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Water-sewer bills far too high

Water-sewer bills in Halton are unreasonably high, especially considering the fact they are much, much lower in a city, Guelph, just a few miles away from Halton Hills.

A citizen, Jim Gordon, raised the difference between water-sewer bills in Halton Hills and those in Guelph at Friday's Acton Councilors' drop-in.

Gordon noted the average bill here is about \$30 for two months while Guelph residents pay about \$11 for 2 1/2 months.

In Guelph, sewer charges are on the property tax bills as they were in Halton until they were moved to the water bills a few years ago.

There's also a big population difference between Guelph and Halton Hills, Gordon noted, but Whiting countered Guelph isn't larger than Halton region.

Gordon also observed that repair and emergency response times are quicker in Guelph. He suggested one reason water-sewer costs are so high here is Guelph sends out one truck and two men on a repair call, in Halton it always seems several trucks and eight or nine workers are sent out. Wages for unnecessarily big repair crews drive up the cost of water and sewer service, Gordon observed.

Whiting noted Halton will strike its new water-sewer rates for 1984 soon.

Water-sewer costs have been messed up in Halton almost since the start of regional government nearly 10 years ago. Customers today are paying for mistakes in the past. He noted the region's famous deficit of the late 70s included a shortfall in the water-sewer accounts and we're still paying for the deficit.

He said lower than expected provincial grants when Halton went to equalized water-sewer rates, cost forecast inaccuracies and poor planning have also contributed to today's costly water-sewer bills.

Gordon said he didn't know how much Guelph residents pay on their tax bills for sewer service, but he felt having sewer service on the tax bills was better than on water bills.

Whiting said sewer service is a "user pay" charge and that's why it was moved to the water bills. He explained since water used for the lawn, washing the car or filling the pool doesn't go in the sewers so people aren't supposed to pay sewer surcharge on that part of their water consumption. People don't pay sewer surcharge after they reach 10,000 gallons used mark, but Whiting acknowledged few water users ever reach that mark, even people who fill their pools or water their lawns frequently in the summer. So, in effect, people are paying sewer surcharge for water that doesn't ever reach the sewers.

Water and sewers should never have been taken away from the local level and given to the region.

Whiting explained that if people find their bills are too high they should be conserving water. But, that presents a new problem for the region. By encouraging conservation when people do cut back on water consumption then sewer account revenues drop. This causes the region budget problems and can produce deficits. He said it was a Catch-22 situation.

The whole water-sewer cost situation in Halton is a "smozell", Whiting declared.

He added there have been a number of inaccuracies in water billing too, but they have generally been straightened out once the problem is brought to the region's attention.

Dennis Devine gets six months in jail

Dennis Devine has been sentenced to six months in jail and must pay First Pioneer Petroleum Limited restitution for the money he admitted to stealing from them last year.

Devine, a Georgetown resident, pleaded guilty in Halton County Court September 6 to taking \$18,830.84 from his employer over a period of time ending last December. At the time he was running the Pioneer Gas Bar in Acton and making \$500 a week, out of which he paid any employees.

The Gas Bar owners, First Petroleum, did an audit in December and discovered the money was missing. Halton Regional Police were called in and a warrant issued for

Devine's arrest. Devine was sentenced last Tuesday after Judge James Carnworth admitted there was no likelihood of the accused repeating the crime. However, the Judge continued, the public has to learn it cannot get away with crimes by persons in a position of trust.

Crown Attorney Anthony Vale stressed the breach of trust to an employer in his submission to the judge, while defense lawyer Michael J. Day pointed out his client wants to make complete restitution.

Devine ran for a Halton Hills council seat in Acton in last November's municipal election, finishing last in a field of five candidates.

TOWN OF HALTON HILLS

1983 MUNICIPAL ELECTION NOTICE TO ELECTORS

TAKE NOTICE THAT the results of the 1983 Municipal Election, for Area Councillor Ward 2 to be held on October 24th, 1983, will be received and posted for public viewing, following the close of the Polls, at the Esqueaux Community Centre located on Stewarttown Road, in the Hamlet of Stewarttown, west of Trafalgar Road (Halton Road No. 3).

Dated this 12th day of October 1983.

K.R. RICHARDSON, A.M.C.T.
Clerk-Administrator and
Returning Officer,
Town of Halton Hills,
36 Main Street South,
Halton Hills (GEORGETOWN)
Ontario, L7G 4X1.



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RECIPE OF THE WEEK

WHOLE WHEAT CARROT CAKE

3 Carrots
2 tablespoons Honey
1/4 cup Sugar
1/4 cup Butter, melted
1 Egg
1 cup Whole wheat flour
1 teaspoon Baking powder
1/2 teaspoon Grated nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon Baking soda

Scrape and grate carrots finely. Measure 1/4 cup (175 ml). Set aside. In a large bowl beat together honey, sugar, melted butter and egg until smooth. In a separate bowl combine whole wheat flour, baking powder, nutmeg and soda; gently stir into liquid ingredients until batter is smooth. Do not overmix. Fold in reserved, grated carrots. Pour batter into greased loaf pan 8 inches x 3 inches (1 L). Bake in a preheated 350°F (180°C) oven for 40 to 50 minutes. Cool in pan, then turn out on wire rack. Spread with cream cheese icing. Makes one small loaf cake. Recipe may be doubled.

CREAM CHEESE ICING

12 ounces Cream cheese
Enough Honey or icing sugar to spread
1 teaspoon Lemon juice
1/4 cup Chopped walnuts

Blend together cheese, honey and lemon juice until smooth. Stir in walnuts.

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