

Dry spell taking toll on Halton crops

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"Extremes are no good," said Allison. "We had an extreme wet, late spring, we've had an extreme hot dry summer, and as a result the crops are struggling."

"It's unfortunate for this to happen in a year when the market potential and world demand for the crops is high, yet the yields won't likely meet the potential demands."

Allison has some corn that was very late being planted because of the wet weather in May and June, and now, when it needs the moisture most to fill the grain in the plants, there is no moisture to help it along. Consequently, some of it's short and stunted.

"When the corn starts to tassel, it's almost too late for the rain to do much good," said Allison, "The plants are so stressed, and it's almost too little too late."

"This is certainly a year when crop insurance will become very important for many," said Allison. "The year is what it is, and all we can do is get through it."

Peter Lambrick of Lambrick Farms in Milton echoed the same sentiment.

"I was at the doctor's office this morning and I just heard someone say, 'I really feel sorry for the farmers.' It's nice to know people understand that we are so weather dependant," he said.

He said he's surprised that the early crop has held up well, but suspects later crops including corn, will begin to suffer if there's no rain soon.

Halton's historical average for rain in July is 76.1 mm— so far the region has seen six mm for the month, prior to Monday's brief shower.

Conservation Halton's director of communication Hassaan Basit said the wet spring has helped weather the unseasonably dry summer- but that will only continue for so long.

"Because of the good wet spring into early and late June, it's allowed us to be a little more resilient than we would have been had we had an average year. Now, however, things are changing and they're changing fast. Water in the creeks and wetlands, even though they were quite full up until the end of June, the water is disappearing fast."

He said fish in Halton's watershed are stressed due to the high temperatures and low water levels and added that parts of Oakville's Fourteen Mile Creek are already dry.

He said if without significant rainfall in the next two to four weeks, Halton will enter a drought situation.

Until now, the Region hasn't issued any water conservation warnings, which Basit said is largely attributed to general water consciousness throughout the province. "There's been a tremendous amount of awareness generated around water conservation. That's triggered a change in people's mindset. There's a conservation attitude to water when we always perceived we had an abundance."

Still, Basit is advising residents to refrain from washing their cars and driveways and to let their grass go yellow.

"The emerald standard of lawns is not encouraged...Grass is very resilient. It's not dying, it's only going dormant," he said, adding that one inch of water a week is more than enough for lawns. "Even not doing that is OK."

Last summer the Region issued four heat alerts covering a total of 12 days.

Thursday's heat alert was the fourth of the season— which has covered seven days so far.

—With files from Ted Brown, staff writer



First call

Norman Ferguson of Caledon helps Adam Scanferla, 11, make his first radio call during the recent Halton Amateur Radio Club's annual 24-hour North American field day at Dominion Gardens. This was Adam's first year participating in the event.

Photo by Calvin Dyke



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HOLIDAY CLOSURE

AUGUST 1, 2011
CIVIC HOLIDAY

CIVIC CENTRE - 905-873-2600
The Civic Centre will be closed on Monday, August 1, 2011.

ACTIVAN - 905-873-2601 ext. 2617

ActiVan service will be available on Monday, August 1st, on an after hours basis.

The booking office is closed.

CANINE CONTROL - 905-877-6235

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Halton Hills Fire Department Administration will be closed on Monday, August 1, 2011.

INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES
- **PUBLIC WORKS**

Public Works will be closed on Monday, August 1st, 2011.

Public Works After-Hours Contact
905-873-2600 – press 2 to connect to the Public Works After-Hours Line and follow the prompts.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES
Acton Branch 519-853-0301
Georgetown Branch 905-873-2681

The Acton and Georgetown branches of the Halton Hills Public Library will be closed July 30, July 31 and August 1, 2011. Both branches will re-open on Tuesday August 2, 2011 at 9:30 a.m.

RECREATION & PARKS DEPARTMENT

Gellert Community Centre
Leisure Swim 1:00 – 2:30 PM
*Regular admission applies
Regular programming canceled

Acton Indoor Pool
Closed on Monday August 1, 2011.

Acton Arena & Community Centre, Mold-Masters SportsPlex & Memorial Arena
Closed on Monday August 1, 2011.

Georgetown Seniors Centre
Closed on Monday August 1, 2011.

Acton Seniors Centre
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John Elliot Theatre
Closed for renovations.


FOR EMERGENCIES
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... Lend Me Your Ears

By Cory Soal R.H.A.D.
A diminished social life is one of the most difficult aspects of age related hearing loss. Many people avoid drawing attention to their hearing loss by having fewer social contracts when it becomes difficult understanding what is being said. The result is an altered and lonely existence that family and friends may mistake for dementia.
Learning new strategies to cope with hearing loss could go a long way to restoring confidence and improving communication. The Hearing Clinic recommends the following: Inform people of the hearing loss so they may modify their speech; eliminate background noise; watch the speaker carefully and sharpen natural lip-reading abilities; ask the speaker to repeat what was said if necessary, and above all else; have your hearing thoroughly tested and properly fit with one of today's modern hearing instruments. Contact The Hearing Clinic if you or someone you know needs assistance.

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