

Council considers 12-per-cent tax increase

By BRIAN MacLEOD
Herald Staff

When councillors gather to pore over the Halton Hills operating budget on Monday they will be faced with a recommended tax hike of 12 per cent for urban area residents.

The preliminary operating budget submitted by town treasurer Ray King contains \$14.2 million in expenditures with a total tax bill of \$495 for urban area residents. Those who live in the rural areas don't have to pay for Regional services such as garbage disposal, so their town tax bill will increase by 9.6 per cent to \$382.

... honing in on budget

Garbage disposal is a responsibility of Halton Region, but the costs are collected on the town's tax bill.

The actual numbers presented to council for approval on March 28 may change pending the operating budget discussions on Monday.

Last week the town's budget committee (which consists of all 12 councillors and the mayor) approved "in principle" a \$4.2 million capital expenditure budget of which \$1.1 million would need to be

raised through local taxes.

The preliminary operating budget actually contains a recommended 16.5 per cent increase in expenditures, including urban service charges. That translates into \$2 million more than last year. In the 1989 budget a number of new costs are identified including \$80,000 for the new civic centre; \$200,000 to fight the landfill proposal in the Acton quarry; \$50,000 for reclassification of town staff; \$227,000 for extra staff hired last

year; and \$99,000 for new staff requested this year.

The recommended 21-per-cent tax increase in urban service charges is due mainly to the huge increase in the cost of waste disposal this year, Mr. King said.

The \$200,000 the town wants to set aside to fight the landfill proposal in Acton represents 3.3 per cent of the budget increase, said Mr. King.

And Mayor Russ Miller said the town may have to pay significantly more than that next year, based on the huge amounts of money ratepayers groups in Milton and Burlington spent to fight landfill

proposals in their areas.

In order to reduce expenditures this year, town staff have recommendations eliminating over \$380,000 worth of projects including a study on Acton's Fairy Lake, a study on possible designated truck routes, a Highway 401 industrial corridor servicing study, walkway maintenance and extra staff, said Mr. King.

On the revenue side the town has had to deal with the province's decision to freeze unconditional grants at 1988 levels. Although the town usually receives only a two-

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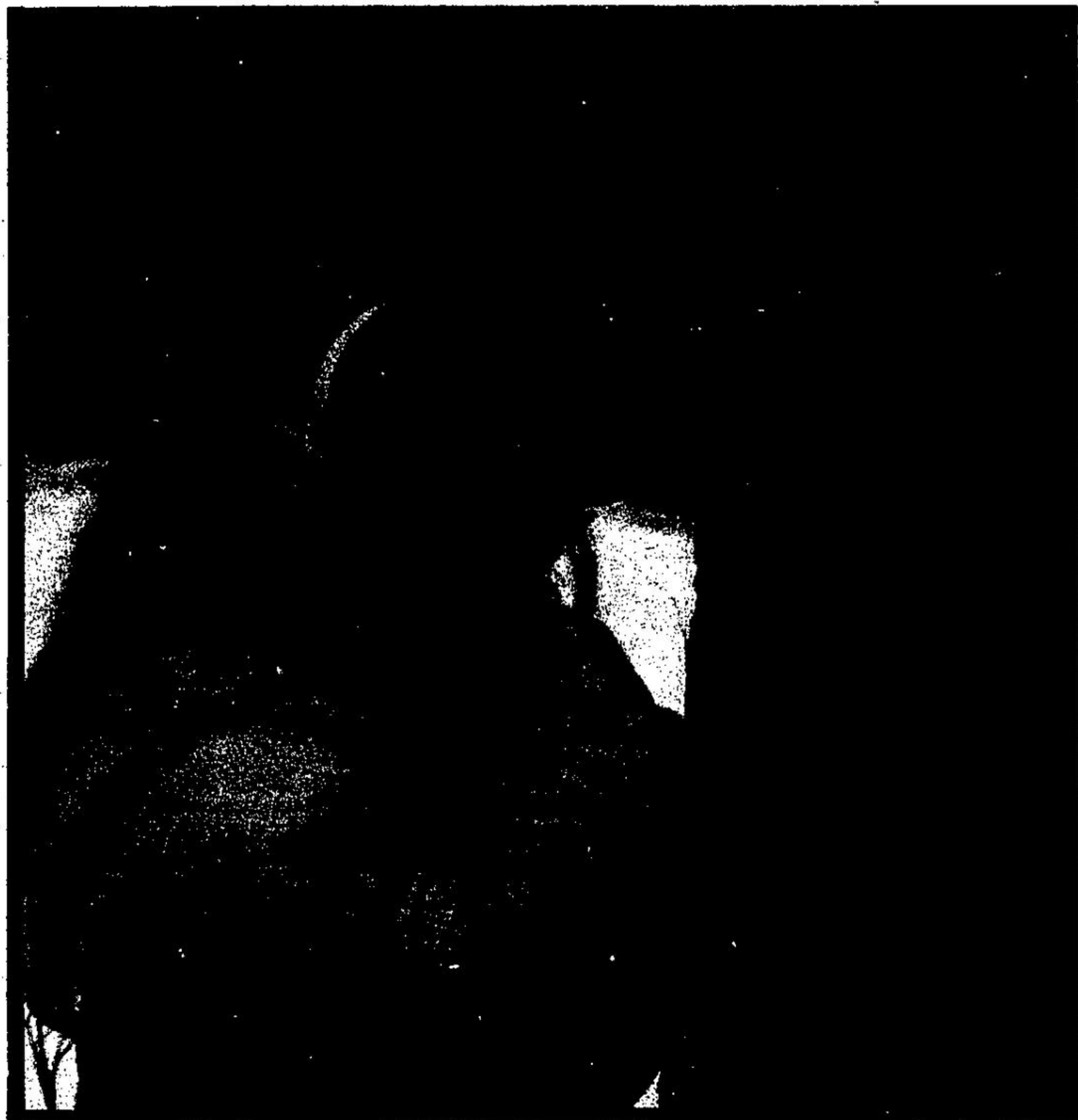
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Off and running

Eight-year-old Melanie Benson likes the sweet taste of sap running from the maple trees at Mountsberg Conservation Area. It's maple syrup time again and the Mountsberg area has tapped into 550 trees hoping to produce about 500 litres of maple syrup. The maple syrup festival at Mountsberg kick-

ed off March 5 and runs through April 16. Demonstrations of new and old technique of maple syrup making are given on site. Visitors to Mountsberg, located in north Burlington, can take the sugarbush express sleighride to the maple syrup festival. (Herald photo by Brian MacLeod)

Cyanide scare Local grocery stores pull suspect produce

By BRIAN MacLEOD
Herald Staff

Local supermarkets and fruit stores were busy pulling fruits imported from Chile off the shelves Tuesday morning following the discovery of cyanide in two Chilean grapes in Philadelphia, Pa.

In what is reported to be the largest ban ever imposed on produce, Health Minister Perrin Beatty told Canada's stores to remove Chilean fruits and vegetables yesterday (Tuesday).

In Georgetown most stores are removing only grapes, plums, peaches and nectarines.

None of the Georgetown stores contacted Tuesday carried any vegetables imported from Chile.

A spokesman for Loblaw's said peaches, nectarines and grapes have been pulled off the shelves of the Guelph Street store but he said there is some confusion among the public. One lady brought a cantaloupe back to the store unsure of where it was produced, the spokesman said.

A spokesman for Miracle Food Mart on Guelph Street wouldn't elaborate on what has been pulled off the shelves but he did say all the produce imported from Chile has been removed.

Joe Scibilia, owner of the Georgetown Fruit Market on Guelph Street, said he has removed grapes, plums and nectarines from the shelves even though he has received no official warning from the government to remove them.

Mr. Scibilia estimates the ban will cost him about \$500.

Vito's market on Highway 7 and Sideroad 22 has also reacted to the ban. Vito's has removed

grapes and plums imported from Chile from its shelves, owner Chris Vito says.

Vito's will refund the fruit if you have the original receipt, he said.

The Georgetown Food Market (Knechtels) on Main Street in Moore Park Plaza has removed grapes, plums and nectarines from the shelves.

Like the other stores in Georgetown, none of Knechtels vegetables comes from Chile, owner Bob Creasy said.

Knechtels orders its fruit fresh every day so Mr. Creasy removed Monday's order of fruit as soon as he learned of the ban Tuesday morning.

Spokesmen for the IGA store and A and P on Guelph Street were unavailable to comment on the situation at press time.

Impaired charged

A Bramalea man was charged with impaired driving following a two-car collision in Acton that injured two passengers.

Halton Regional Police say a 1987 Chevrolet Camaro and a 1987 Ford pick-up collided shortly after noon Sunday at Main Street and Mill Street in Acton.

A passenger in the Ford, an Oakville woman, 62, received minor injuries and was treated and released from hospital. A second passenger, a four-year-old boy, received light injuries.

A Bramalea man, 27, will appear in provincial court April 17 on charges of impaired driving.

Waste

Drivers

Bantam