



This mighty Maple tree on Prince Charles Dr. was bowed by the load of ice (inset) and eventually split in half.

Photos by Margaret Mitchell

## Ice Storm 2013 is remembered

On the night of Friday, Dec. 20, 2013, freezing rain began to fall on Halton Hills. By the afternoon of Sunday, Dec. 22, devastation had come to town and stayed for week. More than 30 mm of ice-coated trees, power lines and buildings with power out for 100 per cent of the Halton Hills Hydro's 23,000 customers.

Trees, limbs and hydro poles were snapped littering the streets. Some neighbourhoods' power returned later that day, but in other neighbourhoods, chaos was an unwelcome Christmas visitor. Over the course of the week, crews came from as far away as Ottawa and Samia swelling Halton Hills Hydro's complement of 12 linemen to over 100, working 16 hours days. Town staff provided support throughout: road clearing, tree trimming, going on Community Watch at seniors residences, fighting a house fire, and manning warming evacuation centres. Halton Police responded to calls, directed traffic and also hosted a warming centre at the Georgetown police station.

Volunteers and local churches jumped into the fray, organizing volunteer drives for dinners for hydro crews, Christmas meals, going door to door with hot drinks and foods for those without power.

On the second anniversary of the disaster, Prince Charles Dr. resident Margaret Mitchell wrote about her experience:

*It was an experience of a lifetime for most of us— even though the damage wasn't as disastrous as it could have been. Being only a week away from Christmas, lots of residents were without electricity for six to seven days before finally returning home. Reliving that week, we were so lucky to be rescued by a kind family and then by our daughter. Being back home on New Year's Day was a blessing. While during this experience, I took time for photographs and seeing the beauty of nature right in front of you was overwhelming.*

For a timeline of Ice Storm of 2013 go to <http://www.theifp.ca/news-story/5360633-timeline-of-the-ice-storm-of-2013/>



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