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Lots of hockey action

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Whoaa!

Milder temperatures this past weekend brought out the tobogganers to Cedarvale Park. Paul Sargeant and five-year-old daughter Claire had a blast sledding down the hill on Main St. S.

Check out more photos
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Photo by Jon Borgstrom

Relentless weather has taxed winter control budget

By **LISA TALLYN**
Staff Writer

From the ice storm, to the bone-chilling cold brought on by the polar vortex, and snowfall after snowfall, there's no question, this has been a brutal winter.

All that snow and ice accumulating on area roadways has been putting a dent in the Town's winter control budget—with about 30 per cent (approximately \$550,000) of the \$1.77 million earmarked for 2014 being spent already in January.

Chris Mills, the Town's Director of Infrastructure Services, says that is up 50 per cent over the average January expenditure (which is 20 per cent of the annual budget). He added that 50 per cent of the material budget (salt and sand) is already spent—not including yesterday's storm.

"If that trend continues into February it will be very significant," Mills said.

2013's winter control expenditures were over by about \$100,000, he added.

"This feels like a very long winter," said Mills. "We're still

battling from the ice storm. As much as I say our staff are feeling it, I'm quite certain the folks in the community have just had it (also)."

The public works crews have been logging long hours keeping the town's more than 900 km of road, 125 km of sidewalks and 22 municipal parking lots clear of snow and ice. When they're not on the roads, the workers have been out cleaning up the downed tree branches and limbs on boulevards across the town.

Mills praises them for doing a great job.

"They're coming in when they're being asked (overtime), they're always here doing the job. Without these guys, none of us would be leaving town," said Mills. Soon there will also be four new public works crew staff hired, as approved in the Town's 2014 Operating Budget.

Despite the crews' best efforts, however, the Public Works Dept. does receive its share of complaints about snow clearing from residents. Their biggest beef—how long it takes for a snowplow to get to their street.

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