

COLUMBIA



UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2020



TOWN OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS: The recent tropical storm Isaias is a reminder that we should prepare for peak hurricane and tropical storm season. We experienced a high degree of power outages with a lengthy restoration period during Isaias and we urge anyone with a medical condition or a disability that may require additional help to notify us. Please contact the Senior Center Director, Bernadette Derring at 860-228-0759.

A great resource for preparing for an emergency is the [Connecticut Guide to Emergency Preparedness](#). The guide provides practical steps you can take to prepare for an emergency. Being prepared during an emergency could mean the difference between making it safely through a disaster for you and your family.

REFLECTIVE ADDRESS MARKERS:

If there is an emergency, help our Fire Department find you! 911 reflective address signs ensure a quick response. To order the Reflective Address Markers please go to the Columbia Volunteer Fire Department's web-page at www.columbiafire5.org and download the printable form or you can fill out the electronic form online. The price is \$10.00 per sign or \$12.00 with mounting brackets.

We encourage the public to visit the Town website at www.columbiact.org for up to date information and I will also be providing weekly updates on the Town of Columbia [YouTube](#) channel and on our [Facebook](#) page.

Thank you and please be safe.

Steven M. Everett, First Selectman
severett@columbiact.org
860-228-0110

Columbia Volunteer Fire Department

**REFLECTIVE ADDRESS MARKER
ORDER FORM**

Please complete the following information:

Name _____
Address _____
City, ST Zip _____
Phone Number _____

Address Number Requested

Note: If your address has fewer than 5 digits, please X those boxes not used.

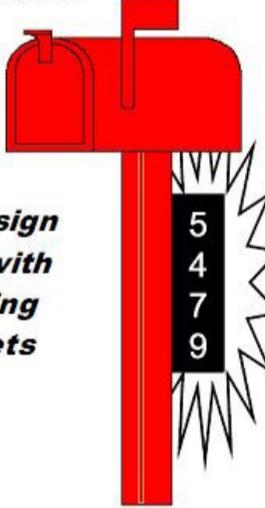
Mounting Preference

HORIZONTAL _____
VERTICAL _____

V
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HORIZONTAL

Mail to:
Columbia Volunteer Fire Department
PO Box 26
Columbia, CT 06237
(860) 228-9602



**\$10 per sign
or \$12 with
Mounting
Brackets**

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

SEPTEMBER 2020

With summer quickly ending, the projects we have been working on are starting to wrap up. These projects include:

The basketball and pickle-ball courts at Rec Park are going to be complete by the end of September.

The garden behind the Moor's Charity School will be getting a face-lift with a low maintenance garden featuring native plantings and herbs in honor of Samson Occum. Preparation is being made for the granite monument placement commemorating and honoring Samson Occum for his contributions to the education of Native Americans and the founding of Dartmouth. The DPW crews have already moved the old "outhouse" to another location in the garden that will be utilized as a garden shed and new split-rail fencing will be installed.



We have submitted our application for a Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant to help expedite the construction of Hunt Road Bridge/culvert replacement.

We are also working on FEMA and other grants to cover COVID-19 expenses.

The Town of Columbia's departments are open by appointment only; however, we continue to encourage residents to use on-line services and the drop-boxes at Yeoman's Hall and Town Hall. We have installed a lock box by Yeoman's Hall for payments, correspondence, permits, Transfer Station Applications, Dog License, etc. Tax Payments can be dropped off at the lock-box in front of Town Hall's front door.

For a staff directory to schedule an appointment please visit the Town of Columbia's website at www.columbiact.org.

Please respect our safety guidelines by wearing a mask when entering the building, use hand sanitizer at the entrance, and observe social distancing guidelines.

In accordance with Governor Lamont's Executive Order 7B and social distancing guidelines recommended by the CDC to slow community spread of COVID-19, meetings are physically closed to the public. We encourage residents to join via Zoom and to provide your comments and input during the meetings utilizing the "Chat" feature in Zoom, or providing comment during the Audience of Citizens/Public Comment portion of the meeting. Public Comment will be accepted by our dedicated email at PublicInput@columbiact.org or by USPS mail to 323 Route 87, Columbia, CT 06237 and must be received prior to the meeting (public comment received after the meeting will be shared at the next meeting).

Entrance to the building will be limited to Yeoman's Hall and exiting through Town Hall.

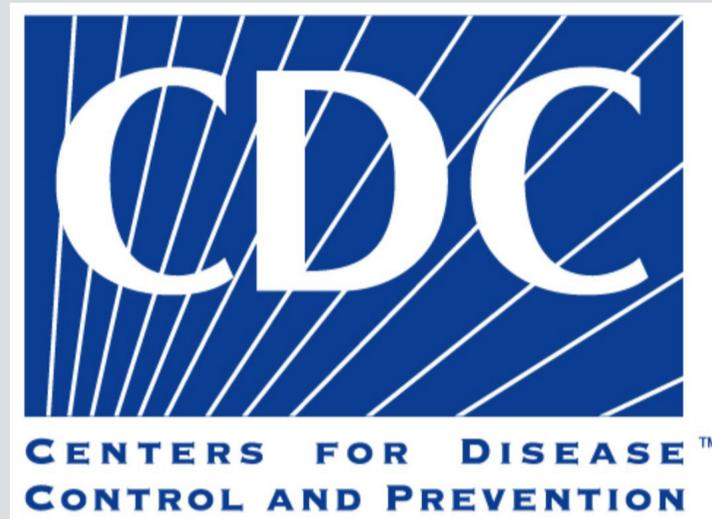
THE TOWN OF COLUMBIA IS ACCEPTING ONLINE DONATIONS through the [Recreation Departments Programs page](#). The donations are to assist those in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. Donations may be used for food supply, fuel assistance, protective equipment and other social services that will benefit those affected by COVID-19.

IMPORTANT LINKS AND INFORMATION RELATED TO COVID-19: Eastern Highland Health District (EHHD) has real-time information on their website www.ehhd.org with an embedded link to COVID-19 information from the CDC. If you have specific questions please contact EHHD directly at (860) 429-3325.

Governor Lamont is encouraging Connecticut residents to sign up for *CTAlert*, the state's emergency alert system, which provides text message notifications to users. To subscribe, text the keyword COVIDCT to 888-777.

For the most up-to-date information from the State of Connecticut on COVID-19, including an FAQ and other guidance and resources, residents are encouraged to visit ct.gov/coronavirus.

For several additional graphs and tables containing more data, including a list of cases in every municipality, visit ct.gov/coronavirus and click the link that is labeled, "COVID-19 Data Tracker."



FOODSHARE'S FOOD DISTRIBUTION IS LOCAL and AT RENTSCHLER FIELD: The Local MOBILE Foodshare location will be at the Beckish Senior Center EVERY OTHER THURSDAY from 1:00 PM to 1:30 PM, starting September 10th to December 17th. For more information call 860-286-999 or visit the [FoodShare website](https://www.foodshare.org). Please see the flyer on Page 6 for more information.

Anyone and Everyone can participate no questions asked. Simply drive up with your car and they will put the food in your trunk.

***FOOD DISTRIBUTION AT RENTSCHLER FIELD, 615 SILVER LANE,
EAST HARTFORD, CT.***

Distribution dates:

- Tue/Wed/Thu - Sept. 1 through Sept. 30 from 8:30 am to 12:00 pm

Important information:

- More Food Resources: www.foodshare.org/coronavirus
- One allocation of food per car to ensure that there is enough food for everyone.



MOBILE FOODSHARE

COLUMBIA'S
MOBILE FOODSHARE
NEW SITE LOCATION

Beckish Senior Center
188 Route 66, Columbia

EVERY OTHER THURSDAY
Sept 10th, Sept 24th, Oct 8th, Oct 22nd, Nov 5th,
Nov 19th, Dec 3rd, & Dec 17th

1:00PM TO 1:30 PM

**DRIVE THROUGH ONLY—NO CONTACT
OPEN TRUNK OR CAR DOOR AND WE WILL
PLACE ITEMS IN YOUR CAR AND YOU CAN
DRIVE AWAY SAFTELY.**

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME—NO PERSONAL INFO
REQUIRED FOR PARTICIPATION**



UPCOMING TOWN MEETINGS

Due to the current COVID-19 Emergency, meetings will be held by utilizing remote access. Each board or committee will provide the information needed to join using an on-line conferencing platform. Please check the Town of Columbia's [website](#) for updates.

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

REGISTRAR OF VOTERS

NOVEMBER ELECTION 11/3/2020

The November Election will be held for in person voting on **November 3, 2020 from 6am-8pm at HORACE W. PORTER SCHOOL.**

If you need to register to vote you can register anytime at voterregistration.ct.gov, or contact our office with your name and address and we will mail a Voter Registration card to you.



Absentee Ballots for the November Election: Every eligible voter will be able to vote via absentee ballot for the November 3, 2020 Election if they so choose. Around mid-September, every registered voter will be mailed an application for an absentee ballot. Applications should be filled out carefully and returned to the Town Clerk's office as soon as possible. Applications can be mailed back using the self-addressed stamped envelope or placed in the drop box outside Town Hall. Once the application is approved, the voter will be mailed an absentee ballot after they become available on October 2nd. If you do not receive an application for an absentee ballot, you can find one on the Registrar of Voters website, or call the Town Clerk at (860) 228-3284.

Please call or email our office should you have any questions.

Registrars of Voters

Karen Butzgy – Democratic

Katherine Morrison – Republican

(860) 228-6843 x113

registrar@columbiact.org

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

BECKISH SENIOR CENTER: The Beckish Senior Center is closed to the public until further notice due to the Corona Virus. We ask that you please stay home and stay safe.

WE ARE AVAILABLE BY PHONE AND EMAIL:

Monday—Friday 8am-3pm

Bernadette Derring—Director of Senior Services

Beckish@columbiact.org

860-228-0759 ext. 1

The Town of Columbia's Transportation Program is running with limited seating. We operate Monday through Friday from 8am to 3pm providing transportation for our seniors and disabled persons. The seating will be limited on the 14-passenger van to 1 wheelchair and 4 passengers plus your driver. The Town of Columbia has purchased a Ford Escape SUV for medical transportation. The medical car will also only allow for 2 people plus the driver to ensure proper distancing.



If you have a medical appointment or would like to go food shopping, please call the Senior Center to book your rides at 860-228-0759 ext. 2 only. To ensure the safety of you and our drivers the following rules will need to be followed:



- You and your caretaker must always wear a mask during your ride.
- We will be using a scanner to check your temperature. If you are running a fever of over 100 degrees, we will not be able to transport you.
- After each round trip per person the driver will wipe down all surfaces of the van to properly sanitize.
- If you are feeling sick on the day of your ride please contact our office as soon as possible to reschedule.
- Sanitizer and gloves will be available on the van.

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

FOOD PANTRY, MEAL-ON-WHEELS & DONATIONS: *Phone Number to call Bernadette:*
860-228-0759 ext. 1

Since the start of the pandemic, the Senior Center's tables are full of non-perishable food items, toiletries, and goodies. We are busy shopping, sorting, packing, and distributing goods to our residents in need. Thank you to all the volunteers who participate in the program.

Food Pantry is open Tuesdays from 8:00am to 3:00pm, please call and we will make deliveries to your doorstep ONLY!



Meal on Wheels Program: If you are homebound and would like to have meal on wheels delivered please call Bernadette at 860-228-0759, ext. 1.

Donations: Donations are welcome. Please call ahead before dropping items off. Monetary donations can be made Payable to "Town of Columbia" and mailed to 188 Route 66, Columbia CT 06237.

BUILDING/LAND USE DEPARTMENT: To make an appointment with the Building Department please call (860) 228-0440 or by email LandUse@columbiact.org. Permits or applications for land use can be safely dropped off in the lock box located by the front entrance to Yeoman's Hall. The box is checked every morning. Please make sure that the envelope is clearly marked with the town department name and include your contact information on your envelope placed in the lock-box.

Please click [here](#) for all permit paperwork.

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

Please call or email ahead to verify permit fees (by check only, made out to Town of Columbia), or to address other questions. Work that is to be done by a contractor must include a copy of their State license, and certificate of insurance with workman's comp, and should include a signed authorization from the property owner. Inspections will be carried out by appointment only for exterior inspections as well as inspections of non-occupied structures (new construction/additions) will continue.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS: The Transfer Station has resumed full service with the following exceptions:

- Swap Shop is Closed.
- Hard & soft cover books will not be accepted.
- Textiles (clothing) will not be accepted. Please dispose of textiles in the regular garbage.

When providing payment please use exact change. There is a box mounted on the outside of the Transfer Station custodian's office for your payments. The Scouts BSA Redemption Shed will be open. We ask residents to please be respectful as always of this shed and to please only deposit CT redeemable bottles and cans.

Applications can be picked up at the Transfer Station or [on-line](#). Please mail in your application to 323 Route 87, Columbia CT., attention Town Clerk, drop off at the lock box located outside Yeoman's Hall. Please include a self-addressed stamped envelope. You can also call the Town Clerk's office for an appointment at 860-228-3284.

The standard permit price (2 stickers) is \$40 per household for non-seniors and \$20 per household for seniors (62 and over). Up to 2 additional stickers may be purchased at \$20 each.

REMINDER: When using the Transfer Station Masks Are Required and practice social distancing.



TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

Some of the projects that the DPW have been working on include:

- New solar walkway lights installed at the Town Hall Annex.
- New solar powered scoreboard installed at Columbia Recreation Areas new Softball Field.
- New construction of Basketball and Pickle-ball courts is will be completed soon.



- Completed construction of a new entrance road at Columbia Recreation Area, wooden guardrail soon to be installed.
- Resurfaced the walking paths at Columbia Recreation Area
- New landscaping installed at the Beckish Senior Center with the help of volunteers.
- Milling of Lake Road and West Street Extension has been completed.
- Drainage work on Hennequin and Pine with paving to be completed the 1st week of September.

Ongoing Projects: Tree work will continue throughout the Town. Eversource will be using Asplundh for tree work clearing along power lines.

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

FIRE MARSHAL: OPEN BURNING - The Town of Columbia allows campfires and the burning of brush. Both are governed by the State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) regulations and town ordinance 15-8. These regulations and guidelines can be found on-line at [CT.GOV website](#) or the [Town's website](#).

Campfire Safety

- No permit is required, but follow safety guidelines.
- Campfires should not be larger than 3 feet in diameter.
- Burn tree wood only.

Brush Burning

- A permit is required.
- Do not burn to clear land.
- Brush should be 3 inches in diameter or less.
- Burn piles should not exceed 10 feet in diameter or height.

Safety Tips for All Fires

- If the smoke affects your neighbors, find a different location to burn.
- Have a 5-gallon bucket of water and a metal rake available, if needed.
- No burning of garbage, furniture, tires, manufactured lumber, stumps, or hazardous materials.
- Do not place fire under electrical lines, the smoke can be a conductor.
- Always burn safely and never leave a fire unattended.

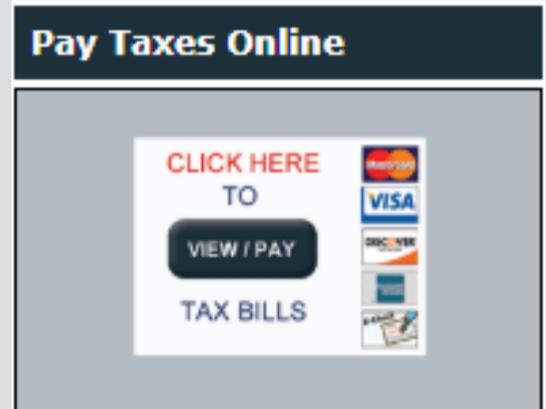
If you have any questions or need to obtain an open burning permit, please contact the Town of Columbia Land Use Department at 860-228-0440.

Michael Lester
Fire Marshal/Open Burning Official
Town of Columbia

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

TAX OFFICE: In accordance with Governor Lamont's Executive orders Columbia has adopted the Deferment Program. This defers the last day to pay taxes until October 1, 2020. The exception to this program is: Real estate bills for landlords and Real Estate escrowed accounts, they are due on or before Monday August 3, 2020. The postmark of August 4, 2020 is a late payment and interest will be charged from the due date of July 1, 2020 at 3. % (1.5% for July and 1.5% for August).

All motor vehicle taxes, the 1st installment of Real Estate and Personal Property taxes are due on or before October 1, 2020. This office uses the postmark as the date of payment. The postmark of October 2, 2020 is a late payment and interest will be charged at 6% (1.5% for July, 1.5% for August, 1.5% for September and 1.5% for October). By law, interest is charged at 1.5% per month from the due date of July 1, 2020. Please check your bill for the last day to pay without a penalty printed below the July 1, 2020 payment amount.



You can view and pay tax bills on-line at www.columbiact.org. You may need to scroll down on the home page to find the view/pay on-line link. The service fees to pay tax bills on-line using a credit or debit card is 2.95% or if using a Bank account .95 cents.

Payments may be mailed using the envelope enclosed with your bill or put in one of the lock boxes outside of the Town Hall front doors.

If you need assistance please contact the tax office at 860-228-0230, or via email at taxcollector@columbiact.org. Beginning August 4, 2020, the tax office hours are Monday through Wednesday 8:00-2:00, Thursday 8:00-6:00 and closed on Friday. If you need to enter the Town Hall please call the office to make an appointment.

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

TOWN CLERKS OFFICE: Admittance to the Town Clerk's office is by appointment only. Please call our office at 860-228-3284 to set up an appointment.

Otherwise, it is business as usual in the Town Clerk's office for those services that you might need – Recording and Searching of Land Records, Fishing and Hunting licenses, Certified copies of Vital Records, Marriage Licenses, Dog Licenses, Transfer Station stickers, etc.

For your convenience, a large white drop box has been installed outside the doors to Yeoman's Hall. This box can be used to drop off items (listed above) for the Town Clerk. It is shared with other offices in Town Hall.

For information with regards to applying for an absentee ballot for the November 3, 2020 election, please refer to the Registrar of Voters section in this issue.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call us or reach out to us by email – Robin (townclerk@columbiact.org) or Gail (atownclerk@columbiact.org).

Take care. Stay safe.



RECREATION DEPARTMENT: Please note that the Parks and Recreation Department is now located at the Murphy House at Columbia Lake. Follow us on [FaceBook](#) and [Instagram](#)!

LAKE ACTIVITIES: Kayak rentals available through the end of October, please call 860-228-8513 to reserve Mon-Thurs.

TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

EXERCISE PROGRAMS held at Yeoman's Hall.

Fit Fusion: Mon/Weds 4:30-5:30pm, Yeomans Hall

Yoga: Will begin this Tuesday 8/25, 6pm, Yeomans Hall

Zumba: Mondays 9/14-11/2, 7pm, Yeomans Hall

For all exercise classes we have a max capacity of 12 people per a class. Due to this we are asking those who wish to attend to email ahead to reserve a spot recdirector@columbiact.org. Walk-ins will be accepted if the class is not already at capacity.

OTHER PROGRAMS: [Columbia Day Camp](#), Monday through Wednesday beginning, September 8th, 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Camp Fees:

\$25 per a child per day

\$5 off each additional child

\$175 family max per week

Registration is available through [Recdesk](#)

Registration is now open for Youth Paint Nights in October! To register please go to the [Recreation](#) page. We will have two different age groups. The room will be set up to socially distance and each person will have their own paints and materials (family members will be able to share and sit at the same table).



TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

DOG SHOW: The Recreation Department will be hosting a dog show at Rec Park. The date is yet to be determined, but stay tuned!

Rec Park: Grounds are open to the public. Please note that social distancing is recommended even in open parks, and that group sizes should be kept to an absolute minimum. **The use of the playground equipment *IS* prohibited.**

Other news from the Columbia Parks & Rec

Department: We had a great Summer Sizzler Road Race on August 14th. The race was sold out!! Congrats to Adam Gootnick who won the race!! Thank you O2 Event Productions, all of our sponsors and everyone who came to run!! Looking forward to next year already!



MARINE PATROL AND GATE MONITORING:

- Checking boats at the gate Monday through Sunday from 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM.
- Marine Patrol is out on the lake Monday through Friday, 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM and on weekends from 11:00 AM to 8:00 PM.
- Marine Patrol schedule continues until September 13th before changing over to weekends only through October 11th.

NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

Saxton B. Little Library is open as follows:

* Library Programs via Zoom continues. Book groups are continuing, contact the Library or check the website for titles. Sept 14, join us for a new program – Let’s Talk, where we discuss a pod cast about a timely topic. Our Stitchers group continues to meet weekly, Writers group monthly. New members are welcome!

* In-Library Browsing Times -- Tuesday 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm, Wednesday 11:00 am - 2:00 pm, and Saturdays 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm. [Note: limited browsing area, stacks, children’s area and rest rooms staff only. Masks and social distancing are required.]

* Curbside pick-ups -- Mondays 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm, Thursday noon – 4:00 pm, 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm, Saturday 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Materials may be requested by calling the Library, requesting through our catalog or by emailing: SBL@columbiactlibrary.org

If you have materials checked-out from Spring, we thank you for taking care of them. We are now ready for their return home! Our outside Book Drops are open 24-7. Please return materials now – while they are still not accruing any fines! Thank you.

Don’t have a card? We can issue you one remotely.

Don’t know what you’d like? Try a grab bag or our Tailored Titles program where we offer you suggestions to try based on your interest.

Missing browsing the shelves? Do it virtually from your computer (instructions found here:

Call us at 860.228.0350. Email us: SBL@columbiactlibrary.org

Or visit our website for more information and to sign up for our e-news letter and be the first to know about new events.

We are happy to continue to provide services to the Columbia Community during these stressful and unprecedented times.

NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

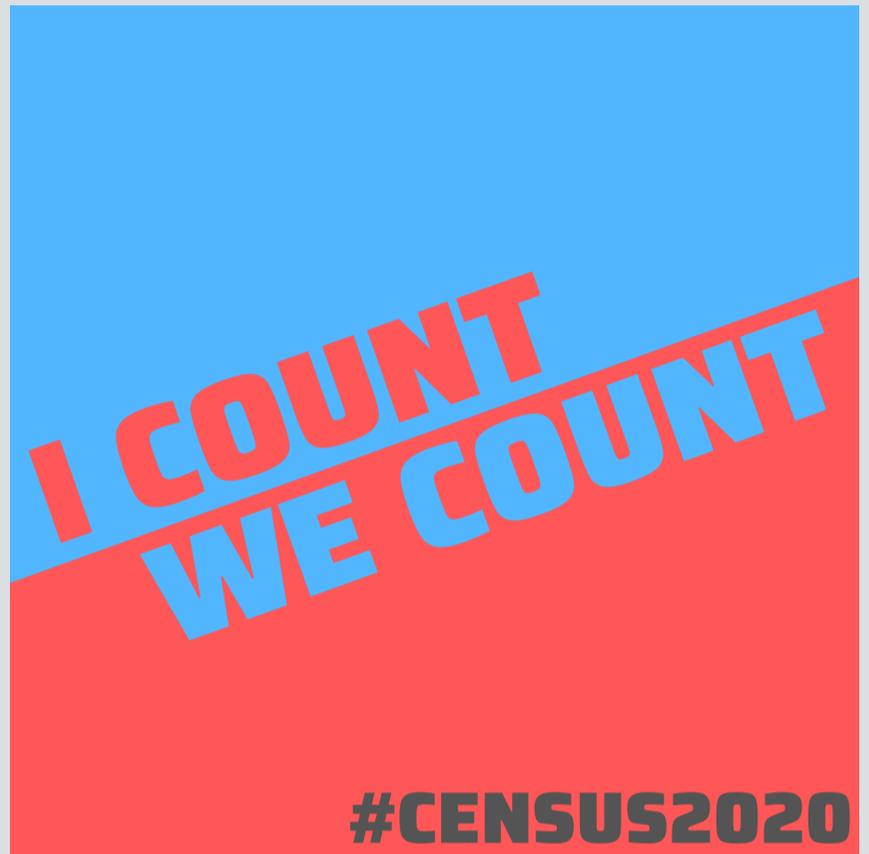
2020 CENSUS:

The 2020 Census is still on-going. It is not too late to respond! Go to [Census.gov](https://www.census.gov) or call (844)-330-2020.

The U.S. Census Bureau, in coordination with federal, state and local health officials, will begin a phased restart of some 2020 Census field operations in select geographic areas this week. As part of the phased restart of operations, the Census Bureau will resume dropping off 2020 Census invitation packets at front doors of households in areas where the majority of households do not receive mail at their home. This operation is also known as "Update Leave". About 5% of households

are counted in the Update Leave operation, where census workers will confirm or update a household's physical location address and then leave a census questionnaire packet during the months of July and August. For more information, please visit the [2020 Census COVID-19 operational adjustments](#) page.

Furthermore, if any Columbia household has not filled out the 2020 Census the Censes field representatives will be going door to door in mid-to-late August.



NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

Molly's Market is a traditional style farmer's market that is taking place at Heartstone Farm and Winery in Columbia CT. From 3-6pm every Thursday August 6th-October 29th you will find fresh home grown products from local farmers. Vendors include Field Engineer Farm, Wilkinson Farm, Cambera Farm, Granny's Pie Factory and more. Molly's Market is still looking for more vendors to join the market. If you are interested send an email to mollysmarketct@gmail.com for more information. Be sure to check out the [Molly's Market's Facebook](#) page and Instagram @mollysmarketct for everything from getting to know the market's vendors, to recipes and farming tips.



**NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES
PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT
NEWS AND INFORMATION**

COLUMBIA CONGREGATION CHURCH

Paper Shred-A-Thon

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19TH



PAPER SHRED-A-THON

9:00AM – 1:00PM at the Old Fire House on ROUTE 66

Staples and clips DO NOT need to be removed.

**Please call ahead if you have large amounts of
paper to dispose.**

860-734-1046

Suggested donation: \$5.00/per brown paper bag

Sponsored by the

Columbia Congregational Church

as a fundraiser for its Mission Outreach

ALL COVID 19 guidelines for social distancing and mask wearing will be required.