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ERIN BLAZE: On Wednesday, Jan. 18 at around 9:30 a.m., fire destroyed an Erin home. Two days later, unidentified human remains were found at the site. The cause of the fire is still not known. The investigation into the fire is ongoing. Members of the coroner's office, Wellington County OPP's crime unit, the Ontario Fire Marshal and forensic investigators continue to examine evidence collected at the scene. Anyone with any information about the fire is urged to call Wellington County OPP at 1-888-310-1122, Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or submit a tip online at csgw.tips.
Submitted photo

Two-hatter Halton Hills firefighters face uncertain future

By **Graeme Frisque**
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Three full-time Mississauga firefighters who also work part-time for the Halton Hills Fire Department are facing possible sanctions and even termination for what is colloquially known as double-hatting or two hatting.

The IFP has confirmed a fourth firefighter involved has since resigned from the HHFD.

The practice of two-hatting refers to firefighters employed full-time in one community and who work part-time in another under the same union, often in their community of residence.

The practice is strictly forbidden under union rules but has been a widespread and contentious issue among firefighters across the province for many years. Ontario and Newfoundland and Labrador are the only two provinces in the country that do not have legislation in place allowing firefighters to do so.

While often referred to in

legislative speak as volunteering as it relates to two-hatting, part-time firefighters are generally paid a wage or honorarium for their service.

The four men, who have requested anonymity, faced an internal tribunal of peers within their union the Ontario district of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) on Monday Jan. 16.

The determination of the tribunal has not yet been released, but according to IAFF district vice-president, Fred LeBlanc, each could face penalties for violating union rules including suspension, fines or even expulsion from the union, which could mean termination due to requirements of union membership as a condition of employment.

LeBlanc added smaller municipalities often employ two-hatters as a cost-saving measure rather than employing full-time firefighters who may not be kept as busy as they would in larger population centres.

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