

Protecting Halton Hills residents is their job

Working with community a top police priority

By LISA BOONSTOPPEL-POT
The Herald

Last year was a successful one for solving crime in Halton Hills but a bad year for Halton Hills citizens who suffered from increased criminal activity.

"No matter how good our officers solve cases, the unfortunate side is more people became victims and were violated last year," said Halton Hills Staff Inspector, Richard Kivell.

Locally, residents suffered 292 more criminal incidents than they did in 1989. Police were able to solve 44.2 per cent of the total number of cases in 1990.

Criminal statistics for the first quarter of this year indicate crime is up over the same time period last year.

Statistics show 54 residents suffered property damage compared to 30 last year; thefts under \$1,000 are up to 63 from 54; thefts over \$1,000 are up to 11 from three in 1990; there were 34 break and enters this year compared to 17 last year; six domestic assaults this year from four in 1990 and assaults are equal to 12 having occurred last year and this year so far.

To combat the increase, Staff Inspector Kivell plans to instigate new programs and strengthen existing ones.



Insp. Kivell

This year, two regular patrol officers will be placed on a special task force within the criminal investigations bureau to work on specific areas of crime such as vandalism, break and enters and willful damages. This was done last year with a measure of success said Staff Inspector Kivell.

He also intends to increase officers on foot patrol as well as increase the presence of officers using radar and enforcing seat belt laws.

"This will help us reduce the number of motor vehicle accidents and in turn, reduce the number of personal injuries," he said.

Moreover, he's going to increase patrols in community parks, elevate the number of liquor violations being issued by increasing spot checks and work more closely with the community consultation committee on policing.

Staff Inspector Kivell said the developing relationship between the police force and the consultation committee, as well as the community as a whole, took off in 1990. "We have a really good working relationship with the community," he said.

He hopes the relationship will continue to develop in the area of crime prevention. Halton Hills just welcomed Sergeant Dave Gwilliams who will work full-time crime prevention.

Other new programs and positions that were recently established include Georgetown's new village constable in downtown Georgetown and the Halton Hills Anti-Drinking and Driving Association (HHADDA).

Fire department prides itself on meeting community needs

For the first time in five years, the Halton Hills Fire Department can report a decrease in fire damage loss and this is just one of the many accomplishments of the department, said fire chief, William Cunningham.

In his 1990 Annual Report, the Chief stated "the ongoing efforts of our Fire Prevention Division are bearing results." He also revealed that for the third year in a row, Halton Hills had had no fire-related deaths.

Some areas that were improved on last year include the department's resources.

The department purchased necessary extinguishers and extinguishing agents that were needed to support the program. This encouraged more hands-on training and reduced the risk to businesses, stated the report.

The primary focus of the 1990 Fire Prevention Division was the area of public education.

Fire prevention officers gave 36 hall tour-fire safety presentations to students, 10 YMCA baby sitter courses, one Girl Guide safety badge course, 28 portable fire extinguisher training courses, two career day presentations to students and two presentations on high rise safety to the tenants of Sands Condominiums.

As for fire suppression, the report indicated the estimated value of property lost to fire in 1990 dropped sharply from the 1989 peak of over \$3 million. As well, the number of calls for assistance dropped significantly during the past year.

Some of the new programs the department started last year include a Hazardous Material Response Team, which began specialized training to prepare and respond to hazardous materials incidents. The team was also, and will continue, to research and acquire equipment necessary to enable them to safely deal with small spills and accidents.

Looking towards the future, the report indicates that much of the apparatus presently in service will require replacement in this decade.

"Meeting today's needs and at the same time preparing for the future is of critical importance," the report states.

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