
The Corporation of the City of Stratford Policy Manual

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Policy Section:	A.1 Awards Recognition Promotion
Department:	CAO's Office
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Policy Type:	Council-adopted Policy

Flags at City Hall

Policy Statement:

This policy outlines and defines the criteria and process for raising, displaying, half-masting and disposing of flags at corporate properties and facilities of The Corporation of the City of Stratford.

Purpose:

The City of Stratford lowers flags to half-mast as a sign of respect, condolence, mourning and/or commemoration. The purpose of this Policy is:

- To ensure that all flags flown at half-mast uphold the dignity and respect for whom the flags are flown;
- To ensure that flags are flown at half-mast in a consistent and appropriate manner in accordance with the Order of Precedence established by the Department of Canadian Heritage and the [National Flag of Canada etiquette](#);
- To ensure flags are flown at half-mast in an inclusive and equitable manner to recognize significant events or dates relevant to diverse cultural, racial and marginalized communities within Stratford;
- To identify dates, occasions, durations, and locations for flag lowering;
- To ensure, when required, that national flags are disposed of in a dignified and respectful manner

- To provide direction for staff; and
- To provide public notice.

Application:

Flags may be lowered at other City facilities as approved by the Mayor or CAO subject to occurrence and staff availability.

These facilities are:

- Rotary Complex
- Dufferin Arena
- City Hall Annex Building
- Police Station
- Stratford Public Library
- Cenotaph Memorial Gardens
- Corner of Ontario Street and Downie Street
- Fire Stations One and Two
- Parks Yard
- Public Works

Exemptions:

- This policy does not apply to flags representing community/non-profit groups or organizations, flown on the City's designated flagpole(s);
- This policy does not apply to promotional banners that may be hanging temporarily outside of City facilities;
- This policy does not apply to flags flown at City facilities that cannot be lowered without aerial truck apparatus;
- Half-masting procedures as described in this policy are subject to safety conditions and weather conditions.

Responsibility:

- This policy will be administered and monitored by the Office of the Mayor and CAO;
- Flags will be lowered by City staff as determined by the appropriate Director;
- Notification of a flag lowering with regards to (b) and (c) below, will be sent to the Corporate Management Team (CMT); and
- Public Notice of half-masting will be provided by the Corporate Communications Lead or as designated by the CAO.

Procedure:

Half-masting at City of Stratford facilities will occur:

- a) On the following Special Days as recognized by the Federal Government of Canada:

28 April	National Day of Mourning for Persons Killed or Injured in the Workplace (Worker's Mourning Day)
23 June	National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism
Second Sunday in September	Firefighters' National Memorial Day
Last Sunday in September	Police and Peace Officers' National Memorial Day
30 September	National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
11 November	Remembrance Day
06 December	National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

- b) In the event of the death of any of the following, from the time of notification of death, up to and including the day of funeral or memorial service:

- The Sovereign;
- The Governor General, Lieutenant Governor, Prime Minister or Premier of Ontario;
- The Mayor or a member of City Council;
- The Member of Parliament (M.P.);
- The Member of Provincial Parliament (M.P.P); or
- National Chief in the Assembly of First Nations;

- c) In the event of the death of any of the following, on the day of funeral or memorial service:

- A member of the Royal Family related in the first degree to the Sovereign (spouse, son or daughter, father, mother, brother or sister);
- Any current City employee (an employee under the Corporate Leadership Team);
- A former Mayor or member of Council residing in the community;
- A former department head residing in the community; or
- A person whom, in the opinion of the Mayor, CAO, or their designates, it is desired to honour.

- d) At the discretion of the Mayor, CAO, or their designates, to honour a significant event, date, or occasion.

- e) If a masting (lowering or raising) date falls on a weekend or holiday observed by the City, the flag will be lowered the regular day of work before and returned to full mast the first available regular day of work following.
- f) Where there is no known funeral or memorial service planned to take place, the half-masting of flags shall occur on the date of notification of the death up to a maximum of three (3) days.
- g) Where the date of the funeral or memorial service is scheduled to be more than fourteen days from the date of notification of death, the flag will be lowered to half-mast for a period of three (3) days. The flag may be lowered again on the date of the funeral or memorial service, or a different duration as advised by the Mayor or CAO.

Community Flagpole

Groups or organizations who would like to request a flag-raising or half-masting on the Community Flagpole at City Hall, must provide the Clerk's Office with a formal request in writing at least four weeks prior to the date requested. This request will be noted on the first available Council Agenda for approval by Council. This request should include:

- Name of the requesting organization;
- Contact information;
- Requested event or occasion;
- Date or time period of event or occasion;
- Explanation or purpose of the event or occasion;
- Description of the organization, any local/national/international affiliation, brief history and any other relevant information.

If Council Approval is granted based on the request made to the Clerks office, the organization must provide the flag a minimum of three business days prior to the approved date. The Mayor's Office will coordinate the raising of the approved flag with the appropriate Director.

This policy is intended to align with the City's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy, to ensure the corporation's objectives are met.

Disposal of the Canada Flag

The key principle is to treat flags with respect reflective of the values they symbolize, drawing on available local resources and traditions.

A flag is considered to be worn when the colour has faded, it has developed a hole or the outermost seam (fly) of the flag has become frayed. When a flag becomes tattered

and is no longer in a suitable condition for use, it should be disposed of in a dignified manner.

The disposal of a flag may be handled in the following manner:

- Flags made of natural fibres (wool, cotton, linen) should be burned in a dignified manner, privately, without ceremony or public attention being drawn to the destruction of the material.
- Flags made of synthetic material (nylon or polyester) should not be burned due to environmental damage and potential fire hazard. They should be respectfully torn into strips, with each element of the flag reduced to a single colour, so that the remaining pieces do not resemble a flag. The individual pieces should then be placed in a bag for disposal – the shreds of fabric should not be reused or fashioned into anything

In Canada, while the national flag has specific recommendations due to its symbolic importance, disposal practices can vary for other types of flags, such as provincial, municipal, or organizational flags. Here are some generalized guidelines for disposing of other types of flags in a respectable manner:

- Dignified Disposal: Like the national flag, any flag representing an organization, community, or cause should be disposed of in a manner that reflects its importance. This usually means avoiding simply throwing it in the trash.
- Burning: Similar to the national flag, ceremonial burning is often considered respectful, held with care to prevent harm and impart dignity to the process.
- Deconstruction: Cutting the flag into pieces so it can no longer be recognized as a flag can be an alternative, allowing for the parts to be disposed of as regular waste if no other options are available.
- Recycling Programs: Some local organizations or recycling programs may offer specialized services for flag disposal. Contacting local government services or flag manufacturers might provide additional options; these programs are more likely in communities with historical or cultural connections to specific flags.
- Return to Source: Returning the flag to the organization or entity it represents for appropriate disposal or reuse can be considered. Some organizations may have specific protocols in place for retiring their own flags.
- Local Guidelines: Checking with municipalities might reveal tailored regulations or recommendations, particularly for flags associated with local jurisdictions or special regional significance.