

A HOME IN THE COUNTRY

Life in Woodstock



Elias Child House, circa 1714

Country Wisdom

Things you need to know about
living in Woodstock, CT

Allan D. Walker, Jr., First Selectman
Chandler Paquette and D. Mitchell Eaffy, Selectmen

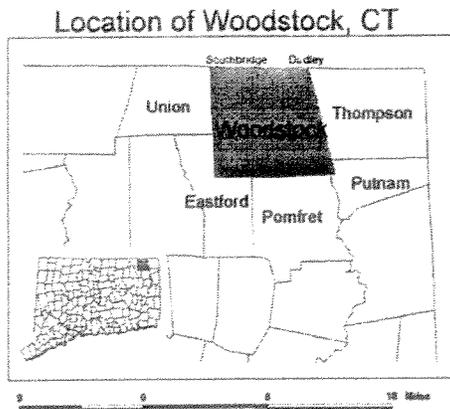
A Brief History of the Town of Woodstock, CT

In 1674, John Eliot and Major Daniel Gookin visited a peaceful encampment of Wabbaquassetts living in the vicinity of present-day Woodstock to preach from Eliot Rock and sought to establish their church among the natives of these lands. King Philip's War broke out in 1675, during which the Wabbaquassetts deserted the area.

The site was chosen as a place of settlement, and on April 5, 1686, Peter Aspinwall, Thomas Bacon, Henry Bowen, Matthew Davis, John Frizzel, John Gore, Nathaniel Gray, Benjamin Griggs, George Griggs, John Marcy, Ebenezer Morris, Benjamin Sabin and Jonathan Smithers came from Roxbury, England. Known as the Thirteen Goers, they founded the Town of New Roxbury, the first European settlement in the area that later became Windham County.

Woodstock was given its name by Judge Samuel Sewall in 1690, for the sake of Queen Elizabeth. The Town remained a part of the Massachusetts Bay Colony until 1749, when it seceded to the Connecticut Colony.

Woodstock, CT is located in the northeast corner of CT, otherwise known as the Quiet Corner. It is known for its "tranquility, history and pastoral good looks" according to the guidebook *1000 Places to See Before You Die*. Area-wise, it is actually the second largest town in CT. Our population is still small (7,860 residents as of 2015), but growing.



Local Government

Government Structure – Woodstock has a traditional New England Selectmen–Board of Finance–Town Meeting format. This means the electors and/or property owners of the Town decide on issues that affect the Town, elect town officials, and vote on the annual fiscal budget. Voting on the annual budget occurs in May.

The Town of Woodstock's operations are subject to the CT General Statutes and Town Special Acts & Ordinances. Some of these are: Planning and Zoning Regulations, Inland Wetland Regulations, Subdivision Regulations, and Water Pollution Control Authority Policies and Procedures. All applicable regulations and policies are on file in the Town Clerk's office or on the website for public inspection.

Agriculture

Our town is a rural, historic community with an agricultural background. Woodstock has more operating dairy farms than any other town in Connecticut. Dairy cows are a sight to see as they graze in pastures. The less pleasant side of raising livestock and poultry, however, is the manure they produce. Manure handling is a necessity for fertilizing fields on farms and sometimes causes odors and flies.

Support for open space conservation and the farming community is strong. In order to preserve the Town's rural character and agricultural base, residents have adopted "The Right to Farm Ordinance" and created the Agricultural Land Preservation and Land Acquisition Fund.

Road Care

The Woodstock Department of Public Works cares for Town-owned roads *only*, including snow plowing, repairing potholes, roadside brush removal and road safety signs. The DPW is located on Coatney Hill Road and can be reached at 860-974-0330 for Town road-related questions and concerns. The State of CT maintains State-owned roads (Routes 169, 171, 197 and 198), so if you are reporting a problem on these routes, please call the State DOT at 860-928-4098.

During the winter months, snow from the road may collect at the end of your driveway. This is not malicious. It's just the way snow plows work. You're responsible for removing snow from your driveway and around your mailbox. Consider shoveling your snow toward the right side of your driveway as you face the road to keep the plow from pushing it back where you've cleaned. But, please don't endanger others by throwing snow into the road—it's actually illegal in CT! You think your mailbox got hit by the plow truck? Well, there's good news and bad news. According to our mailbox ordinance, if the DPW deems the damage their fault, they will compensate you—just \$10 (that's the bad news ☺).

Scenic Dirt Roads

Sure our dirt roads are charming, but they can be difficult to travel on, especially during “mud season” in the spring. Even though the DPW puts forth its best effort to keep all our roads in the best condition possible, dirt roads are more challenging because they require constant maintenance to keep them in shape. Therefore, if you are thinking about buying a house on a dirt road – or already live on one – know the realities (both positive and negative). Keeping your speed down will help decrease those pesky ruts from forming and driving appropriate vehicles to handle the terrain is strongly suggested.

Buying a Country House

Many houses across Woodstock are relatively old, a century or more. They are lovely places. Some are in good repair. Others have “a lot of potential” or need “a little fixing up.” Before buying, it's a good idea to have a reputable inspector check out major systems in the house, such as plumbing, heating, appliances, the septic system, the well, and the roof. Historic properties/homes in the Woodstock Hill Historic District are also subject to special requirements and permissions prior to renovations. Please visit or contact the Building Office for more information about this.

Zoning and Building Permits

Woodstock has ordinances that control the allowed use and development of land. We also have subdivision and land development ordinances. Contact the Zoning Enforcement Officer/Town Planner for information about regulations and required permits prior to any changes you plan to make on the use or structures on your property. This might be a consideration if you're buying property. Woodstock does require zoning and building permits, so you'll need to check with the Zoning Enforcement Officer and the Building Official before doing any construction.

Septic Systems

Unless you have sewer service, all wastewater from your home must be directed to the septic tank. On-site sewage treatments systems have three components: septic tank, distribution system, and an absorption field. Since these components are underground, keep a record of their location once you find them. Septic tanks prevent plugging in the absorption field bed by holding back grease and grit. That's why it's important to pump the tank regularly every two to three years to avoid costly repair or replacement of your system. (Don't dump grease, paints, oil, solvents, chemicals or other hazardous materials into your system unless you have deep pockets and like to see your yard full of construction equipment.)

Repairing or replacing your septic system requires a permit from the Northeast District Department of Health (860-774-7350). A permit is not required for routine maintenance like tank pumping or distribution pipe flushing.

Trash Removal/Recycling

There is a Transfer Station located at 49 Paine District Road. A permit is required for entry and can be obtained at the Town Clerk's Office during Town Hall hours. Seasonal and day passes are also available. (Permits are not refundable and are only issued to Town residents generating waste within Woodstock.)

The Transfer Station accepts the following mandatory recyclables: cardboard, newspaper/magazines/junk mail, tin cans & metal food containers, glass food containers, and plastic containers (separated by type of plastic) among other things. For additional information, including disposal of bulky waste items, visit or contact the Town Clerk's Office.

Note: If you'd like to try backyard composting to reduce your waste and improve your garden, information is available in the main lobby of the Town Hall.

Fire Protection/Open Burning Permits & Requirements

Woodstock has three volunteer fire departments. **To report a fire, dial 911.** State law **prohibits** burning without a permit so contact your neighborhood's volunteer fire department before you burn. (See contact info below. *) **Never** burn when it is dry or windy. Keep a hose nearby and use a container covered with a grate. Setting your neighbor's property on fire won't make you popular and could result in legal action or a fine.

WVFA Station 76 South Woodstock 860-928-3163	Bungay Station 77 West Woodstock 860-974-0316	Muddy Brook Station 75 East Woodstock 860-928-3032
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* If there is no answer at the fire department, call the Selectmen's Office for the Burning Official's cell number.

Public Safety

State Police Troop D serves Woodstock. Troop D Barracks are located at 55 Westcott Road in Danielson. Phone number: 860-779-4900. **For emergencies, dial 911.**

Remember, emergency personnel can find you more quickly if your address number is clearly visible from the road! Posting your house number is also a Town Ordinance.

Real Estate and Personal Property Taxes

Your current bill is based on the previous year's Grand List, which is like a snapshot of the value of your home, vehicles, and personal property as of October 1st of the previous year. Tax revenue covers the fiscal year (July 1st – June 30th) and is collected by a locally elected tax collector. If the total tax is under \$100.00, the tax is due in July in one payment. If the total tax due is over \$100.00, the amount is divided into two equal payments due **July 1st and January 1st**. (Real Estate and Personal Property bills are sent only once a year, in July, so please save your second installment coupon if not paying in full for the year! No additional bills or reminders are sent in January for the second installment.)

Motor Vehicle Taxes

Motor vehicle taxes are due in one installment – in full – in July. Supplemental motor vehicle bills (which capture any changes to your vehicles after the Grand List was issued) are due in January, also in full. Name, address, and vehicle changes are all handled by the CT DMV, which reports updated information to the Town. Copies of vehicle bills of sale and plate return receipts should be submitted to the Assessor's Office as soon as possible for any adjustments to motor vehicle bill charges.

We have a drop box on the sidewalk in front of the Town Hall to submit tax payments or items for other departments within the Town Hall. (When making payments, please pay by check only.) Don't worry. We check this box every morning.

Schools

The Town of Woodstock has two public schools: Woodstock Elementary School (K-4) and Woodstock Middle School (5-8).

Woodstock Academy is a semi-private high school that services our residents as well as students from Eastford, Union, Pomfret, Brooklyn, and Canterbury.

Woodstock is also home to the Hyde School, a private high school located on Route 169, across from the Woodstock Middle School.

Public Utilities

Eversource serves Woodstock as a regulated electric power distribution company. For electrical emergencies, power outages, or street light issues, call Eversource toll-free at 800-286-2000 or 877-944-5325.

CT Law requires that you call 811 two days before you dig anywhere that there may be a buried utility line. Whether you are a contractor working on a site or a resident working around your own home, digging can be dangerous! Always check first to learn where underground power, telephone/cable television wiring, natural gas lines, water lines, or even sewer lines could be.

Cable/Satellite Providers

Currently, there are three cable/satellite providers in our area:

- Charter** 888-438-2427
- DirectTV** 888-777-2454
- Dish Network** 888-661-8432



Annual Hometown Celebrations



- Memorial Day Parade** Held on Memorial Day at 11:00 am on Woodstock Hill (Route 169)

 - July 4th Jamboree** Held on the East Woodstock Common (Woodstock Road & Prospect Street)

 - Woodstock Fair** “Always Labor Day Weekend” at the Fairgrounds on Route 169
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Town Departments / Regional Offices

Here is a list of extensions for various Town Departments. Call us at **860-928-6595, 860-928-0208 or 860-928-1388** and press your party's extension as soon as greeting begins. Not sure which extension to dial? **Press 1** to hear a department directory.

Agent for the Elderly	304	Tax Collector	318
		Assistant Tax Collector	316
Assessor	326		
Assistant Assessor	327	Town Clerk	320
		Assistant Town Clerk	322
Building Official	331		
Building Clerk	328	Town Planner/ZEO	332
Registrar of Voters	339	Treasurer	315
		Assistant Treasurer	337
Selectmen's Office	310		
Payroll / HR	336		

Dial Directly to Reach

Animal Control	860-774-1253
Highway Department	860-974-0330
Judge of Probate	860-923-2203
Recreation Department	860-315-5175
Northeast District Department of Health	860-774-7350
Transfer Station	860-928-2770
Woodstock Public Schools	860-928-7453

TOWN HALL HOURS

Monday, Tuesday & Thursday: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Wednesday: 8:30 am – 6:00 pm

Friday: 8:30 am – 3:00 pm

Woodstock Town Hall

415 Route 169

Woodstock, CT 06281

860-928-6595

860-928-0208

860-928-1388

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For more information about the Town of Woodstock, visit
www.woodstockct.gov