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Community Standards Bylaw  
Executive Summary  
November 25, 2016

On November 22, 2016, the Council of Thorsby passed first reading of the new Community Standards Bylaw. This Bylaw replaces Bylaw 2006-08 Nuisance Bylaw.

Community Standards Bylaws are designed to provide community awareness regarding the safety and environmental success of the Municipality. Bylaws are typically written in sections and each section starts with “what you can’t do” and then provides the “exemptions or relaxations”.

**The Current Community Standards Bylaw** (Known as - Nuisance Bylaw #2006-08 )talks about unsightly premises and what a resident can’t accumulate, it talks about building maintenance, noise, and of course enforcement. What wasn’t clear in the Bylaw was the exemptions and the definitions.

**The New Community Standards Bylaw** talks about the same things but is more clear. Residents are asked to look at the charts to see the differences.

Council has positively agreed on allowances for Daylights saving time so that residents can enjoy their backyards until 11p.m. in the summer. They have agreed on the ability for home owners to work on their vehicles in their driveways with certain environmental responsibilities. These include no vehicle fluids drained onto the driveway, no discarded auto parts on the front yard, no accumulation of auto parts and auto bodies unless they are in structure or tarped. Council has expressed agreement on the ban of C-Cans or Shipping Containers in residential areas, and the ceasing of placing them in the front of commercial or industrial lots. Those having the shipping containers currently will be grandfathered.

Council has positively agreed on the snow angel program for snow clearing (a service for neighbours and residents that can’t move their own snow and that their health and welfare may depend on a cleared driveway) and for businesses to clear snow within a 48-hour window at any hour they deem fit to maintain their business.

Council has added a section on Refrigerators/Freezers and Appliances to maintain safety. These are appliances that when left in a yard can cause animals or children to be trapped in them. Businesses that require them are only asked to have it locked.

Council has added a section to reduce flyers, refuse and graffiti. This does not mean that these cannot be produced. It means that they will no longer be allowed on light standards, power poles, municipal trees, benches, flower containers, garbage cans etc. Graffiti is not allowed on buildings; however, street art murals etc. that are authorized by the Municipality are encouraged. Littering is still prohibited.

Council has enhanced the noise section by restricting sales people knocking on doors after 9 p.m. and before 9 a.m. Persons who want to have a block party, or have a private party and believe that it may be noisy after the time, can discuss an exemption by the Chief Administrative Officer and will be asked to notify their neighbours.

Council has added a section for commercial vehicles, armored vehicles, mail and other merchandise that requires late night attention to be exempted from the noise section so that they can load and unload.

Council has enhanced the construction requirements in the Noise section and has required the site to be secured and has allowed noise if a foundation is required to be poured and the only time the cement can get in is late at night, or if in the industrial sections, the noise is a part of their normal operation of business.

Council has also understood the need to a relaxation through permit (permit fees have not been attached) for RV's in the summer. What this means is if you have family coming to visit and the campground is full, you can have your family park on your driveway for the weekend duration of their stay if you inform the CAO.

Other quick questions Council is interested in relate to cigarette refuse on the streets and what the opinion of businesses is on this matter.

There is also a clarification in the new bylaw with respect to Court of Queens' Bench. Working with unsightly premises or properties takes a long time to resolve. The municipality has powers under the Municipal Government Act to provide "orders to remedy". That means, clean it up! These orders have a long process and are usually not provided to the property owner until all other actions have been exhausted. Sometimes they are not issued for two years because each property cleanup is unique with its own challenges. At all times, there are circumstances that are sensitive and must be handled carefully. Once all avenues have been exhausted the Municipality applies to the Court of Queens's Bench for a hearing and a resolution. These are not common, nor are they used frivolously as the Court has no tolerance for that.

This new Bylaw is ready for your input and if you have any questions or would like more information about this topic, please contact Christine Burke , Town Manager.