

NEWS

Halton Police launches TEXT with 911 this week

Halton Regional Police has launched an emergency telephone service for registered individuals that are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired.

TEXT with 911 is a new service that provides people with those impairments the ability to communicate with 9-1-1 emergency personnel.

The wireless-based service lets a 9-1-1 operator know that a deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired (DHHSI) caller needs to communicate using text messaging rather than by voice.

The service, which began Feb. 3, is currently only available to people who have hearing or speech impairment and are pre-registered with their wireless service provider. Once registered, the caller will be able to dial 9-1-1 and converse with an emergency call operator via text.

Registered DHHSI community members will have the ability to text with an emergency operator only after a 9-1-1 voice call is made.

When the emergency operator receives the 9-1-1 voice call, a prompt will appear on the screen advising the caller is a registered DHHSI member and then a conversation can

continue via text.

Texting directly to 9-1-1 is not an option for either the registered DHHSI member or anyone from the wider cellular community. The text will not reach an emergency services operator in that way.

If a non-registered cellular device attempts to use TEXT with 911 they will receive an automated text message that says in English and French, "Voice dial 911 directly, as texting 911 is not supported."

Halton police frontline dispatchers and communicators have received training on the new system to ensure a streamlined process when emergency calls are completed by text.

"Providing the Text with 9-1-1 service to our community will increase accessibility to emergency services, and in turn increase the safety of our region as a whole. Whether a call for police, fire or ambulance, the call is important, and we need to have the resources to ensure our response is accurate and timely," Halton Regional Police Chief Stephen Tanner said in a press release.

For more information about Text with 9-1-1 in Canada, visit <http://textwith911.ca/service-availability/>.

2014 Toys for Tots was huge success

The 2014 Toys for Tots campaign collected more than \$226,800 in toys, gift cards, cash and food donations benefitting more than 4,000 families throughout Halton this past Christmas.

In the last four years, the program has raised more than \$1,167,995 through the support of citizens, businesses, schools and teams in the community. Halton Police are very grateful for the support of the following community partners: Minor Oaks Hockey Association and Burlington Lions Optimist Minor Hockey Association who collectively raised more than \$55,000.

Other community partners who made significant contributions included Halton Catholic and Halton District elementary schools, Canadian Tire, St Mildred's-Lightbourn School, TD/Canada Trust, Mandarin Restaurant, Halton Honda, Eastside Auto Group and Tiger Jeet Singh Foundation.

Both Halton Police civilian and uniform members contributed their own time and personal funds to assist in the campaign once again. Members collected over \$47,000 in cash and toys at Canadian Tire locations and donated over \$3,500 through individual fundraisers and the Gift Card challenge.

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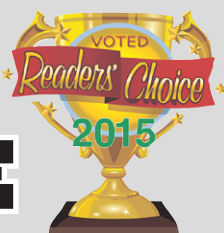
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