

Sludge spreading causes concern

By Oksana Buhel

The Region of Halton has already finished spreading treated industrial and domestic sewage over a field on Eighth Line, near Wildwood Rd. in Georgetown, but area residents are still trying to figure out what happened.

"No one in the area was notified about the spreading - it was just done," complained Sheila Burns, a neighbor to the Lot 22 site which was spread with sludge (biosolids) during a four-day period - July 30, Aug. 3, 4 and 5. During this time, 520,000 gallons of sludge was spread on the 60-70 acre field.

Burns began calling Town of Halton Hills staff, Halton Region staff and anyone who could explain the Halton Region Sludge Utilization Program to her. "No one could answer my question (regarding the possibility of heavy metals in the sewage)," she said. "I was given a complete run-around." She said the only person who provided information was Town of Halton Hills Mayor, Russ Miller, who

called Burns Friday. Ed Caldwell, another neighbor, also addressed town staff with his concerns. Caldwell could not remember who he spoke to, but distinctly remembered being assured the process was safe. Caldwell did not feel the explanation was adequate. "I don't even know what it (sludge utilization program) is," he said.

Caldwell's wife, Claudette, was similarly baffled. "How come nobody was notified," she demanded. The Caldwells run a stable and are concerned the sludge will affect the stream running through their property, where their horses drink. They are also concerned about their well water.

Rumors began circulating sludge-spreading was banned in Peel Region, and residents were demanding why it was being practiced in Halton.

"Not as far as I know," responded John Timko, manager of South Peel water and sewage system, when asked if sludge-spreading had been banned. "I've been here for eight years and it's gone on at

least that long." He added sludge-spreading has been cut down, but only because most domestic and industrial sewage is being incinerated. (Halton Region does not have an incinerator.) Timko admitted there may be a slight problem with odors, but no worse than caused by the spreading of manure.

Victor Lesnicki, Halton Regional manager of waste reduction, explained heavy metal concentrations are monitored strictly by the Ministry of Energy and the Environment (MOEE). He added farms which have sludge spread on them are "tracked very carefully," and a "pretty sophisticated" record-keeping system, organized by people who are strictly concerned with sludge utilization, ensures everything runs smoothly.

"Halton is a recognized leader in sludge-spreading," boasted Lesnicki. "We've been asked to host many workshops on the topic on behalf of the MOEE." Asked why residents in the Eighth Line/ Wildwood



The sludge is applied to agricultural fields at the 8th Line site in north Georgetown, leased by Daryl Gibberson, with the Terra-Gator which tills the soil and pours the liquid sludge into the grooves. Sludge cannot be applied again for five years according to Ministry of the Environment guidelines. photo by Simon Wilson/HHTW

Rd. area were not notified of the spreading, Lesnicki said it was the responsibility of the farmer to inform potentially concerned neighbors, adding his own staff is willing to answer any questions. Peter Morden, regional sludge man-

agement co-ordinator, deals strictly with this issue.

Local environmentalist Rita Landry, expressed concern the community would not be able to handle the amount of sludge; the exact contents of the sludge would not be

known, therefore would not be treatable, and the Region would not reliably monitor the spread areas. She added, however, she has "not yet had a chance to talk with the Region."

Halton Hills

THIS WEEK

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Suggestion to reduce council is rejected

By Oksana Buhel

Town of Halton Hills councillors gave various rea-

sons for not supporting Councillor Pam Johnston's recommendation council size be reduced and structure be modified, at Monday's council meeting.

"I can't support this," Coun. Gail Rutherford said.

"Population is increasing and it wouldn't make sense if council size decreased." She described the "uniqueness" of Halton Hills residents, who are anxious to participate in council meetings.

Rutherford challenged Johnston's theory that cutting down the number of councillors would decrease staff time and allow staff to focus on other issues. "I think this will increase staff time," she said. Rutherford



Pam Johnston

added wide representation was essential in sharing various opinions. "A little powerhouse is not the way to go," she insisted.

Mayor Russ Miller was concerned a reduction in councillors would affect Halton Hills' representation

on regional council. Coun. Al Cook agreed with Miller, recommending the motion be deferred until the region commented on the effect such a reduction would have.

Janet Lunn-Stewart, town clerk assured Cook the process would "still take a while."

Coun. Rick Bonnette informed council his apprehension was based on a "technicality." A change in council size would have to

be approved by Queen's Park, which would not happen until 1997, at the earliest. "We'd be tying the hands of a future council," Bonnette explained.

He added the duties of the town's 32 sub-committees, now divided between 12 councillors, would be divided by eight.

Coun. Norm Elliott agreed, saying work done by Halton Hills councillors was "the best bang for the buck." Johnston had predicted in her report approximately \$45,000 would be saved in salaries by having two councillors, instead of three, in the four wards. "We often work over 20 hours a week for an annual salary of \$11,000," Elliott reminded councillors.

He admitted a lot of review was necessary but current council size and structure was adequate until something better came along.

In a recorded vote, the motion was defeated, 10 - 1.

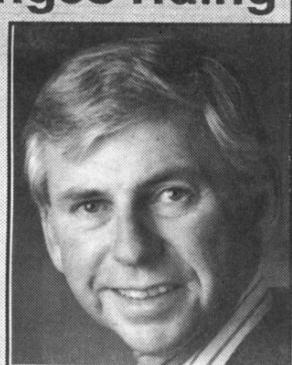
Cox challenges riding

Hilliard Cox, long-time resident of Caledon, will carry the Libertarian banner in the Halton-Peel riding in the soon-to-be-announced federal election.

Cox, a 53-year-old businessman, was elected leader of the Libertarian Party of Canada in May of this year. He has been instrumental in the preparation of Libertarian position and policy papers on a wide range of subjects from Free Trade, to the GST and Justice.

While attending a media conference in Montreal last weekend, Cox was asked to describe the type of campaign he will be running in his own riding. "The same way I expect government to run: simple, low cost and within budget. No frills."

Commenting on what the issues will be in the campaign he noted "...the old parties have made such a mess of things, everything is an issue now. We will concentrate on core issues that affect average Canadians



Hilliard Cox

such as jobs. Voters are ready for real change, not just the same old game with new teams or new faces. The game has to be changed, not just the players."

The Libertarian Party was founded in the '70's at both the federal and provincial levels. Voting members, officers and candidates sign a statement agreeing to follow a set of principles which treat everyone equally, limits governments to "basics" and condemns the use of force or fraud by individuals or government.

Acton igloos

By Oksana Buhel

Ward 1 (Acton) Councillor Rick Bonnette informed Town of Halton Hills councillors Monday night he has found a corporate sponsor for three recycling "igloos," which will be located on Churchill Rd. in Acton by the waste water treatment plant.

InterProvincial Pipeline has bought three igloos, at a cost of \$6,000, to be used by rural residents around Acton who find it too far to drive to the recycling depot on Trafalgar Rd. The igloos should be operational by mid-September.

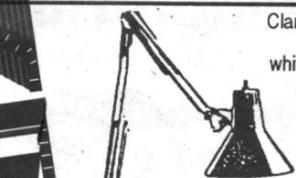
"Regional staff has helped out a lot by vigorously pursuing this," Bonnette said.

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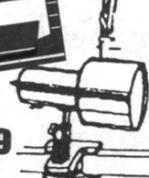


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