



The Rockport Resource

Volume 1, Issue 2

www.rockportmaine.gov

November & December 2020

LED Streetlight Project

The installation of the new LED streetlights is almost complete.

As of October 9th, 230 of the 248 lights have been installed.

There are some lights that were defective and will be replaced.

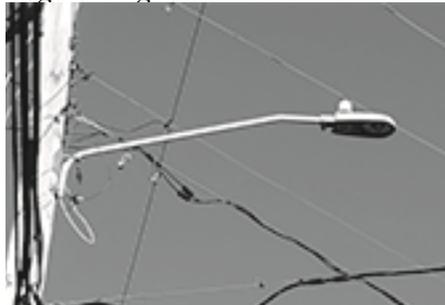
There are several that are near high voltage lines and will need to be installed by Central Maine Power and a few that need CMP to install power.

If you have any concerns, questions or just need your light adjusted because it is too bright, email the Town Manager at wpost@rockportmaine.gov and he will adjust the light for you.

Decorative Light



Regular Light



“New” Town of Rockport Website

Over the next month or so we will be updating our website.

We apologize for any inconvenience that this may cause.

If you are not able to find information on our website or have a question please call the Town Office at 236-0806 X3 and we will assist you any way that we can.

Thank you for your patience.

Business Spotlight

Would you like to be in our Business Spotlight section of our newsletter?

Please email dhamilton@rockportmaine.gov or mbennett@rockportmaine.gov. Tell us a little about your business and yourself; what your business has to offer; hours open and where you are located in Rockport.

We will pick a few businesses to put in the spotlight section each issue. Pictures are welcome as well!

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Census 2020

As of mid-October, 58.1% of Maine residents, 55.6% of Knox County residents and 60.3% of Rockport residents completed their 2020 U.S. Census Survey.

The 2020 Census will provide a snapshot of our nation, who we are, where we live, and so much more. The U.S. Constitution mandates that the country count its population once every 10 years.

The results of the 2020 Census will inform decisions about allocating hundreds of billions of dollars in federal funding to communities across the country for hospitals, fire departments, school lunch programs, and other critical programs and services. It will show where communities need new schools, new clinics, and more services for families, older adults, and children. Also, how hundreds of billions of dollars in federal funding are allocated to more than 100 programs, including Medicaid, Head Start, block grants for community mental health services, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, also known as SNAP.

Election News

By Linda Greenlaw, Town Clerk

There are many items on the ballot for November 3rd, including Budget Committee Members, Town Ordinances, voting to elect a State Senator, a Representative to the Legislature, Register of Probate, County Commissioner, Knox County Budget Committee, the President, U.S. Senator and a

Representative to Congress District One. For the Presidential, U.S. Senate and Representative to Congress District One, Ranked-Choice voting will be used for the very first time in history.

Budget Committee Members

There are twelve (12) nominees on the ballot for three (3) year terms and ten (10) nominees for a one (1) year term. There are also write-in spaces. All these names received 1 write-in vote on the August 18th Election resulting in a run off election.

Fire Works Ordinance

In 2019, a resident approached the Select Board with a complaint about the use of consumer fireworks. This resident then submitted a petition to ban the use of consumer fireworks to the Town in November 2019. The petition submitted did not meet the legally required language needed to implement an ordinance to ban the use of fireworks. It did have 124 signatures of registered voters. The Select Board decided to place a non-binding question on the Annual Town Meeting ballot asking voters if they supported a ban on consumer fireworks. This vote occurred in August (instead of June) because of the pandemic. The results of this vote were 339 for banning fireworks and 227 against banning fireworks. The Select Board then approved the "Ordinance to Regulate the Use of Consumer Fireworks" for the November 3rd ballot. A "yes" vote will ban the use of consumer fireworks in Rockport. A "no" vote will continue to allow the use of

consumer fireworks in Rockport under current state law. Please note that commercial displays of fireworks would not be affected by this ordinance and would still be allowed.

Solar Farm Ordinance

The Solar Farm Ordinance was created by the Ordinance Review Committee in response to solar farm projects that were proposed and approved in Rockport recently. These solar farm projects were required to be reviewed by the Planning Board, but the Town does not currently have any standards that are specific to solar farms. This ordinance puts standards in place for solar farms to ensure that they are allowed in Rockport, but are also sited well, protect neighboring properties, and have appropriate end-of-life requirements for disassembly among other requirements. If approved by the voters of Rockport, this ordinance will be in effect on January 1, 2021.

Ranked-Choice Voting

The following information is from the State of Maine Bureau of Corporations, Elections and Commissions on Ranked-Choice Voting.

What is ranked-choice voting? Ranked-choice voting, sometimes called "instant run-off voting," allows voters to choose their candidates in order of preference, by marking candidates as their first, second, third, and subsequent choices.

The votes are tabulated in rounds, with the lowest-ranked candidates eliminated in each

round until there are only two candidates left.

The one who is determined to have received the majority of the votes (more than 50%) in the final round is declared the winner.

It is different from our previous method of voting, in which voters choose only one candidate for each office and the winner is determined by plurality (whoever gets the most votes).

How does RCV work?

The tabulation process and other details of implementing RCV are explained in the rules that govern the process. If no candidate wins a majority of votes on Election Night in the races that have three or more candidates, the ballots and memory devices from each municipality are securely transported to a central tabulation site in Augusta. There, the winner is determined via rounds. The animated video shows the application of the rules in an example RCV tabulation. You can also view our examples of marked ballots to learn how the tabulation rules are applied.

What if I want to rank my choices among the write-in candidates?

The ranked-choice voting law states that a voter may include no more than one write-in candidate among that voter's ranked choices for each office. Thus, you will see only one space on your ballot to write in a candidate's name and rank that candidate. You can view the full list of qualified write-in candidates on our Upcoming Elections page. All write-in candidates must be formally declared as such, by the deadline

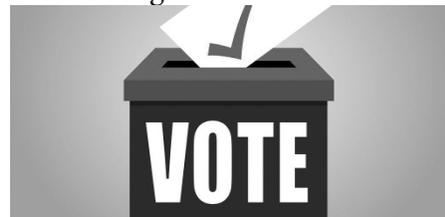
prior to the election; write-in votes for any undeclared persons will not be counted.

Presidential Election

Along with casting your vote for who you want to be President through Ranked-Choice Voting, there is also a seat for U. S. Senate, and a Representative to Congress for District One that are also Ranked-Choice as well. Please visit <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/> for more information.

Voting will be at the Rockport Town Office, located at 101 Main Street, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The Town of Rockport will be adhering to the COVID19 protocol and sanitizer will be available for use.

Please bring a mask to wear.



SHAPE Program

By Diane Hamilton, Safety Training Coordinator

The Town recognizes that safeguarding the health and welfare of its employees in the workplace is not only legally required, but also is of mutual benefit to the Town and its employees.

The Town was awarded a Safety and Health Award for Public Employers (SHAPE) from the Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards in December 2019. This award is typically given to just specific departments. Currently there are only 12 other Towns in the

State in which all Town Departments are SHAPE compliant and Rockport is one of them.

The Town was granted insurance discounts with Maine Municipal Association as a result of the SHAPE program.

SHAPE Compliant Requirements:

- A review of the employer's OSHA 300 log.
- A review of all Safety and Health policies, procedures and programs including: Hazard Communications, Respiratory Protection, Bloodborne Pathogens, Confined Space, Emergency Action Plans, Lock Out Tag Out, Personal Protective Equipment, Health Assessments and Hearing Conservation.
- A review of the employer training programs
- An inspection of the Facility(s)
- An inspection of all equipment
- A review of the employer's record keeping



Toys for Tots (Salvation Army)

We will have a Toys for Tots box in our lobby soon so you can drop off a "new" "unwrapped" gift for a child in need this Holiday Season.

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Essential Resources Every Family Needs Before Moving to Rockport, Maine

If you plan on moving to the lovely Town of Rockport in the future, below are a few resources and links you may find helpful during your upcoming move to Rockport.

Local Links and Resources:

General Rockport Information on the Town Website:

www.rockportmaine.gov

Connecting Power in Rockport:

<https://callmepower.com/directory/me/rockport>

Maine Water Quality Reports:

<https://www.mainewater.com/water-quality>

DMV Information and Locations in Maine:

<https://www.maine.gov/sos/bmv/locations/index.html>

Maine Water:

<https://www.mainewater.com/about-us/who-we-are>

YMCA:

<http://www.penbayymca.org/>

Rockport Public Library:

<https://www.rockport.lib.me.us/>

Relocation and Moving Information:

Moving Checklist:

<https://moving.bedbathandbeyond.com/ultimate-moving-checklist/>

Stress-Free Moving Day Tips:

<https://www.hgtv.com/lifestyle/real-estate/tips-for-a-smooth-moving-day>

How to move to a different State with or without money:

<https://www.lifestorage.com/blog/moving/how-to-move-to-a-different-state/>

Home Improvement Tips:

Tips for Cleaning a New Home:

<https://www.thespruce.com/clean-new-home-before-moving-2435799>

Remodeling and Repairing a New Home:

<https://www.homeadvisor.com/r/remodeling-your-new-home/>

Finding a Reliable Contractor:

<https://realestate.usnews.com/real-estate/articles/tips-for-finding-a-reliable-home-contractor>

Quick and Easy Fire Pits:

<https://www.redfin.com/blog/6-fire-pits-you-can-make-in-a-day/>

Resources for Families:

Preparing Kids for a move:

<https://www.parents.com/parenting/money/buy-a-house/make-moving-easier-on-you-and-your-kids/>

Tips for Adjusting to a new school:

<https://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/adjusting-to-new-school/>

Family-Friendly Rockport Fun:

https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g40841-Activities-zft11306-Rockport_Maine.html

Getting a fresh new start in a new Town can be easier when you have the right resources. Then you can check the most pressing tasks off your to-do list, so you can get out and start exploring your new Town and State.

Infrastructure Paving Projects

The paving for this construction season has been completed for the projects funded by the 2019 Infrastructure Bond.

The roads that were paved include Mill Street, Gurney Street, Park Street, Beech Hill, and South Street.

The shoulders on all of these roads now need to be brought up to the pavement.

This work will be accomplished with a combination of contractors and the Public Works Department throughout the fall.

Old Rockland Street will be reconstructed next spring by Rhino Services, LLC.

Keep Maine Healthy Grant

The Town of Rockport was awarded the Keep ME Healthy Grant on August 1, 2020 for the

amount of \$71,356. The grant is to create local education and prevention plans to prevent the spread of COVID19. The list of projects to be completed are as follows:

- Mailings to box holders in Town on information about how to keep safe during the pandemic.
- Additional signage at the parks, Town Office, Public Safety Building and the Library.
- Mask Dispensers at the Parks, Opera House, Town Office and Library
- Hand Sanitizing stations at Public Works and the Public Safety Building
- Converting Public Restrooms to all touch-free.
- Installing sanitizing wipe dispensers with trash bins at Marge Jones and Walker Park
- Purchase of an electronic sign for mask requirements and other health requirements
- Mask Education and Patrol by the Police Department at the parks.
- Increased sanitation measures

Public Works has been installing the hand sanitizing stations at the parks and public buildings. In addition, the Police department continues COVID-19 safety education and patrols at the parks throughout Town on a daily basis.

We are working to acquire mask dispensers to be installed and we will need to modify the sanitizing wipe dispensers before they are installed at the parks. The electronic sign has been ordered and we are waiting for the plumber to begin work on the public restrooms at the Marine Park and at the Opera House to convert them to touch-free fixtures.

Committee Openings

Do you want to be involved in your Town? These committees are looking for volunteers!

Board of Assessment Review –
1 regular, 3 alternates

CR Pathways Committee –
3 alternate vacancies

Capital Improvement Committee -
3 alternate vacancies

Cemetery Committee -
1 regular,
3 alternate vacancies

Conservation Commission –
Associate Members

Investment Committee –
1 regular vacancy,
3 alternate vacancies

Opera House Committee –
1 regular,
3 alternate vacancies

Ordinance Review Committee –
2 alternate vacancies

Pesticide Advisory Board -
3 regular vacancies

Planning Board –
1 alternate vacancy

Recreation Committee -
1 regular,
3 alternate vacancies

Zoning Board of Appeals –
3 alternate vacancies

Rockport Parks and Beautification Committee -
2 alternate vacancies

Zoning Board of Appeal -
3 alternate vacancies

We do recognize that a good volunteer is a valuable addition to any organization, the sacrifice, personal time and dedication are truly appreciated and we thank all of you for your volunteer service.

**Thank you and
Happy Holidays!**

If you have any questions about a committee or would like an application, you can find one on our website or contact the Town Office at 236-0806 X 3 for more information or email dhamilton@rockportmaine.gov.



The Rockport Resource

Happenings on the Harbor Committee

Due to COVID-19 Holiday on the Harbor will not be happening this year as it has.

We are currently looking at other ways to safely celebrate.

Please stay tuned for more information, which will be listed on the Town Website, Happenings on the Harbor, and Town of Rockport Facebook Pages.



The Rockport Conservation Commission (RCC) requests your participation in our brief 2020 Survey.

The RCC is responsible for conducting research, educating the public and making recommendations to appropriate town bodies.

Harbor, rivers, lakes, wetlands, forests, and conserved lands are a major draw to our community. We are interested in gathering data and opinions about your conservation and environmental concerns.

The survey is anonymous.

SELECT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS TO TAKE THE SURVEY:

- <https://bit.ly/RCCSurvey2020>
- Scan the code at the right with your phone's camera
- Email us for a paper survey
conservation@rockportmaine.gov



**ROCKPORT CONSERVATION COMMISSION
STRATEGIC PLAN**

Organizational Mandate	Strategic Goals	Strategic Objectives
Protect Rockport's water, land, air & forests	i. Conduct and support research required to effectively protect and manage Rockport's natural resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Identify critical research needs; reevaluate periodically; b) Identify and pursue opportunities for external funding, such as grants and foundations, to support research; c) Collect and analyze water quality information for both fresh and coastal waters; d) Participate in state and regional research programs that add value to Rockport's efforts;
	II. Inform the public about ongoing and planned efforts to protect and manage Rockport's natural resources; provide information about the role the public can play in such efforts and; receive the public's input.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Identify and pursue opportunities for external, such as grants and foundations, funding to support public outreach; b) Conduct forums, workshops, fairs, and/or public meetings on relevant topics; c) Engage or partner with regional, local, and civic organizations; d) Engage local students and teachers; e) Provide informational materials to the public; f) Identify critical education and outreach needs; g) Enlist experts, when needed, to inform the public.
	III. Make recommendations to appropriate town bodies as to how best to effectively protect and manage of Rockport's natural resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Provide input to the TOR Annual Report b) Produce reports summarizing research findings and/or input from other TOR entities, the public and/or subject matter experts; c) Participate in or lead SB workshops on topics of interest; d) Conduct or participate in joint meetings with other TOR committees as appropriate; e) Enlist experts, when needed, to inform the Town government.

Opera House

By: Andrew Weber, Opera House Manager

Opera House Manager Drew Weber and Town Manager Bill Post are developing a plan for safely re-opening the Opera House to provide entertainment options for residents and visitors. The capacity is limited to maintain social distancing of six feet between audience members, with the exception of those that live in the same household. The Governor's recent order will increase the number of audience members in the Opera House for performances but will still be less than half capacity.

Performances at the Opera House will be from solo performers duos or trios so that more audience members can be allowed to attend.

To safely re-open and to protect the health of all audience members, performers, and staff, everyone will be required to wear masks while entering and leaving the building or moving around the space. Audience members while seated do not have to wear a mask. Hand sanitizing stations will be located at the entrance to the Opera House and in the auditorium. Disposable masks also will be available.

The Town is also implementing an electronic ticketing service that will allow touch-free ticketing for patrons and staff. Tickets will be able to be purchased on-line and will be scanned at the door.

The Rockport Garden Club will

maintain the flower beds along the exterior of the building and will begin working on the wreaths that annually adorn the Opera House and the Town throughout the Holidays.

We would like to extend a special thank you to Jerry Carr. Jerry has retired as Event Security and Staff Attendant. Best of luck Jerry, we will miss you.

The Opera House Committee is currently looking for a new member.

Thank you for your patience. We appreciate your cooperation as we try to offer events soon, which will be posted on the Rockport Opera House Facebook page and the Town website at rockportmaine.gov.

Emergency Medical Services Evaluation

By: William S. Post, Town Manager

The Town of Rockport contracts with Northeast Mobile Health Services (NEMHS) to provide emergency medical services (EMS) to its residents. When residents call 911 with a medical emergency, NEMHS is dispatched by the Knox County Communications Center with and ambulance and appropriate personnel for the situation.

The Towns of Camden, Hope and Lincolnville also contract with NEMHS for emergency medical services. Each of these contracts expire on June 30, 2020.

NEMHS also provides transportation services for PenBay Medical Center (PBMC) when patients need transport from PBMC to another hospital or care facility. This type of transportation is called "interfacility medical transportation".

The Towns of Rockport and Camden and PBMC have contracted with EMS experts to perform an EMS Evaluation. The consultants will evaluate the current regional approach to assuring emergency medical response and related services such as interfacility medical transportation. In addition, the consultants will assist the Towns and PBMC to define any issues, formulate options for providing EMS and determine what option for delivering EMS is the best choice for the towns, the region and the hospital.

The consultants are currently performing interviews of key stakeholders in all of the communities and gathering information about the Northeast Mobile Health Services operation, and then will be looking at potential options for EMS. The goal is that this evaluation will be complete by the end of 2020 so that the Towns can begin discussion about how EMS services will be provided as of July 1, 2020 after the current contract with NEMHS expires.

As we get more information, we will provide it to the residents of Rockport. Please stay tuned to the Town's website (www.rockportmaine.gov) and this newsletter for updates.

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Police Department

By Randy Gagne, Police Chief

To the citizens of Rockport, I respectfully submit Rockport Police Department's second submission to the Town's newsletter.

A few reminders as we move into the coming months:

- Reminder to motorists that with November comes higher rates of car/ deer accidents as the animals become more active at dawn and dusk.
- Please do not leave valuables in vehicles especially as we move into the holiday season. Remove keys and lock vehicles. Store Christmas gifts out of site when shopping for the holidays.
- Officers will be looking for impaired drivers during the holiday seasons. If you are going to drink, please do it responsibly and don't drive. Make plans for safe travel.

Rockport and Camden officers attended range qualification with their new department issued Glock 9 MM duty weapons. These weapons have been equipped with upgraded sights and weapon lights. We were able to purchase these new weapons partially with asset forfeiture money, old weapons trade, and budgeted funds. The new set ups have officers shooting more proficiently, the ability to keep both eyes open while on target, creating a much safer situation for officers.

Officer Tony Del Vecchio has attended Glock Armorer training and is certified to do all factory

repairs to department weapons in-house.

Sgt. James Moore from Rockport and Officer Mark Bennett Jr. for Camden have attended Car Safety Seat Technician training. Both officers are now certified to install and inspect car safety seats. We will offer this service at both departments for anyone who needs their seats installed or inspected. We will also offer inspections at a joint unwanted medication collection October 24, 2020 from 10-2 at Camden Public Safety.

Sgt. Moore and Officer Travis Ford attended "Below Zero" safety training. This training teaches officers how to work safer and hopefully decrease line of duty deaths to below 100. Both officers will now be certified instructors in this training.

Officers continue to do COVID 19 patrols daily. Officers check all our parks, public spaces and parking lots for anyone who might be in violation of the Governor's orders. Officers also follow up on any complaints we receive from the State or residents. I am happy to report that we have had positive results with any contacts we have had.

Office hours are as follows:
Monday 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Wednesday 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Friday 10:30 AM – 5:00 PM

Please feel free to contact us anytime and be sure to "like" Rockport Maine Police Department on Facebook to follow updates.

Meet Our Police Officers!



Jeta Bixhaku, originally from Albania, has been here in the United States since 2015. She joined the Rockport Police Department this July and has rapidly been accepted by the fellow Rockport and

Camden officers as one of their own. She has proved to be especially skilled in OUI detection, and her de-escalating techniques have been especially valuable when working in situations where mental health issues may be at the core.

Officer Bixhaku brings the skills learned from her time at the Rockland Police Department, and continues to hone in and grow her talents to best serve the residents of Rockport. She has recently finished field training and is now working independently. She is currently working towards her associates degree in Justice Studies, and currently speaks four languages fluently. She is looking forward to a future at Maine Criminal Justice Academy to obtain full certification, and a long successful career in Law Enforcement.

We are going to be printing a biography of each of our wonderful Police Officers. Please look for another biography in the next edition of the newsletter!



Officer Travis Ford graduated from University of Maine with a degree in Criminal Justice in 1995 and then went on to graduate from the Maine Criminal Justice Academy in May of 2000.

He has been a Rockport Police Officer from April 1999 to present and served as Sergeant for several years. He and his wife, a school teacher by trade, have two sons both currently attending the University of Maine at Orono. Officer Ford's personal interests include kayaking, fly fishing and bird hunting.

Officer Ford can be reached at tford@rockportmaine.gov



Animal Control

If you require assistance from the Town's Animal Control Officer, you must call Knox County Dispatch at 236-2027 to speak with a dispatcher who will get you in contact with the Animal Control Officer.

Just a reminder that all dogs are required by law to be licensed upon reaching six (6) months of age or if the dog is adopted, it needs to be licensed within 10 days. You must license your dog at the Rockport Town Office and receive a tag that must be displayed on your dog if it is off your property. The fee to register an "altered" dog is \$6 and the cost for an "unaltered" dog is \$11. In order to license your dog, you must present a Certificate of Rabies Vaccination which must show the immunization is effective at the time of licensure. Dog licenses expire on December 31st of each year. A mandatory \$25 late fee will be imposed upon all dog licenses renewed after January 31st.

Please visit rockportmaine.gov and visit the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's page for more details and requirements.



Rockport Fire Department

By: Jason Peasley, Fire Chief

The Rockport Fire Department has "TOT FINDER" stickers now available at the fire station. The "TOT FINDER" stickers are highly reflective and go on the bottoms of a child's bedroom door to allow firefighters to clearly identify children's bedrooms in the case of an emergency.

Don't forget it is that time of year to replace your batteries in all of your smoke detectors in your home and clean them out with a can of air to ensure the sensors are clear of dust and debris. While you're at it, it is a great time to check your fire extinguishers to ensure the gauge needle is in the green, the safety pin is secured. You should tip the extinguisher upside down and give the bottom a few taps to ensure the ABC chemical is loose and not compacted.

If you have any questions or need help, please feel free to call the Rockport Fire Station at (207) 236-4437.



Public Works Department

For the fall season, Public Works will be working on the shoulders on the newly paved roads. We also will be focused on additional brush cutting as long as the weather allows and fixing any roadside wash outs to maintain the structural integrity of the roadways and prevent it from being undermined and destroyed by the rain. Catch basin cleaning will continue throughout town and is important this time of year as the leaves fall; they can cause the catch basins to plug up and cause excessive water in the road.

The back flow preventors will be pulled from the cemeteries and the water will be turned off soon at each location. This prevents the water lines from freezing and causing extensive underground pipe issues. At Rockville Cemetery we plan on widening the road with access to the back grave sites to make access more convenient.

We will be doing routine fall maintenance at the Marge Jones ball fields to help ensure healthy and maintained fields in the spring. Public Works assists in removing the floats and helps to winterize the pump station at the Harbor and this is anticipated to occur in the coming weeks.

At the Public Works garage we will be getting the winter truck gear ready and installed. Headgears, sanders, and plows are all being prepped now for installation in the coming weeks.

The bulk of the road salt and sand has been delivered and is prepared for the winter months.

Roadway Winter Tips:

In order to assist the Public Works Department during snow events, we would like to remind you of the following:

- Remove your vehicles from the street. Vehicles parked in the street create a hazard for snowplow operators and do not allow roadways to be completely cleared.
- Do not shovel or plow snow from your driveway or walkway into the street. Pile snow in your yard.

Also, some important things to keep in mind if you are on the road during a snowstorm and encounter a plow truck:

- Remember to **STAY BACK** from plow trucks. This is so:
 - The driver can see you
 - Flying debris and snow doesn't hit your vehicle
 - You can stop if the equipment stops abruptly
- Sometimes plows must stop quickly or back up in the road or at intersections to ensure snow is completely removed from the roadways
- Give yourself plenty of time to get to your destination- safety is everyone's primary concern.

Reminders from the Code Enforcement Officer

By Scott Bickford, Code Enforcement Officer

Please remember to bring three(3) copies of internal plumbing and/or Subsurface Wastewater Disposal System (SSWD) applications when you come to the office, or be prepared to pay a \$.25 fee for each page of the application that requires a copy.

For those wishing to have a water meter installed – water meter out applications are available. Please bring your water meter in for inspection if you plan to install it on an outside fixture (no plumber or other permits needed) OR if you are planning to have the meter installed internally, you will need to arrange for an internal plumbing permit application (\$40 fee) and have a licensed plumber (or in some cases the homeowner if he/she resides there) install the meter. An inspection by the Licensed Plumbing Inspector can be done once installation is complete. If you have any questions pertaining to the purchasing and installation of a water meter, please call the office at 207-236-0989 or email us at sbickford@rockportmaine.gov.

This summer the Select Board approved a new fee schedule with some minor changes. The square footage fee for full or half-unfinished cellars is now \$.30 a square foot, and the fee for peddlers has been changed to waive the \$2/daily fee for the first 15 consecutive-days after the permit issued. The one-time permit fee of \$30 is still applicable.

Finance Corner

By Megan Brackett, Finance Director

We in the Finance Department are gearing up for a busy few months. Soon department heads will be submitting their requests for additions or changes to the Capital Improvement Plan. The Capital Improvement Committee will be meeting in December to go through the changes and set priorities that items requested by department heads. If you have items that you feel should be included in the Capital Improvement Plan please feel free to email them to me (mbrackett@rockportmaine.gov) and I can forward the request onto the appropriate department head. Please have any requests in by November 15th, 2020.

Also, in the upcoming quarter we start working on the fiscal year ending 2022 budget. This process takes several months, the first step in the process is for department heads to develop their budgets with what they think it will take to run their department for the upcoming year. If you have projects or things you would like to see done in town, please communicate those to us and we will forward them on. Once department heads have developed their budgets, the Town Manager will meet with department heads and then he will develop his budget, which is the passed to the Select Board and Budget Committee for their review.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please feel free to reach out to me and I am more than happy to help.

Wastewater Update

By Megan Brackett, Finance Director

We are still working with individuals who have received higher than expected sewer bills over the past few months. There seems to be no systematic issue with the billing or meter readings. I am working with each resident or business owner that calls on an individual basis.

Some common themes that we are seeing include:

1. Toilets that are taking longer to fill then they should. We have had several homeowners that were using more than would be expected for their household size; these homeowners had plumbers come in and inspect their toilets. We have had several people call back saying their toilets were taking too long to fill, which in some cases was the equivalent of leaving the faucet running all day.
2. Many homeowners don't/didn't know about the option to have a meter installed on their outside spigot. If you do any amount of watering, it will benefit you to have this meter installed on the spigot. We offer a credit on your sewer bill for any water that passes through that spigot. If you are interested in this option please call the Code Enforcement Officer, Scott Bickford, at 207-236-0989, or you can email him at sbickford@rockportmaine.gov.

If you have any questions about your bill please reach out to me at mbrackett@rockportmaine.gov or by phone at 207-230-0180 x6.

Standard Property Tax Exemptions

By Kerry Leichtman, Assessor

The Homestead Exemption: If your Rockport home is your permanent address (you register your vehicles here, you vote here), you live here more than half of each year and you are not claiming a Homestead exemption on another home somewhere else, you are most likely eligible to receive a Homestead Exemption.

The Homestead Exemption is a property tax relief program that reduces the taxable value of your home. The amount of that reduction has been increasing and is now \$25,000. At this year's mil rate of \$16.81, the exemption would reduce your tax bill by \$420.25. Not small change at all.

The Town is reimbursed by the State for 70% of the amount we exempt. This year we had 905 properties who received the Homestead Exemption, for a total exempted value of \$22,625,000.

There were at least two bills moving through the legislature this year that would have made the exemption even better. One bill would have increased the Homestead to \$30,000 for next year. A second bill proposed increasing the reimbursement to the Town. Both would lower your tax bill. Unfortunately, COVID shortened the legislature's session this year but chances are good the bills will be reintroduced next year.

There is another exemption that is lesser known, and that is for

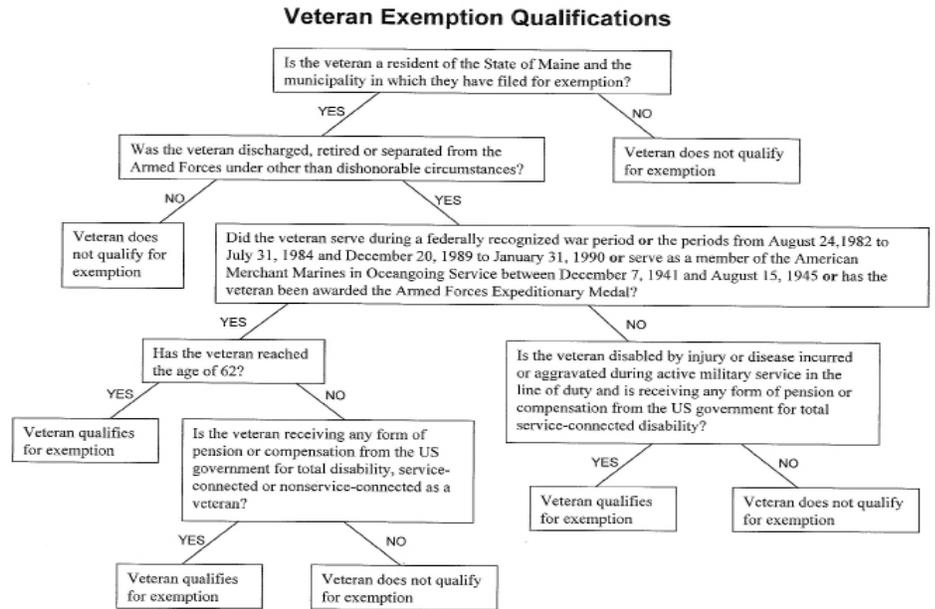
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people who are legally blind. This exemption reduces a property's taxable value by \$4,000. The application must be accompanied by a doctor's letter.

Another popular exemption is the Veteran's Exemption. It reduces the taxable value on many veteran's homes by \$6,000. The veteran must be at least 62 years old and have served during a federally recognized war period or are receiving a pension or compensation from the US Government for total disability as a veteran. The veteran must have been discharged, retired, or separated from the Armed Forces under other than dishonorable conditions. Most applications are accompanied by form DD 214. The chart to the left is a great way to help determine eligibility.

These exemptions are benefits, not charity. They are intended to be property tax relief for people qualified to receive the benefit. Applications are available at the Assessing Department page of the Town's

website. They are due by April 1st to become applicable against the next tax bill you receive. Call or send us an email if you have any questions.



Rockport Public Library

By Ben Blackmon, Library Director

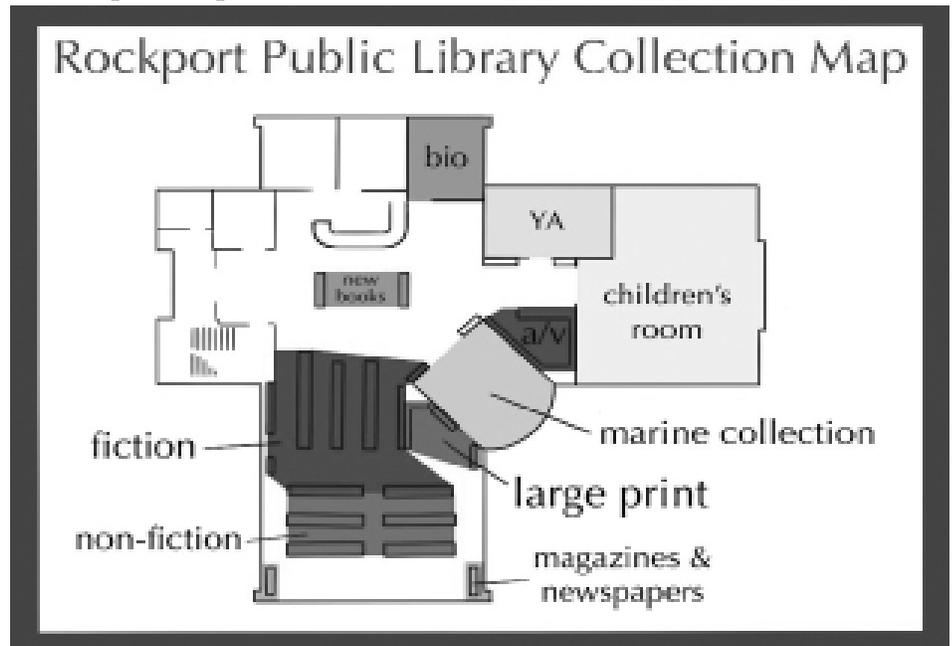
The new Rockport Public Library will be opening its doors to the public very soon. We are so excited to welcome you into the new library and wish we could have a large grand opening event. However, due to the pandemic that won't be possible. The library will still have limits on the amount of patrons in the building at a time. While we can't have a big party we will be having small surprises and tours of the building.

Stay tuned for announcement of our opening day!

1 Limerock Street,
 PO Box 8
 Rockport, Maine 04856
 207-236-3642
 www.rockport.lib.me.us
 Email: rpl@rockport.lib.me.us

Hours
 9 to 5:30 Monday through Friday
 11 to 8 Wednesday

Follow us on Facebook!



Worker's Compensation Safety Incentive Program

The Maine Municipal Association developed a Workers' Compensation Safety Incentive Program to help reduce the incidents and impact of workplace injuries by implementing workers compensation best practices. There are three tiers of compliance in the program and each includes a percentage reduction in workers' compensation insurance rates. Because of the Town's current safety plans and SHAPE compliance, the Town is automatically qualified for tier 2, which will provide the Town with 7.5 % reduction in workers' compensation insurance premiums.

After the Town establishes a Wellness Plan, we can advance to Tier 3 which comes with a 10% reduction in premiums.

Safety Tips for a Winter Weather Emergency

How to Prepare: No matter where you live, it is likely that you will face severe winter weather at some point in your life. Blizzards and ice storms create extreme and dangerous driving conditions, while heavy snowstorms accompanied by wind can knock down power lines, leaving you without heat or means of communication. Create peace of mind for your family during a harsh winter by preparing ahead of time and following these tips to be ready before, during and after a nasty storm.

What to Do Before a Snowstorm:

- Know your lingo. There are different terms that convey varying degrees of severity of incoming weather:
 - Winter Weather Advisory: The National Weather Service will issue an advisory when significant amounts of precipitation are on their way, but not expected in sufficient amounts to cause major hazards.
 - Winter Storm Watch: This means that severe weather conditions that can jeopardize life, limb and property are possible, but not assured, over the ensuing 48 hours.
 - Winter Storm Warning: A warning indicates that a major storm carrying substantial amounts of precipitation is either on its way or already affecting your area and is serious enough to jeopardize lives or cause considerable property damage.
- Prepare for specific conditions. A winter storm can mean any combination of snow, sleet, freezing rain, ice, or wind, but there are other types of weather that warrant more specific notices. The exact amount of nasty weather necessary to warrant a Weather Service label can vary by geographic location.
 - Blizzard Warning: A blizzard warning indicates heavy wind and snowfall that is likely to reduce visibility for extended periods of time.
- Ice Storm Warning: This means that a significant amount of ice will accumulate on the ground. Be extra careful on the roads and sidewalks during and following an ice storm.
- Freeze Watch or Warning: Freeze notifications are given when it is possible or likely that freezing temperatures will endure for a day or longer.
- Stay connected to a radio or TV for alerts from the NOAA and for warnings from the National Weather Service for all hazardous conditions. Download free smart phone apps such as those available from FEMA or the American Red Cross. They provide information about finding shelters and how to receive first aid if you need it.
- Bring pets and other animals inside where they are sheltered from extreme weather and have access to fresh water.
- Keep your phones fully charged and have a backup battery ready in case of a power outage.
- Know the signs of frostbite and hypothermia so you can provide treatment in case anyone gets stuck in the cold for an extended period.

What if the Power Goes Out?

- Report the outage to your utility company.

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- Stay warm. Dress in your cold weather clothes and use blankets indoors.
- If your pipes do freeze, try to warm them using hot water and rags, or with a hair dryer.
- Avoid downed power lines and call your local utility to report.
- Preserve the food in your refrigerator and freezer by moving it to a cooler area.
- Monitor the radio for emergency information and updates.

In Case of a Winter Emergency on the Road:

- Be a responsible driver. Travel at a speed appropriate for the road and weather conditions.
- Try to stay on main roads and avoid back road.
- Use sand or cat litter from your emergency kit to melt ice or gain more traction if you get stuck.
- Clear snow from the top of your car, headlights, and windows.
- Keep emergency contacts like your car insurance and emergency towing service handy.
- Stay in your car if you are driving when the storm hits, even if it is no longer safe to operate the vehicle, unless you are sure you can reach shelter on foot.

You can run your car periodically

to stay warm but do not keep the engine on too long, both to preserve fuel and limit your exposure to carbon monoxide.

What to Do After a Snowstorm:

- Stay away from power lines and avoid driving on roads with fallen debris.
- Be cautious of ice that remains on surfaces when walking outside or driving.
- Throw out any food that may have spoiled during a power outage.
- When it is safe to venture outdoors, shovel the walkways around the house and use sand to improve traction to make it easier to come and go.
- Evaluate the condition of your house, keeping an eye out for storm damage, leaks, and other issues that require attention.
- Check on friends and neighbors, especially any that are elderly, disabled or live alone.
- Report any damage to your local utility and other services in your community.
- Stay alert for flooding potential once the snow and ice start to melt, and take appropriate precautions to secure your property.
- Restock your emergency kit so you are prepared in the event of another weather emergency.

Honorary /Memorial Bench Program

The Town of Rockport has established an Honorary/Memorial Bench Program to create a lasting tribute for family and friends while enhancing our community.

The dedication plaque that will be affixed to the bench backs and will feature the headline “In Honor Of” or “In Memory Of”, or words of your choosing not to exceed 28 characters. The application and policy is listed on our website, www.rockportmaine.gov.

Once the application is received, it will then be forwarded to the Rockport Parks and Beautification Committee for review; you will be notified if your request is approved.

The number of benches in each park or open space will be limited as determined by the Rockport Parks and Beautification Committee. New dedicated benches will in many places replace existing benches to provide a consistent bench program throughout the town.



Town Board and Committee Meetings

November

4th - 6:00 p.m. CR Pathways
9th - 5:30 p.m. Select Board
11th - 5:00 p.m. Rockport Parks and Beautification
12th - 5:15 p.m. Conservation Commission
12th - 3:30 p.m. Opera House Committee
16th - 4:00 p.m. Legacy Rockport
18th - 6:30 p.m. MCSW Board of Directors
19th - 5:30 p.m. Planning Board
23rd - 5:30 p.m. Select Board

December

2nd - 6:00 p.m. CR Pathways
9th - 5:00 p.m. Rockport Parks and Beautification
10th - 5:15 p.m. Conservation Commission
10th - 3:30 p.m. Opera House Committee
14th - 5:30 p.m. Select Board
16th - 6:30 p.m. MCSW Board of Directors
17th - 5:30 p.m. Planning Board
21st - 4:00 p.m. Legacy Rockport
28th - 5:30 p.m. Select Board

For a complete list of events, visit the Town's Calendar at www.rockportmaine.gov

Do you worry about a loved one who wanders?

Join the Wanderer's Program!

The Wanderer's database provides a critical network of real time information including a photograph to Law Enforcement, which assists in locating individuals prone to wander due to Autism, Alzheimer's or other mental/medical conditions.

Registration is simple and takes just a few minutes.

Come to the Town Office, Police Department or our website to fill out a Client Intake Form.

General Assistance

By Diane Hamilton, General Assistance Administrator

Please call for an appointment if you need General Assistance. The application is on the Town's website at www.rockportmaine.gov or email Diane Hamilton at dhamilton@rockportmaine.gov.

Camden Area Christian Food Pantry

128 Mt. Battie Street Camden, Maine, Tuesday 8 a.m. - 11 a.m. and Thursday 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

AIO Food Pantry

70 Thomaston St., Rockland, Maine, Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Wednesday 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. One visit per month. Email@aiofoodpantry.org - 207-596-1043

Good Morning Camden and Rockport Program

Do you live away and worry about a loved one living alone? Join the Good Morning Camden and Rockport program and have a peace of mind.

The coordinator will call between the hours of 8 AM and 10 AM and check on your loved one for you and assist anyway they can. If your loved one does not answer the phone for any reason, an officer will be sent out to their residence to ensure everything is okay.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jeff Sukeforth at the Camden Police Department for more information.

The participant applications are available at the Rockport Town Office and the Rockport Police Department.

Town of Rockport Livestream

Did you know there is a way to participate in the town's boards and committee meetings without actually having to be there?

Look no further!

Most meetings are livestreamed from the Geoffrey C. Parker Meeting Room at the Rockport Opera House.

Simply follow the link: (<https://livestream.com/Rockportmaine>) and choose the meeting you would like to watch live.

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Use the comment section to ask any questions pertaining to the subject being discussed and have your questions answered.

Online Services Available

Boat, ATV, Snowmobile, Hunting and Fishing Licenses - <https://www.maine.gov/ifw/fishing-boating/boating/index.html>

Vehicle and Trailer Registrations - <https://www1.maine.gov/online/bmv/rapid-renewal/>

Burn Permits - <http://wardensreport.com/index.php#!/frontPage>

Report it/Fix it - <http://fixit.rockportmaine.net/>

Upcoming Holidays

November:

11th - Town Offices Closed

26th - Town Offices Closed

27th - Town Offices Closed

December:

24th - Town Offices Closed at Noon



2020 Annual Town Reports

Annual Reports are available at the Town Office for pick up or you can view online at www.rockportmaine.gov

Rockport Town Office:
101 Main Street
Rockport, Maine 04856
207-236-9648
Fax: 207-230-0112

Like us on Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/rockportmaine>

Town Office Hours

- Open to the public 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday through Friday
- Only 3 customers in the Lobby at one time
- Stay 6 feet apart to maintain social distancing
- You MUST wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth.

For a complete listing of events, please visit the Town's Calendar at www.rockportmaine.gov

Town of Rockport
101 Main Street
Rockport, Maine 04856

Permit #

POSTAL CUSTOMER