

OPINION

Chill out

While we may be flipping the calendar to a new year, it's a 2013 event that undoubtedly will impact many residents for weeks, if not months, into 2014.

Of course, we're talking about the recent ice storm which left many residents without power for days on end during the Christmas-New Year's holiday period.

Some residents are still without power nearly two weeks later.

It's clear from comments on social media and emails and letters to this newspaper that some residents did not grasp the extent of the damage left by Mother Nature's latest temper tantrum.

Therefore, consider this message a dose of reality and a reminder to look at the big picture.

In a nutshell Halton Hills was hammered by two days of freezing rain which was followed by plunging temperatures. Tree limbs, by the thousands, snapped under the pressure, bringing down power lines and transformers.

Hydro crews, in horrible conditions, worked tirelessly 24/7 trying to restore electricity to thousands of homes. The problem was exacerbated by the fact that most of the GTA was hit just as hard, straining resources to the max.

To be critical of these workers, and Town and Region officials who monitored the situation day and night, opened warming centres and answered thousands of phone calls, is to be ignorant of the situation at best and selfish at worst.

This was an extraordinary once-in-a-lifetime weather-related emergency that required extraordinary efforts from so many services and individuals.

We understand some residents' frustration, but local hydro workers, emergency personnel and municipal leaders deserve nothing but our thanks.

WEB POLL RESULTS

(Go to www.theifp.ca)

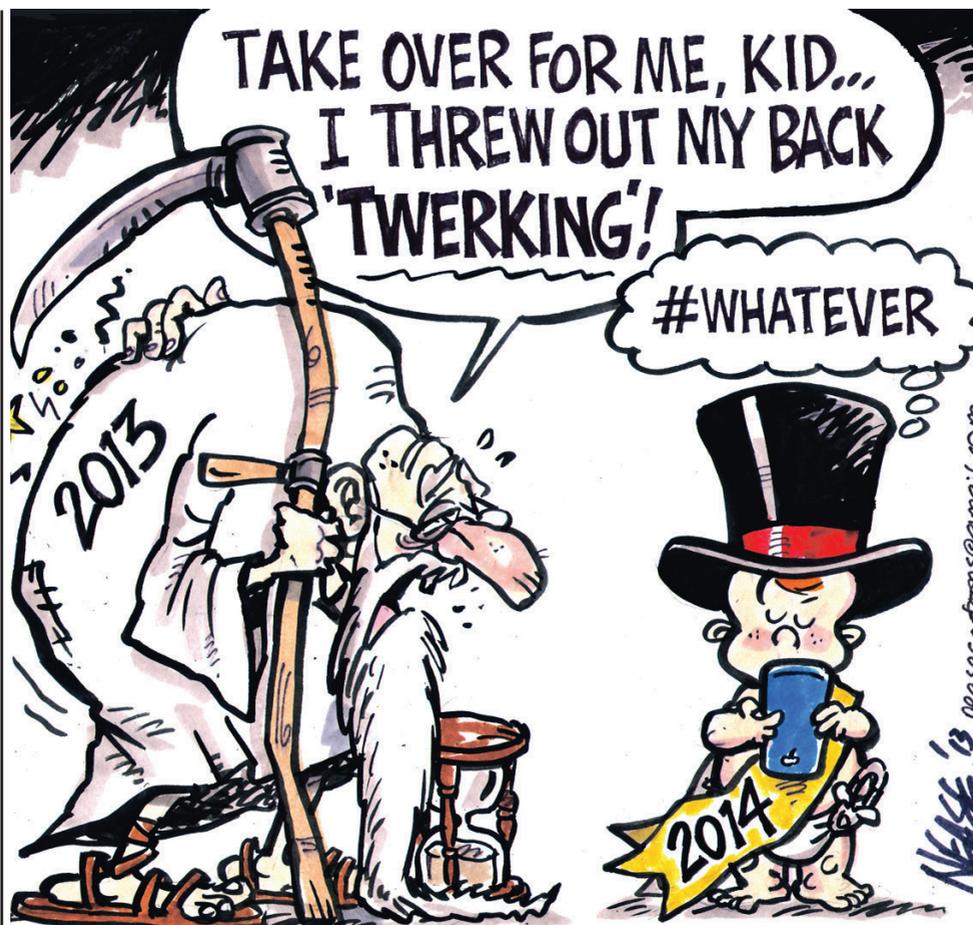
How do you think the Town of Halton Hills has handled the aftermath from the ice storm?

- It has done the best it could under bad circumstances (40%)
 - It has done a great job (39%)
 - It has handled it terribly (13%)
- It has done okay, but could have done better (8%)

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Letters to the editor

Mayor, Hydro come under fire

Dear editor,

As I sit in my cold house on Christmas Eve to monitor the space heater to keep the pipes from freezing in my house, I'm quite happy my wife and children are warm and comfortable with family members in a neighbouring municipality.

I can't help but voice a few concerns. While I have been led to believe that Halton Hills Hydro (HHH) is doing all they can, I find this more than a little hard to believe. I just spent an hour driving through our streets (mostly because my car has heat) and didn't see a single crew.

It's much appreciated that HHH would work overtime to fix the problem but let's remember it's just that— overtime. A large chunk of extra hours at Christmas that HHH workers, who are already well paid, get paid even more. Thank you for doing your job, sincerely.

An extra-big thanks goes out to

Mayor Rick Bonnette. I'm not sure whether his power was on or not (but I could make a bet) but I'd like to thank him for turning down the offer of help from the Provincial government, because apparently, this is not an emergency situation.

Hey Rick, I've got news for you! I've been without power for coming up on 72 hours, for me and mine this does count as an emergency! I drove through Brampton and saw four crews from Orillia at a gas station, spoke with the guys and Brampton had asked for help.

What have you done to get my power on more quickly, Rick? If you've been doing all you can I apologize but from what I've seen and heard it's a far cry from that.

The only thing I wanted to do for Christmas is spend Christmas day relaxing with my family, at home and watching the joy in my sons' faces.

Fortunately a little matter of lack of power can't take that away, unfortunately I live in Halton Hills and will have to go elsewhere to enjoy this.

Jim Faye, Georgetown

Workers thanked

Dear editor,

As the texts came in letting us know which friends had their power restored, I began to think about the people working to get our lives back to some normalcy.

Thank you, not only to the Hydro workers, Region and Town employees, arborists and electricians, but also to their families.

Altering your plans for Christmas so that moms and dads could work the extra hours needed to help our community is a really big gift!

Terri Bilodeau,
Georgetown

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Letters policy

Letters must include the author's name, address and daytime phone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 150 words and may be edited for content and/or length. Publication is not guaranteed.

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