

Municipality of *Bluewater*

Short Term Rental Information

Strict Enforcement Policy

The Council of The Municipality of Bluewater has reviewed and discussed the subject of short term rentals based on resident concerns and inquiries. Council has passed resolutions to adopt a "**Strict Enforcement Policy**".

This means that Municipal Law Enforcement Officers will operate a **zero tolerance mandate (ie. No Warnings)** relative to repeat by-law infraction issues related to short term rentals where evidence supports a charge against the landowner and/or the renter.

Property owners renting their property and adjacent neighbour(s) should be aware of all applicable municipal by-laws and they are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have with each other. It is recommended that neighbours exchange contact information to make discussing any concerns easier, now and in the future. Those affected by a short term rental may wish to also contact the listing rental company and understand their rental standards and feedback process.

Enforcement and Entry

Municipal Law Enforcement Officers enforce municipal by-laws. When a complaint is received, it is investigated to determine if there has been a by-law violation. The appropriate action will then be taken to resolve the matter. At any time, an officer may enter onto land for the purpose of carrying out an inspection to determine whether or not by-laws are being obeyed.

Council has discussed additional regulations and weighed the benefits and drawbacks of licensing short term rentals. Council determined that a "**Strict Enforcement Policy**" is the best solution at this time for enforceable by-laws (e.g. Noise, Fire, Parking).

To submit a formal complaint to the Municipality, you will be asked to provide the following information:

- Complete details of the complaint.
- When? Where is the activity happening? (Accurate address of property).
- Contact details for the person making the complaint (name, address, telephone). This allows the complainant to call in and follow-up with the action taken at the property.

When making a complaint, personal details provided to the Municipal Law Enforcement Department are kept confidential according to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Zoning By-law and Regulation

The Municipality of Bluewater does not currently regulate and/or prohibit short term rentals. Council understands that, traditionally, many residents seasonally rent their cottage/dwellings or lend them to family and friends during the summer months. This has been a common practice for decades. The Zoning By-law does not prohibit the use of a dwelling unit (e.g. entire cottage or home) for any length of time (e.g. short term or long term) to be rented. However, if a room rental is provided, providing or selling meals and/or drink is **strictly prohibited** as this would be considered a bed and breakfast establishment which is only permitted on properties with specific zoning that permits this use. The Zoning By-law is available on our website for review.

Noise By-law

The Municipality of Bluewater Noise By-law is available on the website for review. It is recommended that property owners renting their property post a copy of the municipal by-law or provide each renter with a copy when explaining the rental rules. In the past, this has been extremely effective in ensuring voluntary compliance.

A few by-law highlights include:

- Loud music, yelling and shouting are prohibited at all times.
- Electronic devices using a loudspeaker(s) to produce amplified sound is prohibited between 11 pm and 7 am.
- No person shall cause or permit to be caused any unusual noises, or noises likely to disturb the inhabitants at any time.

Open Fire By-law

The Municipality of Bluewater Open Air Burning By-law is available on the website for review. It is recommended that property owners renting their property post a copy of the municipal by-law or provide each renter with a copy when explaining the rental rules. In the past, this has been extremely effective in ensuring voluntary compliance. Before a fire is set, it is your responsibility to know if a fire ban is in effect by monitoring social media and the municipal website.

A few by-law highlights include:

- Supervise the fire at all times.
- Only use acceptable burn materials.
- Keep extinguishing equipment at the burn site.
- Use an appropriate containing device.
- Supervise children and teach them about safe behaviour around the fire.
- If it is windy, have a fire another day.
- Fires are not allowed during poor air quality days or during a fire ban
- Disobeying the by-law could result in a \$5000 fine as well as costs associated with the fire department having to attend the property to extinguish the fire.

Sewage System

A septic system and sewage system are considered the same pursuant to this article.

The Ontario Building Code includes the size requirements for onsite sewage (septic) systems. The Code states that for residential dwellings, the size of a sewage system is based on the number of bedrooms, finished area of the dwelling, and the number of plumbing fixtures. Anyone concerned that a sewage system is not working properly can contact the municipal office and the complaint will be investigated. Every sewage system requires regular maintenance to ensure it is operating efficiently and safely.

Parking By-law

The Municipality of Bluewater's Traffic and Parking By-law is available on the website for review.

A few by-law highlights include:

- Parking in a prohibited area is a \$60.00 fine.

Public Nuisance By-law

The Municipality of Bluewater's Public Nuisance By-law is available on the website for review.

A few highlights include:

- Disturbing the peace is a \$350 fine.
- Urinating in a public place is a \$350 fine.
- Committing lewd activities is a \$350 fine.
- Loitering is a \$350 fine.
- Creating a nuisance to residents is a \$350 fine.

Enforcement Coverage

The Municipality has retained Municipal Enforcement Unit Consulting (MEU) to provide enforcement of municipal by-laws. In order for the Municipal Law Enforcement Officers to enforce and/or charge under the municipal by-laws, officers are required to have documented evidence that a contravention of a by-law has occurred. Unfortunately, many complaints are received after the fact and therefore do not provide municipal staff the ability to gather the required evidence for proceeding with charges of a by-law infraction. Therefore, when a contravention of a by-law is evident, please contact MEU.

MEU 1-855-900-9119.

Contact Information

This information brochure has been prepared for general information only. For specific information, please refer to municipal by-laws: <https://www.municipalityofbluewater.ca>

If you have questions about the by-laws, please feel free to contact the By-law Department at:

Municipality of Bluewater
14 Mill Avenue
Zurich, Ontario N0M 2T0
PH: (519) 236-4351
info@municipalityofbluewater.ca