

Overall, HRM effectively manages its property tax activities, Auditor General, Evangeline Colman-Sadd, said in her report released today, January 9th.

The audit found property tax billing and collection is consistent with HRM policy requirements, and in most instances HRM tax staff attempted to collect overdue accounts.

HRM should improve how it manages its tax agreements with large and industrial customers. Important tax information provided by some of these property owners is not verified by HRM tax staff.

The audit found the property tax system has significant weaknesses, which could lead to fraud or error. Many employees had access to change property assessment values which they do not need for their jobs.

“HRM management is aware of the risks in the system and knows a new system, better suited to the administration of property taxes, is needed,” the auditor general said. However, the audit found there is no updated plan to replace the system. “A new system should be robust enough to address the current issues. In the meantime, management should address weaknesses with the existing system to the extent possible,” said the auditor general.

Management agreed to implement all five recommendations from the audit.

The report is available on the auditor general’s website at <https://www.halifax.ca/city-hall/auditor-general/published-reports>.

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In her report released today, Auditor General Evangeline Colman-Sadd said property tax billing and collection is consistent with HRM policy requirements, and HRM tax staff worked to collect overdue accounts.

There are significant weaknesses with the current property tax system, which could lead to fraud or error. A detailed plan is needed to replace the system.

Management agreed to the audit’s five recommendations.

The report is available on the auditor general’s website at <https://www.halifax.ca/city-hall/auditor-general/published-reports>.

-30-

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