

# Funding doesn't cover tree replacement cost

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this storm and to send a message to the federal and provincial governments that they need become more effective partners in natural disasters.

Terry Fenton, Acting Manager, Local Government for the Ministry of Municipal Affairs explained at the Council meeting that under ODRAP, municipalities could receive up to 100 per cent of their eligible costs which include: clearing and removal of trees and limbs if public safety is endangered, town-owned equipment costs, overtime for employees and those hired for the response or to fill in for regular employees, food and water for disaster relief workers, repair and restoration of pre-disaster condition of uninsured public facilities and evacuation and shelter of people and animals including operating expenses.

Fenton said the program would not cover the cost of replacing trees.

For the Town, replanting lost Town-owned trees (which includes the cost of the trees) is estimated at \$750,000.

Fenton said while the Province recognizes trees are "really important to communities," they aren't considered essential property, which is what ODRAP covers.

"I don't understand how trees (on Town



James Young Dr. in Georgetown.

property) cannot be included as part of municipal infrastructure," said Mayor Rick Bonnette. "They add to any community."

He said in the urban area the Town lost approximately 1,500 trees.

Bonnette asked if the ODRAP policy would ever be reviewed.

Councillor Dave Kentner also stressed the need for the Province to reevaluate the tree replacement policy.

"Trees are absolutely essential for good health. They take care of cooling for climate change, they take care of the quality of the air we breathe and they're one of the main support tools for our animal life," said Kentner.

Fenton said an ODRAP review is under

way, and Halton Hills isn't the first municipality to ask about tree replacement.

She said in Goderich after the 2011 tornado, the community launched a fundraising campaign to replace some of its lost trees.

Councillor Bryan Lewis wanted the Province to be aware of the magnitude of the ice storm in Halton Hills.

"We were the strongest, most severely hit out of all of Halton Region," said Lewis. "We got beat up big time. We are making improvements daily, and I think we should be recognized for doing that."

"This is going to cost our community \$64 for every man, woman and child who lives here," said Lewis. "Excluding hydro, it could be \$38 for every man, woman and child living in our community. Those are significant (costs) when you're dealing with a small community that got beat up big time."

HHH President and CEO Art Skidmore said they would be looking at filing a rate adjustment request with the Ontario Energy Board for recovery of costs in an extraordinary event.

He said he suspects "it's probably a rate rider for a specific period of time."

HHH submits its costs and it's up to the OEB to decide.

## New Regional Managing Editor for The IFP

The Independent & Free Press is pleased to announce the appointment of Chris Vernon to the new position of Regional Managing Editor for *The Independent & Free Press*, *Caledon Enterprise*, *Orangeville Banner*, and *Erin Advocate*.



CHRIS VERNON

Vernon has been with Metroland for more than 19 years, many of them in key leadership roles. For the past six years, Vernon has been responsible

for leading and managing all aspects of one of Metroland Media's largest newsrooms — *The Brampton Guardian*. He has consistently produced award-winning editorial content, while also shepherding the newsroom into a digital future.

Vernon is a graduate of the Humber College School of Journalism.

"I am very excited to be part of *The Independent & Free Press*, the paper of record for this community," said Vernon.

Vernon is also a former member of the Canadian Forces Lorne Scots army reserve.

Vernon comes to this new role with a deep understanding of the importance of community news.

At *The Guardian*, he fostered a team environment that resulted in numerous industry awards during his tenure.

Vernon can be reached at [cvernon@metroland.com](mailto:cvernon@metroland.com).

## Police blotter

A Brampton woman is facing charges in connection with a series of thefts at four different retail locations in Georgetown in November. Stolen Nov. 26 were \$400 worth of baby formula and perfume from Shoppers Drug Mart on Guelph St., \$200 worth of alcohol from LCBO on Guelph St., \$680 in baby formula from Acton Sobeys, and at least 12 bottles of perfume and cologne from Acton Shoppers Drug Mart. Halton Police made an arrest Sunday after releasing photos of three suspects believed to be involved in the thefts. Charged with five counts of theft and breach of probation is Elaine Jennings, 54.

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A Georgetown man was charged after police stopped a vehicle on Guelph St. about 12:20 a.m. Sunday. Charged with impaired driving and having over 80 mg of alcohol in 100 ml of blood is Robert Carswell, 63.

## Canada Post says sorry

By LISATALLYN  
Staff Writer

Canada Post is apologizing for failing to notify customers of delivery delays over the past three weeks, and is implementing a new alert system to keep them better informed.

"We should have notified those customers, and that's why we're apologizing completely," said spokesman Jon Hamilton.

Some Georgetown residents were among many frustrated people across the GTA who had empty mailboxes.

Rod Taylor of Windsor Rd. said he only had mail delivered to his home once between Dec. 20 and Jan. 6.

"I was in fact expecting cheques from insurance companies which were dated before Christmas and arrived only last week," said Taylor. On Monday he said he received mail on four days last week.

Taylor said he tried to pick up his mail at the Post Office Dec. 31, but was told, "they could not find any of mine because it was all in a big pile, but that I might get delivery Jan. 2."

He said he did get mail that day but it was just a few first class envelopes.

He is frustrated by the "total lack of communication from Canada Post" and doesn't know now if the service is regular again.

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