

Halton Region challenges residents to be prepared

Are you emergency ready?

This May, Halton Region is challenging residents to get prepared by assembling or purchasing an emergency preparedness kit. The Challenge coincides with Emergency Preparedness Week, May 6 - 12.

"The recent train derailment in Burlington reminds us that we all need to be prepared, because emergencies can happen any time and any place," said Halton Regional Chair Gary Carr. "Whether it is a derailment or chemical spill, power outage or a natural disaster, such as a tornado, being prepared is your best defence."

Halton Region, Halton Police, Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville plan together to address emergency preparedness issues. The Region's Emergency Management Program incorporates five phases - prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. Emergency response partners work together to assume a coordinated approach to emergency preparedness to ensure that Halton is a disaster resilient community.

"The workload demands on first responders during an emergency can be extremely taxing," said Halton Police Chief Gary Crowell. "The public can help lighten the load by not adding to the burden. Ensure you have sufficient water, food, medicine and other supplies on hand to survive the first 72 hours of an emergency. Have a family emergency plan in place, and a Go-Kit (72 hour emergency survival kit) ready, so every home in Halton is prepared."

Halton's Emergency Preparedness Challenge runs from May 1 until May 31, and individuals can

take part in the Challenge by taking a photo of their emergency preparedness kit and uploading to the Region's emergency preparedness Twitter page, @BPreparedHalton or emailing a photo to bepreparedhalton@halton.ca. All submissions will be entered into a draw and one winner for each municipality will be selected randomly at the end of the month to receive an emergency preparedness related prize.

Emergency Preparedness Week is a Canada-wide initiative to increase awareness about individual and family preparedness. One of the goals of Emergency Preparedness Week is to teach the public how to reduce the risks and consequences of an emergency by being better prepared. Throughout the Week, Ontario residents are encouraged to identify and learn about risks in their communities and how they can protect themselves.

Local activities planned for Emergency Preparedness Week in Halton include:

- Halton Hills - Display with handouts at Halton Hills Fire Department's Public Education Information Centre in Georgetown Market Place

Visitors to the exhibits are invited to take a quiz and be entered in a draw to win an emergency preparedness kit. You can also take the quiz online at www.halton.ca/beprepared. For more information about Halton's Emergency Management Program and to download or order Halton's Personal Emergency Preparedness Guide, visit www.halton.ca/beprepared, dial 311 or 1-866-442-5866.



MUSTANG MIGHT: The grade 5 and 6 girls basketball team at McKenzie-Smith Bennett took on Stewarttown in their first game of the year last Thursday hosted by Stewarttown. Despite a valiant effort, the Mustangs lost 20-2. - Traci Gardner photo

Landlord charged for no alarms

A Georgetown landlord has been charged after a routine Fire Department inspection found four inoperable smoke detectors in a three-storey multi-unit apartment building located in Georgetown. The fines total \$940.

Early warning is key to ensuring residents survive and ensuring smoke alarms are installed and maintained in rental units is the

responsibility of building owners and landlords. Failure to comply can lead to penalties to a maximum of \$50,000 for individuals, \$100,000 for corporations and may include imprisonment of not more than one year.

Mayor Rick Bonnette said only working smoke alarms can save lives. "Property owners have responsibilities to ensure tenants feel safe in their

homes. No one should be without the protection of a smoke alarm. Ten dollars, the cost of a smoke alarm, is a small price to put on a life," Bonnette said in a press release issued on Tuesday.

Tenants must take responsibility for their own safety by not disabling smoke alarms, and inform their landlord of any issues.

Fire Chief Brent

Marshall said there is zero tolerance for this sort of neglect by a property owner or landlord. "The fire department will enforce the requirements to ensure our citizens are safe. I encourage all tenants to test their smoke alarms today. If tenants or landlords require any assistance with smoke alarm information, please call the fire department for further information."

Green gifts for Mother's Day

Mom may appreciate chocolate or flowers. But for children who want to offer her something a little more special - especially for their eco-conscious moms - there are a number of different gift options to make Mom's big day as eco-friendly as it is enjoyable.

- Make a basket of gardening gear. Garden plants and supplies are perhaps the greenest gifts to give Mom. You can also include gardening gloves and ergonomic tools made of recycled materials.

Finish the gift with the inclusion of a book that describes different garden designs and gives tips for beginners.

- Dine at a local restaurant. To make the experience eco-friendly, select among restaurants that are close to home in the area. Explore the possibilities of restaurants that may serve foods made with local, organic ingredients.

- Pay for a car tune-up. Improving the gas mileage on Mom's car is one gift that can be environmentally friendly. Fixing a serious

maintenance problem, such as a faulty oxygen sensor, can improve Mom's gas mileage by as much as 40 percent.

- Pamper mom with organic products. What mom doesn't enjoy a little pampering from time to time? You can treat your mother to a spa experience at home by assembling a basket full of organic shampoo,

conditioner, massage oils, bath salts, and any other organic spa items you can find.

- Select organic fruits and flowers. Companies like www.organicbouquet.com can assemble a bouquet made from responsibly grown flowers or even a wreath for a wall or door. They also have food gifts, from organic fruits to nuts.



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