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■ NEWS

HERE'S HOW **TOWN HANDLES** WINTER STORMS

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Though the weather can be challenging and unpredictable, a joint effort between the Town of Halton Hills Public Works and Fire Service prepares the town for inclement weather.

A "winter storm preparedness" report was presented to the Planning and Public Works committee on Feb. 7, using measures taken during a snow event over the weekend of Jan. 11 and 12.

Here's what happened in Halton Hills before and during that winter storm.

Before the storm

Public works staff:

- · Ensure chainsaws are sharpened and fuelled up
 - Prepare four portable generators
- · Load a public works cube van with "water over road" signs and sandbags
- Prepare two steam generators, used to thaw culverts
- Equip six tandem trucks with chains on tires to provide extra traction in case of freezing rain
 - · Completely load the town's salt dome
- · Clear storm water run-off of any and all debris, including snow and ice (the runoffs include catch basins, ditch inlets, ditches, and tributaries leading to rivers)
- · Continuously monitor the Credit River to ensure no substantial ice buildup that could lead to flooding

The Town of Halton Hills Fire Ser-

· Monitors social media, email and various weather agencies for weather updates and advises senior management, council, and the public of issued winter storm warnings



Torstar file photo

In the event of a winter storm event, Halton Hills Public Works Department and the fire department work to minimize the risk of damage caused by the weather.

- · Gives updates on weather status to fulland part-time staff
- · Staff members check and test fire department emergency generators
- Fuels up (and tests where necessary) all emergency vehicles and gas-powered equipment
 - · Checks small equipment and supplies
- · Confirms staffing levels; senior administrative staff are scheduled on-call for the weekend

After the storm

Public works staff reported a total of 185.5 hours worked over the weekend. Seven staff members cleared catch basins and ditch inlets during the downpour on Saturday, with 15 staff the following day working to salt main arterial and collector routes before sanding urban and rural secondary roads.

The town received over 50 phone calls from residents during the winter event and closed two roads: 10th Line south of 10 Side Rd., and 5 Side Rd between 8th and 9th Lines.

Public Works staff also closed and graded Fallbrook Trail and attended Fairy Lake where water had breached the lake's banks, though no damage occurred.

Fire staff continued to monitor and share information with the town throughout the event. A drone was used to monitor inaccessible areas of the Credit River, Silver Creek, and Fairy Lake. On Jan. 11 and 12, the department responded to a total of nine emergency calls with three related to the weather, including two calls for flooding in a structure and one vehicle collision.

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