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Halton police charge two firefighters with fraud

By Graeme Frisque
gfrisque@metroland.com

Halton Regional Police Service (HRPS) charged two firefighters after allegedly stealing donated funds for the families of firefighters killed or injured in line of duty from the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association (OPFFA).

In a release sent Tuesday (Feb. 28), police said Warren Paul Atkinson, 52, of Newmarket and Stuart Grieve, 58, of Stoney Creek are facing charges of fraud over \$5,000, money laundering and obstruction of justice.

Atkinson is an active firefighter in Toronto while Grieve works for Hamilton's fire service.

The release said the two men were conducted advocacy work to assist families of retired and deceased firefighters from across the province in applying for WSIB benefits between May 12, 2011 and Feb. 26, 2014.

The OPFFA received a complaint which caused them to conduct an internal investigation into donations. The investigation revealed several large donations to the OPFFA that were never received, all (alleg-

edly) linked to (the accused), said police, adding the ensuing investigation resulted in the aforementioned charges.

According to a report from The IFP's sister paper, *The Burlington Post*, the two men are accused of defrauding the OPFFA of roughly \$250,000.

We're just happy that something has come out of this, OPFFA president Rob Hyndman told *The Post*, adding the accused were co-chairs of OPFFA's occupational disease committee working with families and the association's lawyers.

With the OPFFA's head offices located in Burlington, the investigation fell under the jurisdiction of the HRPS.

Both Atkinson and Grieve are scheduled to appear in Ontario Provincial Court in Milton on March 29.

Police are asking anyone with information pertaining to this investigation to contact the Halton Regional Fraud Unit at 905-465-8965.

Tips can also be submitted through Crime Stoppers. See something, Hear something, Say something at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) or through the web at halton-crimestoppers.ca



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