

# Unilock Ltd. fined \$50,000 after crippling industrial accident

By Colin Gibson

Paving stone company, Unilock Ltd., located at 287 Armstrong Ave. in Georgetown, was fined \$50,000 Tuesday in Milton Provincial Court as a result of an industrial accident which occurred on June 17, 1992.

Alan Squire, 30, formerly of Georgetown and now living in Brampton, was working near a robotic cuber (a machine which stacks layers of paving stone for packaging) when a safety guard malfunctioned and instead of automatically shutting off, the machine kept operating.

Squire was struck, then crushed by a piece of paving stone.

He was initially taken to Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital, then transferred to Toronto's Sunnybrook Hospital where it was determined he had suffered spinal damage, a broken rib and other internal injuries.

Mr. Squire is still undergoing treatment for his injuries and has not regained the use of his legs.

In December of 1992, a Ministry of Labor investigation resulted in six charges being laid against Unilock under section 32B of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Plant manager Phil Hardy had four charges laid against him under Section 27 of the Act, which deals with supervisory responsibility, because of the accident.

In Milton on Tuesday, after intense negotiations between Labor Ministry officials, the defence counsel and the presiding judge, five of the original six charges against Unilock were dropped and all charges against Mr. Hardy were subsequently dropped.

According to a Ministry of Labor source, the fact that Unilock accepted the blame for the accident, admitted that the safety mechanism had malfunctioned and has subsequently implemented strict safety measures at its Georgetown plant, had a lot to do with the amount of the fine and the dropping of the five other charges against the com-

pany and the dropping of the charges against Mr. Hardy. In addition, defence counsel pointed out, the accident to Mr. Squire represented a first offence for Unilock under the Occupational Health and

Safety Act.

When contacted Thursday at Unilock Ltd., Mr. Hardy, who still retains the position of plant manager, refused immediate comment on the court proceedings. In the tele-

phone conversation, however, he suggested he would get back to Halton Hills This Week.

By press time Friday, Halton Hills This Week was still awaiting the call.

## Day in court demanded

By Dianne Cornish

Fines imposed on a Georgetown contractor by Milton's provincial court last week have added fuel to the fire in a dispute between the builder and the town's building code and bylaw enforcement office.

Peter Beecham was convicted last Thursday of seven charges, including three charges related to building violations. He was fined \$8,000, while his numbered company operating as North Eastern Construction was fined \$9,000.

Beecham said Monday he'll appeal the conviction. He said he's angry because of "a mix-up" which prevented him from having his "day in court."

Beecham wasn't at last week's

trial because he was misinformed about the trial date, he said. The builder, who appeared in court for the third time on the charges last December, left the courtroom after learning that his case wouldn't be going to trial that day. He later called the provincial court to get his court date and said he was told March 14.

"I just jotted it down on a piece of paper and then forgot about it for a while," Beecham told Halton Hills This Week. He said he heard about his conviction from a newspaper reporter on the same day he had called provincial court to try to confirm the correct date for his trial after realizing that March 14 falls on a Sunday.

Beecham said he'll appeal the case because of the mix-up and because he feels he can win. He added he has been a builder for 30 years and has never before been convicted of a building code violation.

There's also an ironic twist to the story. Halton Hills This Week was told Wednesday by an employee in the records office of the provincial court that Beecham attended the March 4 trial. When asked to confirm that, she said records show that Beecham represented himself at the trial. This information is contrary to what Beecham said and also to what Halton Hills municipal law enforcement officer Ron Stein

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# WEEKEND

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At the invitation of Ecole Sacre Coeur teacher Mlle. Louise Brunet, Halton Hills This Week's Publisher Ken Bellamy and Editor Colin Gibson visited the school and gave a talk on the functions and production of a community newspaper to Grade Four English class students. After the session, Mr. Bellamy and Mr. Gibson joined the students and Mlle. Brunet for a group picture. HHTW photo

## Transition program to be implemented

Recently the Ministry of Education announced the possibility of a modification to the Transition Years restructuring initiative. The administration of the Halton Board of Education will continue with plans to enact Transition Years in the fall of 1993.

Notes Dean Fink, Superintendent of Instructional Services and spokesperson for the Transition Years initiative, "The new Minister of Education and Training, David Cooke, recently modified the government's stance on the implementation of the Transition Years restructuring initiative and particularly the elimination of advanced, general and basic streams in grade 9. In his February 19, 1993 memo, the Minister states, "Where a school board or a section has valid and compelling reasons for not implementing destreaming in 1993, it may request that the Minister of Education and Training grant a postponement of implementation in one or more of its schools until September, 1994."

The administration of the Halton

Board of Education does not intend to petition the Ministry for a deferral. The Halton Board's administration and staff have been planning for this change for three years. Each senior elementary and secondary school has a staff committee in place to ensure the implementation of the Transition Years initiative. Halton has an operational plan which will enable Halton to meet both the spirit and intent of the Transition Years for September 1993."

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