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Snow service in Halton Hills

Sufficient men and equipment if nothing breaks, nobody off

Halton Hills works department has sufficient men and equipment to handle just about any snow situation, engineer Robert Austin says, as long as all hands are on deck and nothing breaks.

However, workers get sick, they have holidays and sometimes there can be special or unusual works, like a lot of extra burials in the cemetery or members off with the fire department. When this happens, work can fall behind.

Austin says he has no spare equipment, only exactly enough for the 13 plow routes. The works department has two mechanics who are kept busy making repairs when equipment breaks down.

When there's problems with manpower or equipment shortages, Austin admits, the "level of services falls", out of necessity.

There were more mechanical breakdowns than usual during the tough December we went through this winter. For example, there wasn't enough frost in the ground and a couple times the big blades on the snow plow got caught in gravel roads. There was a fair amount of damage. It's nobody's fault, Austin observed. Workers only plow roads going a couple miles an hour, but a plow can be "quite a beast" and nobody can react fast enough when a blade becomes stuck.

It sometimes takes time to work the bugs out of new equipment, and that can hamper snow plowing operations. This year hydraulics on a new reversible plow used in Acton were malfunctioning and eventually the equipment had to be sent back to the manufacturer for repairs.

As long as there's an Acton and a Georgetown there will be complaints that one area gets better service than another, Austin predicts.

At the same time he says he hasn't had a call of complaint himself in several years from an Acton resident saying Georgetown

gets better service. However, he acknowledges that people do say these kinds of things to councillors, Town employees and the press.

He wishes people would take up their complaints with staff like himself and added they have a tough enough job to do without front page articles and headlines offering people's negative opinions on the service. (The final issue of 1983 of The Acton Free Press carried a front page article pointing out the conflicting opinions of some members of Halton Hills council and the Acton BIA about the quality of service, mostly snow removal after storms, the community was receiving in December as compared to Georgetown.)

He says complaints printed in the paper "demoralize" staff and makes them "more up tight."

"I have staff who live in Acton who felt after that (the comments in the paper) to heck with Acton, we don't care if it ever gets plowed," Austin declared.

He acknowledged that citizens put all Town workers on the spot from time to time, expecting an employee to answer a question even if it isn't in their area of responsibility. No worker is going to not answer the taxpayer either, and sometimes the wrong answer or information is given out.

It's a tough situation for a Town employee, Austin explained. "Not many people have to take the kind of abuse a municipal employee must take. It's hard to keep your cool."

Chimney fire

Volunteer firefighters were called to 207 Churchill Rd. N. Thursday morning to put out a chimney fire. There was about \$1,200 damage.

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TOWN OF HALTON HILLS RECREATION REPORT

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!
 On behalf of the residents of Halton Hills and the Recreation and Parks Department, thank you Service Clubs for making our Christmas Holidays more enjoyable. Through the generous donations of the Georgetown Optimists, the Acton Rotarians and the Lions Clubs of Acton and Georgetown 2,500 residents were able to participate in our Free skating and swimming program. THE OPTIMISTS HAVE EXTENDED THE IN GENEROSITY BY PROVIDING FREE SKATING OPPORTUNITIES DURING THE UPCOMING SCHOOL HOLIDAYS AND THE MARCH BREAK IN GEORGETOWN.

OUTDOOR SKATING RINKS

The Town of Halton Hills Public Works Department prepared for your outdoor skating pleasure - 8 rinks in Georgetown and Acton. For more information on their locations call the Recreation and Parks Department. One rink at the Georgetown Fairgrounds is available to be booked if your group would like exclusive use. Rinks are also made available on the booked rink for evening use.

DAY TIME SWIMMING

Day time swims at the Georgetown Pool are being held from 11:30-12:30 on most Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays until mid February. For a detailed schedule of these swims, please call the pool shop 8:00 (877-7721) or the Recreation Office (877-5185 ext. 240 or 213).

SUMMER SPORTS GROUPS

The deadline for making requests of sports fields is fast approaching. The contact person for each league should drop into the Recreation office to pick up an information package as soon as possible.

DEADLINE MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1984. LAST CHANCE FOR LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Have you thought about your future? Youth between the age of 13 and 17 are urged to register NOW for the Leadership Development Program offered by the Recreation and Parks Department. You will receive seven workshops on topics such as program planning, first aid, tips on working with children and more!

Leadership Development starts Thursday, February 2nd, 1984, Cedarvale Community Centre - 425.00

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RECIPE OF THE WEEK

SAUCY TUNA-RICE CASSEROLE

- 2 tins (6 1/2 ounces each) TUNA well-drained
- 2 c. cooked RICE
- 1 tin CREAM OF CHICKEN SOUP
- 1/4 c. SHERRY
- 1 tsp. WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE
- 1/2 tsp. PEPPER
- 2 tsp. LEMON JUICE
- 1/2 c. GRATED CHEESE (sharp)
- 1/2 c. ALMONDS - toasted and chopped
- Mix drained tuna, lemon juice, rice and almonds.
- Blend soup, Sherry, Worcestershire Sauce, and pepper and heat until boiling.
- Place tuna and rice mixture in a greased baking pan.
- Pour soup mixture over all and sprinkle with cheese.
- Bake in a moderate oven (350 degrees F) until lightly brown and piping hot. (Serves six)

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