

# Region to spend \$634,000 on hazardous materials

By STUART JOHNSTON

Halton Region is taking the next big step to reduce waste by collecting household hazardous materials, such as paint and oil -- for an initial cost of \$634,000.

"This is clearly the more expensive, conscientious and responsible way of doing things -- it's the price we have to pay for half-eroding our planet," Burlington councillor Joyce Savoline told her colleagues at a recent regional council meeting. "It's money well-spent."

Laidlaw Environmental Services Inc. has been hired to collect and dispose of household hazardous waste this year, to prevent such materials from contaminating Halton's new landfill, set to open this fall.

Residents will be able to drop off their hazardous waste at Halton's two depots in Burlington and Milton. Both depots will be open the first Saturday every month (second Saturday in September). Laidlaw will then collect and dispose of the waste collected at

these depots.

All told, the program is expected to cost the Region \$634,000 this year.

Burlington's rep Bob Brechin questioned the high price tag, and suggested that each Halton resident be charged \$2 for the service. However, a user-pay system such as that is something Regional staff want to avoid at this point.

"One of our major objectives is to divert toxic waste from our landfill, so it's important that we have this program in place that encourages people to use it," Public Works commissioner Art Leitch replied. "If we impose a charge on the service, we feel it would discourage people from using it."

Leitch added that the costs to the environment would be heavy should the Region decide not to go ahead with the project.

"Those are costs we're trying to avoid," he said.

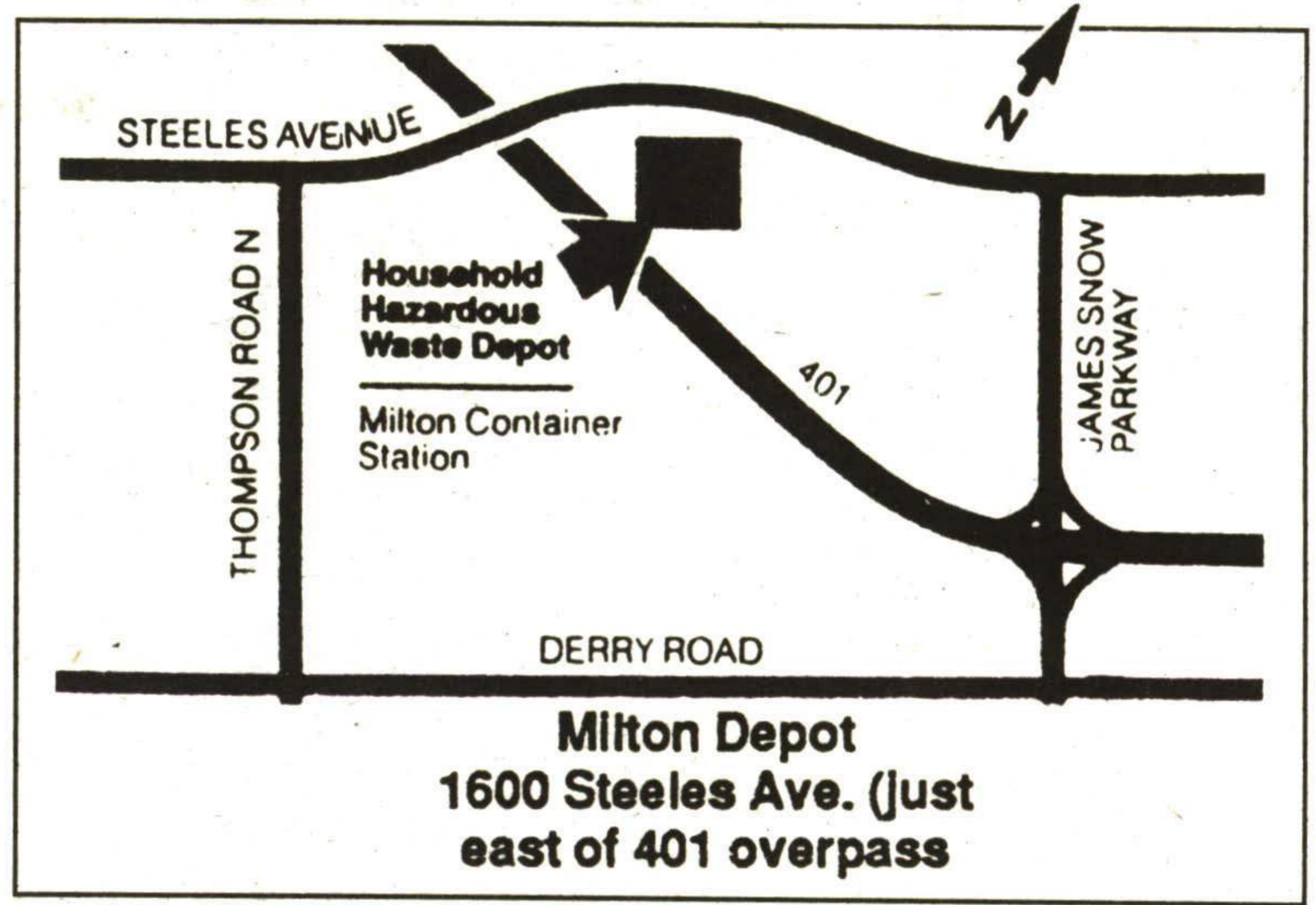
Halton Hills rep Marilyn Serjeantson suggested that facilities such as WasteWise could be used for a paint exchange day, where

people drop off their half-empty cans for others who may need a touch of paint.

Recycling co-ordinator John MacKay favored the idea, noting he will attempt to organize such a day with the community organization.

Halton chairman Pete Pomeroy noted that, in order for the hazardous waste program to be successful, residents must be better educated about the whole system.

"We usually only capture about 10 per cent of households in programs such as this," he said. "It's a very important program, but it isn't easy. We've got a long way to go... We need a greater basis of support for all diversions of waste, but it's still not a great deal of people participating."



The Acton Parent/Scout banquet was held recently with Troop Scouter Ron Birrell (left) earning a special plaque for his dedication and community service work. Committee chairperson Andrea Schiller and Karl Heidi made the presentation.

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