The following information has been provided to answer a variety of frequently asked questions related to the payment extension of property taxes and utility payments.

Property Taxes

Q: In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, what relief will the Town offer for tax and utility bills?

A: The Town Council has authorized the waiver of penalty/interest charges on both tax and utility bills for April, May and June 2020. The May 27th tax instalment due date has been changed to June 30th.

Q: What does this waiver mean?

A: The tax and utility penalty/interest usually applied monthly to unpaid tax and utility bills at the rate of 1¼% per month (15% annual), will not be charged for the months of April, May and June 2020.

Q: Will the waiver apply to the March 27th tax instalment?

A: Normally, tax penalty/interest would be added to the March 27th instalment on April 1st. Therefore the waiver does apply to the March 27th tax instalment.

Q: I pay my tax and/or utility bills by preauthorized payment plan (PAP) withdrawal from my bank account. What is happening with the PAP plans?

A: The PAP withdrawals will continue as usual except for the May 27th due date tax PAP, which will be withdrawn on the new due date of June 30th.

If you would like to suspend or remove your tax and/or utility PAP, please send a written request to the Town: by regular mail, Box 310 Thornbury ON N0H 2P0; email finance@thebluemountains.ca; fax 519-599-2474
Q: I have sent post-dated cheque(s) to pay my tax and/or utility bill. What is happening with post-dated cheques?

A: Post-dated cheques will be deposited on the date of the cheque. If you would like to postpone or cancel your post-dated cheque, please call the Finance department front desk phone 1-888-258-6867 x221 and leave a message with your tax roll or utility account number. You could also send a written request, as noted above.

Q: I did not have time to cancel my PAP or post-dated cheque for the March 27th tax instalment, and I did not have enough money in my bank account. Will I be charged an administrative fee?

A: As part of the waiver, the administrative fee for returned payments will not be charged until after June 30th. If it was a PAP payment, please contact us with your instructions moving forward.

Q: What happens after June 30, 2020?

A: Only 41% of your taxes are retained at the local level, with the Town having to remit 59% to the County and the School Board. The Province has already extended the date on which the Town has to remit school board taxes from June 30th to September 30th, and the Town is working with the County to reach an agreement with them. A further extension of due dates will depend on the agreement reached with Grey County.

Utilities

Q: When is my utility bill due?

A: There will be no late penalties posted until June 30, 2020, effectively making June 30, 2020 the new due date for the January-February 2020 bill (issued March 10, 2020) and the March-April 2020 bill (to be issued May 11, 2020). The original due date will still be printed on the bill.

Q: Can I defer my utility bill?

A: Bills will continue to be issued on the current schedule, but there will be no late penalties posted until June 30, 2020. This means your bill is being deferred until June 30, 2020.

Q: Are utility bills still following the regular schedule?

A: Yes. The bill for March 1, 2020 – April 30, 2020 will be issued on May 11, 2020.

Q: When will utility pre-authorized payments be processed?

A: Pre-authorized payments will continue to be processed on the due date printed on your bill.
Q: What if I don’t have the money for a pre-authorized payment?
A: Please call 519-599-3131 ext. 223 and leave a message, or email utilities@thebluemountains.ca at least 24 hours before the payment is scheduled to be processed. We can remove you from the plan until you request it to be reinstated.

Q: Can I sign up for utility eBilling?
A: Yes, you can enroll for utility eBilling here. Once your application is processed, you will receive an email confirmation. (This is a manual process so it may be a few days before you receive a reply.)

Q: If Town hall is closed, how can I make a utility bill payment?
A: All other payment options still apply, you can:
  o Mail a cheque to the town hall (the address is on your bill)
  o Leave a cheque in the drop box at Town Hall (east doors)
  o Pay in person at your local bank
  o Pay through online banking (Bill Payments, not eTransfer)

Q: We are moving into the area, how can I set up my new utility account?
A: Please contact the Utility Coordinator at 519-599-3131 ext. 223 or email utilities@thebluemountains.ca to set up your account.

Q: What if I have a question or need more utility information?
A: Please leave a message at 519-599-3131 ext. 223. If you call during regular business hours, you will receive a call back the same day. If you call after hours or on weekends, you will receive a call back the next business day.

Alternatively, you may email utilities@thebluemountains.ca. Reply times are the same.

Q: Can I have my water meter inspection/repairs completed since I am home?
A: No. For everyone’s safety at this time, we are not entering residences for non-emergencies. Please contact the Utility Coordinator at 519-599-3131 ext. 223 or utilities@thebluemountains.ca to discuss suitable temporary arrangements.