

Man gets 4.5 years for sexually abusing friends' daughter

Victim's family has to pick up pieces after 'selfish choice'

STEVE BRUCE

A Halifax man who sexually abused his close friends' four-year-old daughter has been handed a 4.5-year prison sentence.

Robert Warren Munro, 41, was sentenced recently in Halifax provincial court on a charge of sexual interference from an incident that happened in May 2023, while he was babysitting for the family.

"Sexual violence against a young, helpless child ... rightly brings a chorus of responses in our society — anger, disgust, sorrow, indignation," Judge Mark Heerema said in his sentencing decision.

"However, the loudest and clearest voice must come from the court. That message is simple: Sexual violence against children will not be tolerated, looked past or downplayed.

"While honouring the need to show restraint, it is incumbent to impose a sentence that emphasizes denunciation and deterrence, a sentence that condemns clearly the actions of Mr. Munro."

The judge ordered Munro to provide a DNA sample for a national databank and have no contact with the victim or her family while he is serving his sentence.

After he gets out of prison, Munro will have to register as a sex offender for 20 years and will be prohibited from having firearms for 10 years. He will also be subject to a 10-year prohibition restricting his contact with children.

Munro was also found guilty on a charge of sexual assault from the same incident, but that conviction was stayed at sentencing.

There's a publication ban on any information that could identify the victim, who is now seven.

Heerema accepted evidence at trial that Munro digitally penetrated the girl in her bed and told her not to disclose their secret to her

mother.

Crown attorney Sarah Kirby argued for a six-year sentence, while defence lawyer Mark Knox recommended a conditional sentence and probation.

In his analysis, the judge said the appropriate range was somewhere between three and six years, meaning a community-based sentence would not be an option.

"Children are not sexual objects," Heerema said. "And if anyone treats them as such, they will be met with a sentence that's unambiguous in its condemnation."

He said the offence robbed the little girl "of her right to a happy, healthy and wholesome childhood and has undoubtedly altered the course of her existence.

"She was a powerless child of a few years who was sexually violated by a trusted loved one as she lay in bed in her pyjamas. Her soul, heart and mind will ... spend a lifetime wrestling with that cruelty.

"Predictably, Mr. Munro's actions that evening will impair her emotional, social, psychological and sexual development. We know that the full impact of sexual violence against a child is often only fully revealed as the child ages into adulthood and beyond.

"What has been forced upon her at such a young age is an injustice beyond words. Her family will be saddled with guilt for what they could have done to prevent this.



Robert Warren Munro leaves Halifax provincial court Nov. 19 during a break at his sentencing hearing on a charge of sexual interference involving the four-year-old daughter of close friends. Munro was sentenced this month to 4.5 years in prison. STEVE BRUCE

They will anguish for what she has lost. They will try to pick up the pieces of Mr. Munro's selfish choice. How deeply unfair."

Heerema said he was grateful for the victim impact statements submitted by the girl's parents.

"It is hard for me to encapsulate the anguish, fear, hatred, betrayal, devastation and loss they continue to experience," he said. "Listening to their words and seeing their pain, it is clear this offence has significantly destructed and devastated their family. How could it not?"

"On behalf of our society, I lament what (the girl) has experienced, what this family has gone through. I appreciate that this sentencing of Mr. Munro cannot make right, restore or repair what (the victim) has experienced.

"Let me say directly to (the girl's) parents: I'm thankful that (she)

has you as a family. As she walks the path now set before her, I'm confident that she will see you as dependable and trustworthy loved ones who she can lean her troubles on. You are and will be her safe space."

Heerema said the case features a significant breach of trust.

"Mr. Munro exploited the love and trust of this family, and it allowed him to (commit) this offence," he said. "He should have been a source of protection and care to (the victim). I accept that this trust relationship caused confusion and concern in the mind of (the girl) afterwards."

In an interview for his presentence report, Munro denied any wrongdoing and did not accept responsibility or express remorse. He suggested that the girl misidentified him as her abuser because

of "perpetrator substitution" and stressed that he felt there was nothing for him to make amends for.

"I do not know what precisely led Mr. Munro to commit this act of sexual violence against such a young and defenceless child, who I accept was important to him," Heerema said.

"He has maintained his innocence, which is his right, but that does not bode well for his rehabilitation... It also speaks to some concern for the risk that he presents to our society.

"I hope that Mr. Munro has the courage to look inward and examine this part of himself that he has hidden from others, and perhaps, to some extent, from himself. I hope that he takes advantage of the programming that will be offered to him."

Ontario man charged with sexual offences

PNI ATLANTIC

An Ontario man is now facing more than 30 sexual offences involving children as part of an investigation that began in 2022.

In August 2025, Sebastien Michael Vienneau, 29, of Woodstock appeared in Kentville provincial court to face charges of luring a child, indecent communications and transmitting sexually explicit material to a child.

The ongoing investigation led the West Hants RCMP's general investigation section to charge Vienneau with 30 counts of luring a child, eight counts of making sexually explicit material available to a child, two counts of indecent communications and two counts of making child pornography. Vienneau is also charged with possessing child pornography, accessing child pornography, and making child pornography available.

The charges were laid in Kentville provincial court Dec. 11. The offences involve 30 alleged victims, all of whom were youth at the time.

"This extensive investigation demonstrates a steadfast commitment by investigators to determine the facts of the matter," Staff Sgt. Ed Nugent, of the West Hants RCMP, said in a Dec. 23 news release.

"It involved many units and agencies working toward a common goal of identifying victims and ensuring all appropriate charges would be laid."

Vienneau is scheduled to appear in Kentville provincial court Jan. 6.

IN THE MATTER OF:

The *Companies Act*, Chapter 81, R.S.N.S., 1989, as amended;

- and -

IN THE MATTER OF:

An application by 3293630 Nova Scotia Limited for leave to surrender its Certificate of Incorporation

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that 3293630 Nova Scotia Limited intends to make an application to the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies for leave to surrender its Certificate of Incorporation.

DATED: December 30, 2025

LAUREN AGNEW
Stewart McKelvey
Solicitor for 3293630 Nova Scotia Limited

IN THE MATTER OF:

The *Companies Act*, Chapter 81, R.S.N.S., 1989, as amended;

- and -

IN THE MATTER OF:

An application by 4440843 Nova Scotia Limited for leave to surrender its Certificate of Amalgamation

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DATED: December 30, 2025

LAUREN AGNEW
Stewart McKelvey
Solicitor for 4440843 Nova Scotia Limited



Nova Scotia Energy Board

NOVA SCOTIA ENERGY BOARD
NOTICE OF PAPER HEARING

The **Town of Mahone Bay**, on behalf of its electric utility, applied to the Nova Scotia Energy Board on December 18, 2025, for approval to begin recovering deferred revenue from the phasing in of a rate increase approved in the Town's last general rate application (M10832). The Town seeks Board approval to recover its deferred revenue from its Domestic (including Time of Day and Net Metering), Small General, General Service and Town street lighting rate class customers over two-year period, beginning January 1, 2026, through rate riders as follows:

Domestic (including Time of Day and Net Metering):	0.5289 cents/kWh
Small General:	0.4866 cents/kWh
General Service:	0.3572 cents/kWh
Town street lighting:	Varies by Lamp Type

The Board will consider this matter in a paper hearing process.

This is a public process, and you may participate as follows:

- You may make written comments by sending a letter to the Clerk of the Board at P.O. Box 1692, Unit "M", Halifax, NS B3J 3S3, or secure file transfer service by visiting <https://board.titanfile.com/NSEB/>, or by fax at (902) 424-3919 by **Friday, January 9, 2026**.
- You may request formal standing as an Intervenor, subject to Board approval. This will allow you to present evidence. Your request must be received by the Board by **Friday, January 9, 2026**. The deadline for Intervenor to request to ask Information Requests or file evidence is **Friday, January 16, 2026**.

A copy of the Application and any timetable applying to this matter may be viewed on the Board's website at <https://nserbt.ca/nseb>, by clicking on "Matters & Evidence", and in the "Go Directly to Matter" search box, enter Matter No. **M12642**, and on the Town of Mahone Bay's website.

To assist the Board in using correct forms of address and pronouns in our hearings and decisions, we invite all parties, lawyers, and all other participants to share their pronouns and titles with the Board and each other if they are comfortable doing so. There is no requirement to provide this information.



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LIFESTYLES

Indoor enrichment for pets during long winter nights

ASHLEY KIPPERS
SHAID Tree Animal Shelter General Manager

As winter settles in and the evenings grow longer, many pets find themselves spending more time indoors with fewer opportunities for stimulation. Just like people, animals can become bored or stressed without enough mental and physical activity. Providing enrichment is especially important during the colder months and can make a world of difference for a pet’s overall wellbeing.

SIMPLE WAYS TO KEEP PETS ENGAGED INDOORS

Interactive toys: Puzzle feeders, treat balls, and wand toys encourage problem-solving and movement. Rotating toys every few days can help keep them exciting and “new.”

DIY enrichment: You don’t need fancy supplies. Cardboard boxes, paper bags (handles removed), and homemade treat puzzles made from toilet paper rolls can provide hours of entertainment.

Routine and playtime: Scheduled play sessions help pets burn energy and reduce anxiety. Even 10-15 minutes of interactive play before meals can improve mood and encourage healthy habits.

Calm spaces and stress reduction: Quiet hiding spots, cozy beds, soft lighting, and gentle background noise can help reduce stress – especially for shy or sensitive animals. Products like pheromone diffusers or calming treats can also be helpful.

Mental stimulation: Training sessions, clicker work, or simply teaching new routines can keep pets mentally engaged and strengthen the human-animal bond.

Long winter nights don’t have to be dull or stressful for pets. With simple enrichment ideas and a little extra attention, they can become cozy, engaging, and comforting – especially for animals waiting patiently for a home of their own.

MEET TWO CATS WHO THRIVE WITH GENTLE ENRICHMENT

Enrichment is especially important for shelter cats who are adjusting to new environments.

Timberland, a neutered male, is shy but curious. He enjoys observing at first, gaining confidence as he feels safe.

Yule, an eight-month-old spayed female, is still finding her footing in the shelter. The busy environment can be overwhelming for her, but with patience, soft voices, and gentle enrichment, she is slowly warming up. A calm home with consistent routines and enrichment would help her blossom.

Both cats would thrive in peaceful homes where winter evenings are filled with soft play, patience, and understanding.

January’s Rafflebox fundraiser will be starting soon, helping SHAID continue to care for animals like Timberland and Yule. Try your luck and help kitties at the same time!



ASHLEY KIPPERS PHOTOS

Yule and Timberland are looking for new homes.



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D9140



THE MUNICIPALITY OF CHESTER
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

In the matter of the Municipal Government Act and the Municipality of the District of Chester

TAKE NOTICE THAT on Thursday, November 27, 2025, Chester Municipal Council provided intention to enter into a Development Agreement with ARW Development Ltd. to build 11 single unit dwellings in addition to the existing 5 structures on the 24.6-acre lot (PID 60664828) on Barkhouse Road, Martins Point is to be considered.



A **PUBLIC HEARING** will be held on **Thursday, January 15, 2026 at 8:45 a.m.** and is being held in Municipal Council Chambers (151 King Street, Chester).

Residents can give their opinions at the Public Hearing by speaking in person or sending written comments to: Pamela Myra, Municipal Clerk, 151 King Street, PO Box 369, Chester, NS B0J 1J0 or pmyra@chester.ca.

Comments must be received before 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 8th, 2026.

Council may vote to approve or reject the proposed Development Agreement amendments at the Council Meeting which will follow the conclusion of the Public Hearing.

Copies of the proposed changes are available by contacting the Community Development Department, located at 186 Central Street, Chester.

Call us!
902-275-2599

Email us!
planning@chester.ca

D9125