

# Readers' Corner

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## Letters

### We all have role to play in curbing illegal dumping

Dear Editor,

The issue of illegal dumping has become a major concern in Milton. As the town's population increases, so too have the number of people using local parks, parking lots, rural roads, open fields and woodlots, among other areas to dump their yard and household waste. The result of this illegal activity is an ugly blight on our landscape.

Having lived in Milton for over 10 years, I have personally witnessed and seen the effects of illegally dumped materials. Most recently, I witnessed a couple in their 40s dumping bags of yard waste and home appliance boxes into the open field that abuts Reichert Court in the Willmott neighbourhood.

I approached the couple, informed them that dumping of garbage was illegal and that they could be fined. They said, "Everyone does it," and continued to unload their minivan in front of me. I recorded their licence plate number, filed an on-line complaint and spoke with the Town's municipal law enforcement personnel, who took my statement and visited the site to see the garbage that had been dumped.

The day we visited the dumpsite, another large volume of discarded furniture had been placed in the same location.



Furniture, garbage and other items were dumped on the south side of Reichert Court, according to Milton resident Andrew Ritchie.

About a week after reporting the incident, I was contacted by the Town's bylaw enforcement staff, who informed me that the Town would not be issuing a fine or laying charges because the couple claimed to have returned to clean up their discarded items.

It would appear the Town's hands are tied when it comes to preventing these selfish violations of the littering bylaw. Essentially, staff must witness the violation and must have "all the facts" before issuing a fine or laying a charge. Unfortunately, the Town does not have the resources to witness such violations, and the Town relies on residents to file complaints, after which the Town's Enforcement Unit

will investigate, but seldom issue a fine or lay a charge.

This is clearly a circular or counter-productive argument, as the apparent lack of enforcement, issuing of fines and laying of charges merely encourages more illegal dumping, and sends a clear message that illegal activity is okay in the town of Milton.

Illegally dumped material can have serious effects on the environment, wildlife habitat and the ability of others to use and enjoy outdoor recreational areas, and/or their own properties.

The reason for this illegal activity is difficult to comprehend. If you can use your car, truck or mini-van to discard such materials in an open

field or the side of a rural road, you can just as easily transport it to the Region's Waste Disposal Site.

The Town needs to make every effort to combat and prevent illegal dumping and its unsightly outcomes. The time for action is now, including allocating more staff to carry out illegal dumping surveillance, prevention, education and enforcement activities.

The Town needs to take a firm stance on this issue and send a clear message to violators that it will lay charges, seek damages, and do whatever is necessary within the rules of the law to prosecute violators.

As residents, we need to be vigilant and report instances of illegal dumping online. After witnessing illegal dumping, please report it immediately and include all relevant details, including the time, location, description of the vehicle (licence plate number) and what the person looked like (male/female, tall/short). This will help the Town's enforcement unit in their investigations. Hopefully, when combined with petitioning your local and regional councillor, the Town will begin to take a much stricter stance on violators. When that happens, we will all benefit.

Andrew Ritchie, Milton



In a story published in last week's issue of the *Champion*, the Town's Commissioner of Engineering Services Paul Cripps suggested Halton's five CAOs put their heads together to explore whether there's an interest in creating a combined regional transit system. We asked *Champion* Facebook fans if they support a regional transit system. Here's what they said: **Kate Larsh:** Should definitely connect Burlington and Oakville!

**Mike Mcphail:** Absolutely! There needs to be regional transit most definitely. Connection to Burlington and Oakville. The region of Waterloo does this, and it works well, getting between the trities is easy... Better transit would fix a lot of the traffic problems and would keep our roads in better condition, but only if people would take it. I have a car and never take transit in this city because its just awful, but I would leave my gas guzzling car at home a lot if transit was reliable, more frequent and quick.

**Daniel Goodland:** And how about something connecting Milton to Georgetown — and Brampton.

**Letters welcome:** The *Champion* welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be no more than 300 words. We reserve the right to edit, revise and reject letters. Letters must be signed with first and last name for publication, and the address and the telephone number of the writer included for verification purposes only. Email yours to [editor@miltoncanadianchampion.com](mailto:editor@miltoncanadianchampion.com) or send by mail to 555 Industrial Dr., Milton, Ont., L9T 5E1.



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