

Town of Charlemont Newsletter July 2022

Assessor's Office

A Note from the Assessors on Motor Vehicle Excise Information

Under MGL Chapter 60A, all Massachusetts residents who own and register a motor vehicle must annually pay a motor vehicle excise. Also, it is important to note that every motor vehicle, whether registered or not, is subject to taxation (under MGL Chapter 59, Section 2), either as excise or as personal property, for the privilege of road use.

Billing:

Excise bills are prepared by the Registry of Motor Vehicles, according to the information on the vehicle registration. They are then sent to town where the

vehicle is principally garaged, and the tax is levied at the rate of \$25.00 per thousand dollars of value. The excise tax law (M.G.L. c.60A, s.1) establishes the formula for valuation whereby only the manufacturer's list price and the age of the motor vehicle are considered. The value is based on the list prices for vehicles in their year of manufacture and is reduced by a percentage each year, down to ten percent. Every motor vehicle owner must pay an excise tax based on at least ten percent of the manufacturer's list price; therefore, owners of vehicles older than five years will have a fixed excise tax bill for succeeding years of ownership.

Abatements:

If your vehicle is sold, traded, stolen, totaled, or moved out of state, you may be entitled to an abatement of all or a portion of that motor vehicle's excise. You must first pay the excise bill in full before an abatement will be considered. Applications for abatement must be made through the Assessors' office. Along with the abatement application, you must include two other forms of supporting documentation, as spelled out on the back of the application.

Important Reminder:

When you register a motor vehicle, an excise bill is generated, and you are responsible for its payment. **The bill will continue to generate each year until the plate expires or you cancel the plate with the RMV.** If you move from town, it is important to notify the Registry of Motor Vehicles, your insurance company, and the Post Office of your new address, so the excise will be assessed to the correct town of garaging and that you receive your bill on time.

For additional information regarding excise tax please see the [Excise Information page](#) on the Secretary of the Commonwealth's website or contact the Assessor's office at 413-339-8586, x2.

Tyler Memorial Library Update

If you haven't already filled out the library survey, there's still time! The Library Trustees are asking for your help in gathering some information. Your input is important. It will help the library make strategic decisions.

You can access the survey using this link.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TylerMemorial>

Or, if you prefer you can stop by the library where there will be printed copies available.

We are looking for volunteers to fill vacant positions in town. We need:

Agricultural commission (4 members)

Animal Inspector (1 person)

If you are interested descriptions can be found in the volunteer handbook on the town's website or contact town hall 413-339-4335 ext. 8

Transfer Station News

On May 10, 2022, a new food and paper waste compost program began at the Charlemont / Shelburne Transfer Station on North River Rd. There is no cost to participate in this program. The collection is open to residents of these towns only, during each town's operating hours.

Similar programs are successful at 10 municipal transfer stations and 25 schools in the county. Franklin County is a statewide leader in school and transfer station compost programs.

Why compost? Composting makes a valuable soil amendment from waste, saves money, slows climate change, and reduces trash. Households that separate their food waste for composting can potentially reduce their trash volume and save money on required town trash bags or stickers.

The Compost Cooperative has placed special receptacles at the transfer station. The containers will be emptied weekly, and the contents brought to Martin's Farm in Greenfield for composting. **This commercial composting facility is different from your average backyard compost system in that it can compost meat, bones, cheese, paper products, and other materials that are not appropriate for home compost bins or piles.**

The new compost program will accept many materials that are currently destined for the trash. All solid food wastes are acceptable including meat, bones, poultry, fish, cheese, dairy (no liquids), eggs, eggshells, shellfish, fruits, peels, vegetables, bread, grains, tea bags, coffee grounds and paper filters. Paper is also accepted: napkins and paper towels, paper egg cartons, paper to-go containers, and pizza boxes with stuck-on food. (Pizza boxes that are empty and free of food should go in paper recycling.)

It is very important to keep the following items OUT of the compost container: liquids; pet wastes, kitty litter, diapers; plastic bags, wrappers, or cling wrap; polystyrene foam; conventional plastic, metal, foil, glass; or non-biodegradable items. Yard waste, leaves and brush are not accepted in this program.

To collect compostable items at home, residents can use a compost pail, 5-gallon bucket or any other closed container. The Solid Waste District office in Greenfield sells 2-gallon "Sure-Close" compost collection pails for \$5, by appointment: 772-2438. Check with transfer station attendant about the availability of compost pails at your town's transfer station. To make clean up easier, line pails with newspaper, a paper bag, or a compostable BioBag. All "compostable plastic" bags must be BPI-certified; for more information, see <https://www.bpiworld.org/> [bpiworld.org](https://www.bpiworld.org/).

If compostable wastes are transported to the transfer station in a traditional plastic bag, the bag must be emptied into the compost container and then the plastic bag must go in the trash. Never put plastic bags in the compost!

As always, residents are also encouraged to compost at home. The Solid Waste District sells home compost bins to Charlemont and Shelburne residents for a subsidized price of \$25, by appointment. Please call 772-2438. For more information, visit: <https://franklincountywastedistrict.org>.

Broadband Construction Project Nears Completion, Deadline for Installation Subsidy is Approaching

After years of planning and hard work, reliable high-speed broadband is now a reality in Charlemont. All areas of the town are now in service. As the construction phase of the Broadband project comes to completion, we would like to remind town residents that the subsidy period for broadband installation will soon close. Residents can sign up for just Internet Service or bundle it with the optional phone service. Residents are eligible for the subsidy if they commit to a year of service and sign up before the deadline which is **August 31, 2022**. Complete details can be found under Resources on the Charlemont Connect website (www.charlemontconnect.org). This page includes information about our drop policy and subsidies, commercial pricing, the phone service, and the federal Affordable Connectivity Program which may reduce your cost for internet service if you qualify. There is also a button that will connect you to the Whip City Fiber page for Charlemont to sign-up.

We encourage residents who haven't sign up to do so during the subsidy period, where you are eligible for a subsidy of up to \$1400, making the connection free for most residents. You can still connect after the subsidy period ends, but you will be responsible for the cost of the connection currently estimated to start at \$650. If you choose not to take service at this time, please consider taking advantage the \$500 "Cold Drop" subsidy, where the fiber optic cable is brought to the outside of your home thus lowering the cost of a connection in the future. For many residents the subsidy will cover the complete cost of the cold drop. In addition, the town is offering special cold drop subsidies for owners of rental properties. The deadline for all subsidies is August 31, 2022.

To sign up call Whip City Customer Service at 413 485-1251 or go to the Whip City Fiber webpage for Charlemont (www.whipcityfiber.com/charlemont) and click the sign-up button.