

Region proposes \$23,500 war on sewer leaks

By RICHARD PETRASHEK
Herald Staff Writer

In an attempt to combat revenue loss caused by surface water infiltrating the sanitary sewerage system, Halton region's public works committee has passed, subject to budget approval, a recommendation launching a pilot flow monitoring program in Halton Hills.

"The reason for the project is that excessive amounts of rainwater and groundwater have been getting into the system", Bruce Kitchen of the region's works department told the Herald last week.

"In some of the older urban sections of the region, the

downspouts from a substantial number of houses are hooked into the sewage systems," he

explained. "This used to be the standard years ago, but now it is illegal."

"We also have some cracks in some of the older joints in the system and when the

groundwater level is higher than the pipes, it leaks into the system."

Mr. Kitchen explained that this is essentially clear water which has to be treated.

"During a rainstorm, this water uses up important treatment capacity and can potentially cause flooding," he noted.

USES CAPACITY

The monitoring program to be done in Halton Hills, should it receive budget approval, will be conducted by two engineering students at an estimated cost of \$23,500, according to Ernie Reid, chief administrative officer for the region.

Backyard nursery for region's planting

With a "demonstration forest" already planned for the site, Halton region's works department, in conjunction with the regional Conservation Authority, may in the future be using vacant property at the rear of regional headquarters as a nursery.

The region's public works committee approved a staff recommendation, last week, directing the department to embark on the project for the purpose of propagating suitable species to be used for roadside planting.

A staff report to the committee noted that regional council's December 5 direction to explore the possibility of preplanting trees prior to the commencement of construction on future large-scale public works projects.

"We have approximately four acres of regional property behind the building that can be used as a nursery and there is also some provincial property nearby, which we might also be able to use", Bruce Kitchen of the public works department told the Herald.

Works centre delayed

Alterations and additions to Halton region's northern area public works operations centre on Steeles Avenue are being delayed until after tenders have been received on a revamped version of the project in the spring.

The regional public works committee approved a recommendation last week rejecting tenders that had been received on the original plan of reconstruction and instructed the architect to modify the design of the project.

The committee also approved a recommendation from Oakville Coun. Laurie Mannell that the architect's modified plans be brought before committee prior to being sent out for tender in the spring.

A low tender of \$410,384 on the original design of alterations and additions was rejected last November due to budget limitations.

Confusion over sewer rates billing

began getting a large number of calls from Halton Hills residents confused about the sewer charge on their bill", Mr. Farmer told the Herald last week. "The problem is that the first sewer rate charges are based on the last water consumption in 1979. A

lot of people seem to feel that they're paying in 1980 for water consumed in 1979.

"In tabulating the sewer rate charge we have used the most recent water consumption, therefore the first 1980 bills are based on water con-

sumed at the end of 1979. This does not mean that it is 1979 revenue from our point of view, nor is it a 1979 expense for our customers."

Previously, town residents paid their sewer charges on both the tax bill and the utility

bill, Mr. Farmer said.

"In 1980, everyone will pay six bi-monthly or 12 monthly water bills which will include the sewer rates at the new level", he explained. "There will be no sewer charge on the tax bill."

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