

City Currents

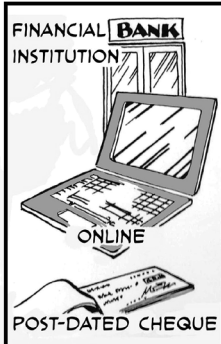
COMMUNITY UPDATE JUNE 5, 2015

Ask Luke

I HAVE TO PAY MY TAXES BUT WHO HAS TIME TO WAIT IN LINE AT CITY HALL?

PROPERTY TAX DEADLINE

JULY 2



Avoid the lineups! Mail your post-dated cheque or place it in the drop box at the front door to City Hall. Or make a payment online via your financial institution or use telephone banking. For more information, see the Frequently Asked Questions document posted online at www.campbellriver.ca. If you are interested in monthly pre-authorized withdrawals for payment of next year's taxes, look for the application form included with this year's tax notice mail out. Remember to claim your Home Owner Grant by July 2, 2015 to avoid a late penalty!

PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

The City of Campbell River is inviting interested members of the Public to apply for appointment to the City's Public Art Sub-Committee for the following terms:

- one member for 1 year,
- two members for 2 years, and
- three members for three years.

The Public Art Sub-Committee (PAS) will advise the Community Services, Recreation and Culture Commission on the following:

- effective implementation of the Public Art Policy
- public art planning
- allocation of Municipal funds for public art projects
- selection and placement of all public art works projects driven by public development
- development of a public art selection process, program and collection
- establish a public art program for the City and develop and maintain an inventory of public art

The Public Art Sub-Committee will require a diverse collection of individuals in order to reflect the diversity of community interests and will include:

- 2 Artists (recognized as Artists by their peers and active in the community)
- 4 Members that can represent the following: Arts, Culture, Recreation, Business, Heritage, People with disabilities, First Nations, Education, Community Advocate and/or Youth

Information and applications are at City Hall or at www.campbellriver.ca

Apply today! Deadline is 4:30 PM Friday, June 26, 2015

Questions? Please contact Michele Sirett, Recreation & Culture Supervisor at 250-286-1161 or email michele.sirett@campbellriver.ca

PROPERTY TAX PAYMENTS ARE DUE BY JULY 2, 2015

The City has posted more information about property taxation on its website (under What's New). Paper copies are available by contacting City Hall.

Property owners are reminded to check tax notices and the water, sewer, and garbage/recycling charges to ensure active or de-activated secondary suites are correctly noted in the user fee calculation.

How does my property tax bill compare to the Council-approved rate?

Council approves the general levy for the entire City budget, but that doesn't mean you will see that same percentage change on your tax notice. Many factors influence the taxes on a given property making it different from the overall percentage approved by Council.

Each year, some property assessments increase while others decrease, so your property assessment change may or may not be close to the average BC Assessment reports – and your taxes may or may not increase to match exactly with the rate set by Council.

Another factor is that the City of Campbell River collects taxes on behalf of other groups (Schools, Hospital, Library, Strathcona Regional District, BC Assessment, and the Municipal Finance Authority). They develop their own budgets outside of the City's control. **The rate passed by Council is only for the levy included on the Municipal – City line that appears on your tax notice.**

Other charges such as water, sewer, garbage and recycling also appear on your notice, but are not included in the general levy.

Things to remember about the Home Owner Grant

- Residential property owners can claim the Home Owner Grant without paying property taxes.
- Banks and financial institutions cannot claim the home owner grant for you.
- Unclaimed Home Owner Grants count as unpaid taxes, and are also subject to a 10% penalty if an application is not filed by the July due date.

How to apply for the Home Owner Grant

- Go online to www.campbellriver.ca and click on "Payments" under "Online Options" then launch the Home Owner Grant application from the link at the bottom of the screen. Use your access code (called "Access" on your tax notice, beside the folio number).
- Apply in person at City Hall 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, except statutory holidays

What is the amount of the grant available?

For 2015, the maximum:

BASIC Home Owner Grant is \$770

ADDITIONAL Home Owner Grant is \$1,045 (\$770 + \$275)

Note: The Home Owner Grant amount is reduced or eliminated based on property value and minimum property tax payable.

Where do I get a grant application?

The grant is located on the bottom of your tax notice that was mailed out at the end of May. If you know your folio number and access code (located on your tax notice), you may claim your grant online through the City website (www.campbellriver.ca). Click on "Payments" under "Online Options".

What are my payment options?

Payment methods accepted by the City of Campbell River:

- Online banking through your bank
- Interac (ensure your daily and/or transaction limit will cover the amount of your payment)
- Cheque
- Cash

Can I pay by monthly installments?

Yes! The City accepts payments made by monthly installment through a direct-debit to your bank account. This year's property tax notice contained an insert outlining the program and an application form for those who wish to make regular monthly payments towards their annual property taxes. The same information and application is available on the City's website or call 250-286-5715.

What happens if property taxes go unpaid?

The City of Campbell River is governed by the Community Charter which legislates a 10 per cent penalty be imposed on any property taxes that remain outstanding after the July 2, 2015 due date (including unclaimed Home Owner Grants). This legislation does not give authority to the City to waive late penalty charges and is applied consistently to all taxpayers.

Your payment and Home Owner Grant application (if eligible) must be received by the City of Campbell River on or before the due date to avoid penalty charges. Grants not claimed or incomplete are considered unpaid taxes and will result in penalty charges.

Can I defer my property tax payment?

The Province of British Columbia has a tax deferral program, which is available to homeowners aged 55 and older, families with children, and persons with a disability.

The Property Tax Deferment Program is a loan program that allows you to defer your annual property taxes on your home.

To qualify, you must have and maintain a minimum equity of 25 per cent of the current BC Assessment property value, after deducting the UPPER limit of all outstanding mortgages, lines of credit and other charges on your home.

There is a one-time administration fee of \$60 for a new approved agreement and an annual \$10 renewal fee.

For more information, please visit www.sbr.gov.bc.ca (see individuals / property_taxes).

What do homeowners get for property taxes paid?

In 2015, the average* household in Campbell River will pay approximately \$195 per month in taxes, user fees and parcel taxes to pay for more than 100 services such as:

- Potable water, sanitary sewers and storm water services
- Police and fire protection
- Emergency response service
- Garbage, recycling and yard waste collection
- Road and sidewalk maintenance and repair
- Street lighting and traffic control
- Recreation facilities including the Sportsplex, Community Centre, Centennial Pool, city parks, tennis courts, ball fields, Discovery fishing pier and the new Splash Park
- Planning and building inspection services
- Bylaw enforcement
- Cultural facility grants for the Tidemark Theatre, Campbell River Museum, Maritime Heritage Centre, Haig-Brown House, Campbell River Art Gallery and the Sybil Andrews Cottage
- BC transit service
- Campbell River Airport services
- Environmental monitoring and management
- Economic development, tourism and the Visitor Information Centre

*Average residential property value is \$264,100.

DID YOU KNOW?

Every \$100 the average household pays in taxes is divided between the federal (\$50), provincial (\$42) and municipal (\$8) governments. The municipal property tax payment funds more than 100 different City services.

MORE CITY CURRENTS CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 ➔