

Region facing possible 1992 tax increase

Halton Region may be forced to increase the 1992 Regional tax rate higher than expected or cut Regional services for next year if the \$2.5 million projected year-end revenue shortfall for tax and rate supported 1991 budgets is realized.

Ken Shunk, Regional Manager of Budgets, said Monday if the revenue projected to be collected through Regional water and sewage, and water management budgets continues to fall short through the end of this year and into the next, then any one of three possible scenarios could happen: the 1992 Regional tax rate could be higher than expected; Regional services could be

cut; or a combination of the two could result.

Mr. Shunk qualified his statements saying staff is currently of the opinion the shortfall results from a temporary aberration in the system. He predicts therefore it's likely that if there is a year-end shortfall at all, it will be much less than now being predicted.

According to a Regional staff report, scheduled to go before Regional Council today (Wednesday), the water and wastewater budgets are expected to generate a \$557,000 and a \$997,000 respective net loss in revenue.

The shortage in revenue from billable water flow results from

the recession and the wet spring, said Mr. Shunk.

The recessions means less companies and people use water as a way of cutting down their expenses. In turn, however, the Region's revenue from billable water flows is reduced.

Similarly, a wet spring means people don't need as much water for activities such as washing the car, thereby reducing the amount of revenue the Region receives through water consumption, explained Mr. Shunk.

In the case of wastewater or sewage, the wet spring has resulted in large quantities of effluent seeping into the sewage system which is not generated by Halton residents or companies. This type of sewage of non-billable, but it still must be processed through the sewage system at a loss to the Region, he explained.

Regional staff predicts a \$992,000 deficit to its waste management budget, said Mr. Shunk, because of the decreased amount of garbage being produced. The recession has meant less garbage, said Mr. Shunk. That has reduced the Region's cost to

ship and landfill its garbage. But the decreased cost has not been sufficient to offset the amount of revenue the Region has not received from Halton's four municipalities. The municipalities - Halton Hills,

Milton, Oakville and Burlington - pay the Region to dispose of their garbage. However, since each community is producing less garbage this year than expected, Halton Region is collecting less revenue.

Hillhouse on Ontario board

Halton Board of Education trustee, Pat Hillhouse, has been elected executive vice-president of the Ontario Public School Board's Association (OPSBA).

The nine-year veteran school trustee was elected at the association's annual meeting and convention in Thunder Bay. OPSBA represents 91 public school boards and more than 1.7 million students and adult learners.

In the last year, Ms. Hillhouse has served as chairperson of OPSBA's policy committee and as chair of the association's Central West region.

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