

# TOWN OF HALTON HILLS



## Town and Halton Hills Hydro thank residents for support

*A great deal of work still to be done*

The damage our community sustained as a result of the ice storm has been devastating. At a time when families were making last minute Christmas plans, we experienced a significant ice storm; which downed power lines and tree limbs.

At one point, all 23,000 of Halton Hills Hydro's customers were without power. Some were without for a very short period; unfortunately others endured outages that lasted more than a week as the service stacks and meter bases on their individual homes were damaged.

Staff at both Halton Hills Hydro and the Town have worked long and tirelessly throughout the storm and the subsequent clean-up. Some of these individuals did so even while their own homes were without power. This was a storm that affected us all, but the community rallied together.

We also acknowledge that, for many people, this was a frustrating time and some expressed anger over the length of time it took to reconnect their service. We understand and empathize. The storm encased tree limbs and power lines with heavy ice and then the winds made it treacherous for our outside line workers, and then it snowed. The ice storm ravaged our community on December 22, but the weather was a challenge throughout the restoration and clean-up. Coupled with the extent of the damage, this has been a massive undertaking.

We did not declare a state of emergency since our staff was able to address the community's needs and such a declaration would not have restored power any quicker.

We called for external assistance as the storm hit and lined up a power line contractor and a local tree clearing contractor in anticipation of the damage. We also reached out to utilities and contractors outside of our community on the first day of the storm; however, the ice storm hit most of the GTA and other parts of Southern Ontario at the same time, so there was only a few contractors available until a few days after the storm's damage. Once other communities completed their reconnections, we received tremendous support from Waterloo North Hydro, Bluewater Power (Sarnia), Guelph Hydro, Oakville Hydro, London Hydro, Kitchener-Wilmot Hydro, Westario Power (Kincardine, Port Elgin, Hanover), Woodstock Hydro, Welland Hydro, Hydro One, Westmore Powerlines, Dundas Powerlines, Quality Tree, Davey Tree and Asplundt Tree contractors. We couldn't have done it without them, and we sincerely thank them for their support.

We also saw countless acts of kindness from members of our community; not that we were surprised by this. There were numerous stories of people taking in their neighbours for days to ensure they were comfortable. Our hydro crews received many signs of encouragement from the community. It was the demonstrated support of our community that provided a boost to the morale of our crews.

Customers honked their car horns and our crews saw many friendly and supportive waves as they reconnected lines and cleared trees. We received numerous emails, Tweets and Facebook posts from people expressing genuine emotions of appreciation and thanks. People in Acton cooked and delivered more than 50 turkey lunches on Christmas day for our hydro crews and office staff. Members of Milton Baptist Church also delivered 50 pasta dinners to our employees on Christmas night. Bethel Christian Reformed Church provided a lunch and a dinner to crews and St. Albans Church also provided food for our crews. Town Councillors also stepped up and did what they could.

It has been a difficult few weeks, but the sense of community and generosity of spirit has been tremendous. The clean-up is far from finished. We expect it will take Town and hydro crews months to get to everything, but it will all get done.

Thank you Halton Hills for your patience and strength - we will learn from this experience. We will analyze how we responded and we'll make necessary enhancements. We are a stronger community as a result of this storm and we look forward to better days ahead.

Respectfully,

Rick Bonnette  
Mayor  
Town of Halton Hills

Arthur A. Skidmore  
President & CEO  
Halton Hills Hydro

# A Ted Bit And after all that— a stupid head cold?

Okay, it was bound to happen.

After a week of power outage, and popping in and out of the (somewhat warm) house at all hours to try to maintain some warmth— well, like half the world, I came down with a head cold.

I know, the stress of the outage, lack of quality sleep and repeated exposure to temperature changes, can do a major number on your immune system.

If the severity of this cold is any indication, my immune system must have had the royal crap kicked outta it.

It's not one of those sniffly, paltry little head colds that makes one have to delicately wipe their nose from time to time.

Nope, this puppy is a full-blown, downright nasal geyser, requiring copious boxes of tissues, and lots of walks 'outside' to rid oneself of, well you know what I mean...

The Sidekick brought it home first, and I tried my very best to not breathe while in her space.

In bed, I slept facing away from her. I high-tailed it to the next room when she sneezed and I made sure I washed my hands as often as I could—which wasn't often enough, considering we had no water at times, and when we did, it was cold.

But darnit, we all know one can only hold their breath and avoid those nasty little airborne germs for so long, until, like death and taxes, the inevitable strikes.

So now I'm sick....

It first showed itself Christmas Day, late in the afternoon, when I noticed my throat was a bit sore, and I found myself clearing it and 'aheming' more often than usual.

I figured I was just tired out, and it would pass. Then came Boxing Day, and it seemed to be gone— I was cautiously optimistic.

December 27 and 28 I was gettin' kinda cocky— Hah! I'd beaten it in a two days!

Silly me....

Fast forward to December 29, the day before I was to return to work.

That's when the geyser thing start-

ed, accompanied by machine gun fire sneezing and incessant coughing— and as of January 8, it still hasn't shown any signs of leaving.

I've been battling it with that Tylenol Cold stuff, and flushing my sinus with a Neti Pot every once in a while— all of which do help make me feel better.

But it's still hangin' in there.

I hate having a cold. In spite of the fact I try my best to not sneeze or cough in my coworkers' space at work, they tend to avoid me like the plague.

They have this wary look in their eyes as I walk into the office, a look I'm guessing, that is similar to the one that was reserved for lepers, back in Biblical times of old.

At home, The Sidekick is pretty good about putting up with me when I have a major head cold.

I don't bug her or become obnoxious.

I simply curl up on the sofa in the living room with my favorite 'blankie' and best stuffed animal and give

her full access to the remote control in the den, so she can catch up on her chick movies and shows.

Okay, I was kidding about my favorite 'blankie' and stuffed animal part.

I must say, she isn't the least bit put off when I sneeze or cough in her local vicinity.

She goes on the theory that it's the same cold bug she had a couple weeks ago, (and gave to me) so she's already built up a resistance to it.

Head colds are like a lot of things. They're a nuisance, and they most certainly can cut down on our daily productivity.

But in the grand scheme of things, they're also a reminder that we're not invincible, and that our bodies need to get rest to be able to recharge our immune systems from time to time.

By the time you read this, I'm hoping this head cold will be on the way out— well, I'm kinda counting on it.

And my immune system will be back to its happy, healthy state.

I hope.

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**TED  
BROWN**

*'Our bodies need to recharge our immune systems from time to time'*