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NEWS

OVERDOSES RISING AT ALARMING RATE: POLICE

Halton police are again urging those who take drugs to take precautions due to the "alarming" and escalating local trend of fatal and non-fatal overdoses.

Officers report that so far this year they have responded to 108 suspected overdoses involving either illicit substances, and/or prescription medications.

Of those, 24 people did not survive.

Police said if something doesn't change, they anticipate responding to more than 300 overdoses by the end of the year, with the potential to lose more than 70 lives.

In 2020, Halton police attended 241 overdoses, 38 of which were fatal.

The police service noted it is important to recognize that these numbers represent our neighbours, loved ones, colleagues and classmates.

"These aren't stats. These are lives," said Halton police Deputy Chief Roger Wilkie.

"The Halton Regional Police Service remains committed to exploring all avenues to reduce the incidence of drug poisonings in our community. Our officers carry naloxone and we want to help."

Police are continuing to encourage those who use drugs, or know someone who does, to call 911 if they witness or are experiencing a suspected overdose. They said all front-line officers carry naloxone, a life-saving medication that can quickly reverse an opioid overdose. Officers are also reminding residents that on May 4, 2017, the Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act became law.

The act can protect people who call 911 to report a drug overdose from:

- charges for possession of a controlled substance
- breach of conditions regarding simple possession of controlled substances in pre-



Metroland file photo

Halton police front-line officers carry naloxone and encourage anyone who witnesses an overdose to call 911.

"These aren't stats. These are lives."

- Halton Police Deputy Chief Roger Wilkie

trial release, probation orders, conditional sentences, and/or parole.

"In the course of responding to nearly 350 suspected overdoses since the beginning of 2020, we haven't laid a single drug possession charge. Don't hesitate — if you encounter an overdose, call 911," said Wilkie.

Police said if someone appears to be overdosing, give naloxone if you have it, call 911 and stay with the person until help arrives. Officers are also urging those who use drugs to never use alone and to always use a small amount of a drug first to check the strength.

To learn where you can get a free naloxone kit, visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/where-get-free-naloxone-kit>.

For a comprehensive list of other available supports and resources, visit <https://www.haltonpolice.ca/en/staying-safe/overdose-awareness.aspx>.



\$20,000 PRIZE

HOME SWEET HOME RENOVATION CONTEST

We all have a greater appreciation for the comforts of home these days and many of your customers have been dreaming of a home reno project.

This is your chance to make their dreams a reality.

Castle is pleased to introduce our exciting Home Sweet Home Contest offering one lucky winner \$20,000 to spend on the products and services that you offer in store.

This prize can be used towards one or more amazing home renovation projects.

One grand prize will be awarded nationally and redeemable only at the winning Castle location for available products and services.

PROMOTIONAL:

This contest will be nationally advertised in print, on television, on castle.ca and through our social media channels.

POP KIT:

Your participation includes a complete POP Kit:

- Online entry cards or fill-in ballots
- Web and social media graphics
- In-store promotional posters
- Contest Rules & Regulations
- Ballot return envelope (where applicable)

CONTEST DATES:

May 1st to July 31st, 2021

PARTICIPATION FEE: \$499.00

REGISTRATION DEADLINE:

March 19th, 2021



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