

Halton student transportation services among top in Ontario

Halton Student Transportation Services (HSTS), which provides shared busing between the Halton District School Board and Halton Catholic School Board, has achieved the highest possible efficiency rating through a recent provincial Effectiveness and Efficiency (E&E) study. It also concluded HSTS is among the top bus sharing consortiums in Ontario.

Deloitte LLP conducted the E&E study this summer and concluded HSTS earned the rating, 'High', due to initiating a number of improvements and enhancements to its consortium management, policies and practices, routing and technology, and contracting practices. A preliminary E&E review was conducted by Deloitte in July 2009 to establish HSTS benchmarks and included recommendations. A follow up review took place in June 2014.

"The cooperative and respectful relationships that exist between staff members, as well as between

the Consortium and its member boards, provide the foundation on which the Consortium's success is based," according to Deloitte LLP's June review. "The actions and policies of the Consortium demonstrated a commitment to being one of the leading Consortia in the Province."

In 2006-07, the provincial government began implementing reforms for student transportation. The objectives of the reforms were to build capacity to deliver safe, effective and efficient student transportation services; achieve an equitable approach to funding; and to reduce the administrative burden of delivering transportation; thus allowing boards to focus on student learning and achievement.

Each school year, approximately 33,000 students who attend 150 public and Catholic schools across Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton, and Oakville rely on school bus transportation to and from school.

Carbon Monoxide detectors required in all homes

It's now the law in Ontario to install carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in your home if you have a fuel-burning appliance or an attached garage.

"If your home has a fuel-burning appliance or an attached garage, you must have a working CO alarm outside all sleeping areas of the home," said Halton Hills Fire Dept. Fire Chief Brent Marshall. "For added protection, install a carbon monoxide alarm on every storey of the home according to manufacturer's instructions." Fuel-burning appliances can include furnaces, hot water heaters, gas or wood fireplaces, portable fuel-burning heaters and generators, barbecues, stoves and vehicles.

Single-family homeowners and owners of residential buildings that contain no more than six suites have until April 15, 2015 to comply with the law. Owners of residential buildings with more than six suites have

until October 15, 2015 to comply.

The law will be enforced by the Halton Hills Fire Department. Failure to comply with the CO alarm requirements could result in a fine of up to \$50,000 for individuals or \$100,000 for corporations.

The Ontario Fire Code was amended October 15, 2014 to require CO alarms after the provincial government passed Bill 77 – the Hawkins Gignac Act, in December 2013. Bill 77 is named after OPP Constable Laurie Hawkins, who died, along with her husband and two children, in her Woodstock, ON home from CO poisoning in 2008.

The Ontario Fire Code also requires that in condo and apartment buildings with a service room, CO alarms must be installed in the service room and outside all sleeping areas of all homes above, below, and beside the service room. In condo or apartment buildings that have a garage, CO alarms must be installed outside all sleeping areas of all homes above, below, and beside the garage.

"In Ontario, more than 80% of injuries and deaths from CO occur in the home," said Mayor Rick Bonnette. "The Chief and I want to make sure everyone in Halton

Hills is safe from CO. Install CO alarms, and do everything you can to prevent CO in your home in the first place."

What is CO?

CO is known as the silent killer because it is an invisible, tasteless and odourless gas that can be deadly.

CO is produced when fuels such as propane, gasoline, natural gas, heating oil or wood do not burn completely in fuel-burning appliances and devices such as furnaces, gas or wood fireplaces, hot water heaters, stoves, barbecues, portable fuel-burning heaters and generators and vehicles.

Prevent CO in your home

Ensure all fuel-burning appliances in your home are inspected annually. Visit COSafety.ca to find a registered contractor near you.

Check that all outside appliance vents are not blocked.

Never use a portable fuel-burning appliance inside (i.e. barbecues, portable heaters and generators).

Know the symptoms of CO:

Exposure to CO can cause flu-like symptoms such as headaches, nausea, and dizziness, as well as confusion, drowsiness, loss of consciousness and death.

If your CO alarm

sounds, and you or other occupants suffer from symptoms of CO poisoning, get everyone out of the home immediately. Then call 9-1-1 or your local emergency services number from outside the building.

If your CO alarm sounds and no one is suffering from symptoms of CO

poisoning, check to see if the battery needs replacing, or the alarm has reached its "end-of-life" before calling 9-1-1.

Know the sound of your CO alarm:

Your CO alarm may sound different than your smoke alarm. Test both alarms monthly and make sure everyone in your home knows the difference between the two alarm sounds.

Don't be confused by the sound of your CO alarm's low-battery warning. Follow your CO alarm manufacturer's instructions so you know the difference between the low-battery warning, the "end-of-life" warning, and the alarm alerting you to the presence of CO in your home.

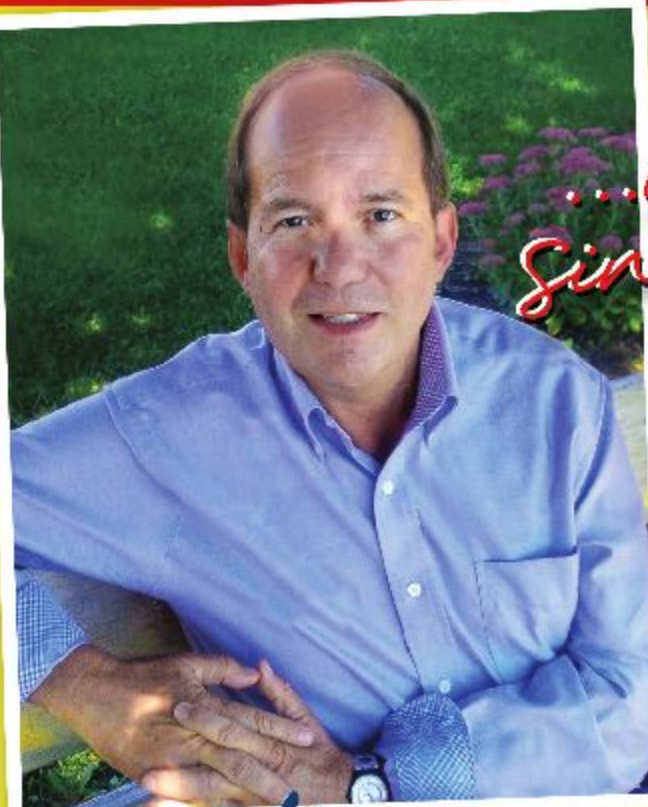
For more CO safety tips, visit ontario.ca/firemarshal and COSafety.ca or contact Acting Captain Mark Burger of the Halton Hills Fire Department at markb@haltonhills.ca or (905) 873-2601 ex 2115.

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Rick Bonnette

Rick Bonnette

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