

IN-STORE SHOPPING RESUMES AT HARDWARE STORES

MELANIE HENNESSEY
mhennessey@metroland.com

Hardware store owners throughout Halton are celebrating the Province's recent decision to allow in-store shoppers at their retail locations for the first time in weeks.

The reopenings on May 9 mark the start of a 'new normal' for hardware stores, with one-way aisles, transparent barriers around cashiers, limited numbers of customers allowed in the store and other measures to achieve social distancing, similar to what grocery stores have been doing.

"It's not business as usual," said Teresa Scully, who operates Acton Home

Hardware with her family. "We're taking all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of our staff and the community. We hope everyone follows our safety measures that we have put in place."

The Acton woman said her team is excited to open their doors again and serve the community, which her family has been doing since her parents took over the local hardware store in 1996.

"We want to thank the community for their understanding and support during all of this," said Scully.

The sentiment was echoed by Milton Home Hardware owner Jeff Seydel, who said he welcomes the in-person experience again with his customers.

"I'm certain everyone will agree that interacting face-to-social distance-face is way better for everyone," he said. "We're ecstatic to be open again."

Many Home Hardware stores offered curbside pickup during their mandatory closure — a style of shopping that Seydel said presented challenges as his staff worked hard to keep up with the phone calls, emails, e-commerce orders, texts and messages on Google and Facebook.

"It was very exhausting and trying for our team," he said.

Hardware stores were joined by other retail stores not located in malls on May 19, when the Province gave them the go-ahead to reopen as well.



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