

Mind your S's

As tens of thousands of Halton students get used to the idea of returning to school this week— can't you hear the collective sighs?— there will be a period of adjustment for motorists too.

After nine weeks without flashing school bus lights, stop sign-wielding crossing guards or the traffic congestion caused by morning drop offs and afternoon pick ups in front of schools, most Halton drivers will need to re-familiarize themselves with important road rules that protect schoolchildren— and motorists— from harm.

To help motorists shake off the intellectual cobwebs of not having been exposed to school-year road safety for so long, Halton Police will be out this month paying particularly close attention to the five S's— speeding, seatbelts, stop signs, school zones and school buses.

Meanwhile, Halton Transportation Services— which serves Halton's public, Catholic and two French-language school boards— will take to roads and streets throughout the region, transporting some 28,000 students on more than 425 buses, mini buses, vans and wheelchair-accessible vehicles.

Worthy of note is the fact that the illegal passing of a stopped school bus can result in a fine between \$400-\$2,000 and six demerit points for a first offence, and a fine between \$1,000-\$4,000, six demerit points and possible jail time for each subsequent offence.

All traffic-related fines such as speeding and failing to yield for a pedestrian at a marked crossing are automatically doubled when the traffic offence occurs in a posted community safety zone, which are usually located around school neighbourhoods.

The message Halton police are sending motorists is a simple one. With school back in session there will be far more vehicles and pedestrians joining the traffic grid.

Be careful out there, or be prepared to face the consequences.

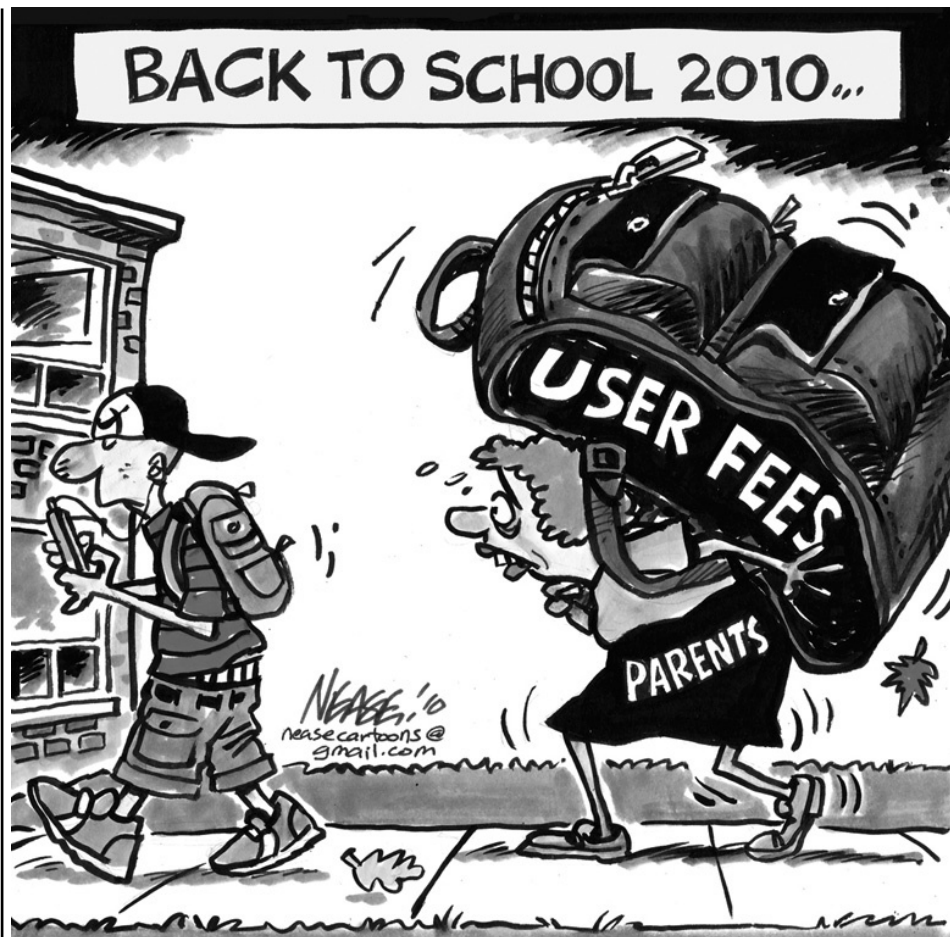
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The Independent & Free Press

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WEB POLL RESULTS

This is for both the parents and their kids:
 Are you happy that school is back in?

- Yes indeed! (76%)
- Definitely not! (18%)
- I'm undecided (6%)

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Letters to the editor

Noisy motorcyclists deaf to complaints

Dear editor,
 Re: Motorcyclists asked to muffle noise (Aug. 31 Letter)
 Mr. Jarvie, though you make several intelligent and valid points, I'm afraid all is lost, as your message will simply not get through to your targeted audience.

You need to realize you are dealing with a group of people who have modified their bikes to make excessive noise...simply because they can.

It's their right, so therefore it's ok— common courtesy be damned.

They do so under the guise of better performance, yet fail to realize that removing the baffles actually reduces horsepower.

Though they think it's impressive, amusingly, they in fact are only impressing themselves (and perhaps the odd 10-year-old boy they may pass by).

You are trying to reason with someone who compares the "annoyance" of a wind chime to the roar of a 120+ decibel motorcycle.

These are the same people that come into your neighbourhood and

suggest "if you can't handle it" you need to uproot your family and move.

Ah yes, simple solution is to sell the home you've built over the past 20 years, take your kids away from their friends and re-locate to another area, where most likely you will have the same problem.

The only real hope is to modify the statutes if necessary, and then press for enforcement of the law. Perhaps someone from the Town needs to step up and order spot checks similar to a truck blitz. This way they can ticket the actual offenders and hopefully reduce this real problem that affects a large number of taxpaying residents.

Anthony Montana, Georgetown

Noise 'unnecessary'

Dear editor,
 As an avid motorcyclist since 1968, I say Amen to the need to address unnecessary motorcycle noise.

An estimated 40 percent of new motorcycles have altered stock exhaust purposely to produce more noise. Decibels can reach jet aircraft levels; eardrums and public health are at risk.

There is not one scintilla of evidence that loud motorcycle exhaust saves anyone's life. Their numbers

make them a top noise pollution source in many Ontario communities.

Municipalities, through the AMO, might consider lobbying the province to amend the Highway Traffic Act adopting the new SAE standard (J2825) incorporated in the recent Edmonton motorcycle noise by-law.

Current provincial legislation on vehicular noise is out of date, subjective and unenforceable. However, many Canadian municipalities are considering passing their own motorcycle noise bylaws: Caledon being an example.

Before, when Ontario was more rural, and there were significantly fewer motorcycles on the road, loud motorcycles did not pose as significant a community issue as today. We need to rein in the noise brigade regardless of brand.

Syd Girling, Georgetown

Thanks for honesty

Dear editor,
 Thank you to the lady for delivering the credit card which somehow went astray during a store purchase, especially since it appears she has unfortunately not enjoyed the same good luck.

D. Hogg, Georgetown