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Effective January 12th The Independent & Free Press is changing its delivery dates. Your #1 news and shopping source in Halton Hills will now be delivered on Tuesdays and Thursdays evenings.

One of the most important reasons why The Independent & Free Press has achieved long-term success has been that we are responsive to customer and reader needs, and over the years, this has led us to add and move days of delivery at various times to accommodate our clients.

Since many stores offer sales starting Wednesdays and Fridays, we want to help residents plan their trips in advance. The first paper delivered on the new schedule will be Tuesday, Jan. 12.

Not only does the move help bargain hunters, it means paper carriers can now spend Friday nights together with their families.

The Independent & Free Press will continue to give readers local breaking news, sports and entertainment daily at [www.independentfreepress.com](http://www.independentfreepress.com).

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# THE INDEPENDENT & FREE PRESS



THE INDEPENDENT & FREE PRESS WEEKEND EDITION REAL ESTATE THE INDEPENDENT & FREE PRESS

Friday January 1, 2010 www.independentfreepress.com 16 Pages

Editorial.....6  
Ted Brown.....7  
Sports.....10  
Directory.....15, 16  
Classified.....17

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**  
Lois Benham recently celebrated turning 100 years old  
PAGE 10

**BABY HONOUR ROLL**  
Get a look at last year's newest Halton Hills residents  
4-PAGE SECTION

90 Cents (+ GST)  
Circulation: 22,800

# THE INDEPENDENT & FREE PRESS

FRIDAY, January 1, 2010

Halton Hills' award-winning newspaper

*Ring in the new year by ringing the Acton Town Hall's bell*

Volunteers at the old Acton Town Hall can hardly wait for the clock to strike 12 on New Year's Eve as they were scrambling Tuesday to have the grand hall ready for last night's party. Among those taking care of last-minute details, including a test of the "ringability" of the town hall's bell, are (clockwise, from front) Marissa Kidd, Brenda La Rose, fundraising chair Kathleen Dils, committee chair Ron Birrell, and Gail Kerr. The facility will be officially opened later in the new year.

Photo by Ted Brown

**HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE STAFF AT THE INDEPENDENT & FREE PRESS**

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**Building permit drop results in \$300K deficit**  
By CYNTHIA GAMBLE Staff Writer

The Town's Building Services department is projecting a \$300,000 deficit in 2009—and possibly \$550,000 in 2010—due to a reduction in large revenue-producing housing permits.

According to a recent staff report, the Town has issued about the same number of permits in 2009 as it did in 2008 and 2007. But the difference lies in number of residential subdivision units and large industrial/commercial projects.

In 2005, 829 new home construction permits were issued, and that dropped to 358 in 2006, 258 in 2007, 96 in 2008 and 144 as of Sept. 30, 2009. But 81 of the 2009 permits were applied for and paid for in 2008.

Similarly commercial/industrial building permits ranged from a high of 73 in 2007 to 2009's low of 46 (as of Sept. 30).

Even pool enclosure permits are down from 125 in 2008 to only 76 in 2009 as of Sept. 30.

Only residential additions and renovation permits seem to be keeping pace with past years' results.

In 2005, the Town issued close to 1,500 building permits. This year that total will be half that number and as a result, revenues are down. The Town is facing a \$300,000 deficit in building permit revenues.

In 2010, the Town is projecting permits for 408 new homes—assuming the additional water from the Region's groundwater well system is approved to serve at least 243 of the new homes. If the water isn't released and those homes aren't built, the Town is looking at a shortfall in revenue in the range of \$550,000 next year—and permit fees for new homes will have to be raised by 60 per cent in 2011.

The projected 2009 \$300,000 deficit will be shifted to a deferred revenue account and paid off over the next three to four years, when water approvals allowing more housing occurs. To compensate for the downturn, the Town will also increase its building permit fees in 2010 by 10 per cent. The department will also introduce a number of new fees including administration fees, sign variance application fee and solar collector and wind turbine fees.

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