chervil on Grey County roads, please contact the Grey County Weed Inspector at (548) 877-0884.

Managing Wild Chervil is a shared responsibility among landowners, the Town and the County. With proactive elimination of the plant, the Town's agricultural industry can continue to thrive and provide fresh, local produce to the community.

# Getting to Know TBM Staff: Natasha Hudson

In this ongoing series, Town Staff will be introduced to the public with a glimpse into their roles and how their service impacts the community.

When you think of a librarian, do you picture someone who reads and talks about books all day? Natasha Hudson, Library Specialist at The Blue Mountains Public Library, dispels some myths about being a librarian in the digital age. Spoiler alert: a job at the library leaves very little time for curling up with a good book!

The Blue Mountains Public Library (BMPL) is a dynamic centre of community engagement where everyone can connect, explore and create. BMPL is more than just the library; it's a GLAM - Gallery, Library, Archive and Museum. The L.E. Shore Library (173 Bruce St. South) and Craigeleith Heritage Depot (113 Lakeshore Road E.) are the buildings that house the art, books, technology, and artifacts, but more importantly, they're community hubs for learning, growing, and exploration.

Accepting a job at BMPL in 2020 was a no-brainer for Natasha, having grown up in neighbouring Meaford and previously worked at Meaford Public Library. While 2020 posed some challenges for libraries and the safe delivery of services, Natasha quickly discovered that the Blue Mountains community wholeheartedly supports their library, which makes for a positive and inspiring atmosphere. Internally, the team is supportive of one another and loves their jobs, and that passion is reflected in the meaningful work they do.



Natasha would like to impress upon residents of The Blue Mountains that libraries are so much more than a place to borrow books. They deliver valuable services and skills to patrons from as young as newborns, through early literacy programs, to seniors interested in expanding their proficiency with technology. The gaps libraries fill and the community needs they meet cannot be underestimated. Patrons not keen on books or programs might find something of interest in the *Library of Things*, a growing collection of useful items that are loaned out, including games, snowshoes, and even technology.

Beyond the library, Natasha likes to spend her time on the trails or harbour walking her dog, sampling the flavours at cideries and wineries, and shopping for unique finds at the Georgian Artisan Shop...and maybe squeezing in time for a few pages of a good book.

**What's on at the BMPL**  
Your Gallery, Library, Archive, and Museum

- ✓ Celebrate Freedom to Read Week: February 23 - March 1
- ✓ March Break: Free Family Fun! Paint Jam w/ Tyler Boyle, Teen Escape Room, and more.
- ✓ Gallery Exhibit: Garden Stories Opening, March 1, 2-4 pm
- ✓ Museum Exhibits: Geology Through Time, Camperdown, Fleming: A Family Legacy

Learn more and plan your visit (519) 599-3681 [www.thebluemoorainlibrary.ca](http://www.thebluemoorainlibrary.ca)

# 'Smartball™' Technology to Help Find Water-system Leaks

The Town of The Blue Mountains strives to stay on the cutting edge of technology with the goal to increase efficiencies for staff and taxpayers. One example of this from the past year is the Water Division's employment of Pure Technologies SmartBall™ system to inspect water mains for leaks.

The SmartBall™ is a free-swimming inspection platform that moves through pipelines along with the flow of water, and is capable of pinpointing leaks within less than 2 metres of their actual location. It's basically a supercharged microphone – tracked by proprietary sensors – that listens for the telltale sounds of water and air escaping from the pipe.

"The Town has been struggling with high water loss in the drinking water system," said Allison Kershaw, Manager of Water & Wastewater. "Being able to find and repair leaks in watermains reduces the cost to deliver water and keeps our system secure. Watermains not only provide safe drinking

water to homes and businesses, but also provide the water required for fire fighting."

A total of 9.6 km of trunk watermain were inspected by the SmartBall™ between the Thornbury Reservoir and Arrowhead Road. Four leaks and three acoustic anomalies were detected in less than seven hours. Compared to traditional, surface-based leak detection methods, the SmartBall™ allowed the Town to obtain significantly more accurate results using fewer staff hours.



A promotional poster for 'March Break PUBLIC SKATING' at Beaver Valley Arena. It features a cartoon penguin wearing a red hat and scarf, skating on ice. Text includes: 'The Town of The Blue Mountains is excited to offer public skating during the March Break. Please visit our website for dates and times.' The website 'thebluemountains.ca/public-skating' is listed at the bottom. Logos for the Town of The Blue Mountains and the Chamber of Commerce are also present.

A promotional poster for 'Pitch Night &amp; Gala' on Thursday, March 6, from 6PM-9PM at Marsh Street Centre, Clarksburg. It features a QR code for tickets, a silhouette of a woman's head, and the text 'INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY INVEST IN WOMEN: ACCELERATE PROGRESS'. Logos for the Blue Mountains Chamber of Commerce, Town of The Blue Mountains, and Community Futures South Georgian Bay are included. The bottom text reads: 'To celebrate IWD 2025, we want to help female entrepreneurs shine! Join us to hear six local women pitch their business ideas, and enjoy live music, appetizers and cocktails. Tickets \$20 Contact info@bluemountainschamber.ca'.

For a complete listing of events, visit: [www.exploreblue.ca/events](http://www.exploreblue.ca/events)