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# 'No Surprises' payment plan a success for Hydro

A promotional campaign aimed at helping Hydro customers to reduce the shock of high seasonal bills has been an "unqualified success" according to the Halton Hills Hydro Electric Commission.

As a result of the "No Surprises" equal billing program launched last summer the number of residential customers opting for the pre-authorized payment plan virtually doubled. Some 4,100 residential customers signed up, representing a 50 per cent increase over last year, when only 2,700 residential customers opted for pre-

authorized payment.

"We are pleased that the 'No Surprises' campaign caught the attention of our customers," said David Collie, Hydro General Manager. "The results speak for themselves. We now have a total of 33 per cent adherence to this payment plan among all of our customers."

As part of the campaign, every household in Halton Hills received a package that included materials explaining the "No Surprises" Payment Plan, an equal billing program designed to switch Hydro's customers to automated billing.

The attractive materials, which feature brochures, envelopes and advertising that include the "No Surprises" plug logo, were distributed to every household within the Commission's jurisdiction.

The customer simply completed the form to pre-authorize the equal monthly deductions from his or her chequing account and returned

the application along with a blank, unsigned cheque marked "void."

"We knew this was a good idea," said Murt Allison, Chairperson. "Our customers realized that switching over to the plan lets them avoid those big bills that result from cold winters or dry, hot summers. Every month the Hydro-water bill is the same."

The benefits of the plan are many. Customers avoid nagging interest charges, because with the monthly sum automatically debited from their chosen bank accounts, the bills are always paid on time. Customers also don't have to take time to write cheques anymore, nor do they need to worry about postage or misplacing bills.

Customers still receive statements advising them of the status of their Hydro-water account.

Every element of the promotion — from the concept to the finished product — was produced right here in Halton Hills.

## OHOSP program extended beyond 1993 deadline

Ontario Finance Minister, Floyd Laughren, announced on Dec. 14, 1993 that first-time home buyers can continue to open Ontario Home Ownership Savings Plans (OHOSP) beyond Dec. 31, 1993.

The program, first introduced in 1988, aims to help first-time Ontario home buyers with incomes of up to \$40,000 (if single) and \$80,000 combined (if married). It offers tax credits based on qualifying contributions to the plan. The program was scheduled to end on Dec. 31, 1993.

"This government strongly endorses the OHOSP program which encourages people to save money for their first home," said the Minister. He further added that he will introduce legislation in 1994 that will extend the program indefinitely.

As of October of this year, over 375,000 plans have been opened, resulting in over 200,000 home purchases. Individuals and households have received over \$101 million in OHOSP tax credits and more than \$105 million in OHOSP Land Transfer Tax re-

funds. The part of the program that refunded an eligible home-buyer's Land Transfer Tax (LTT) will not be continued, because it was becoming too costly in the present fiscal environment.

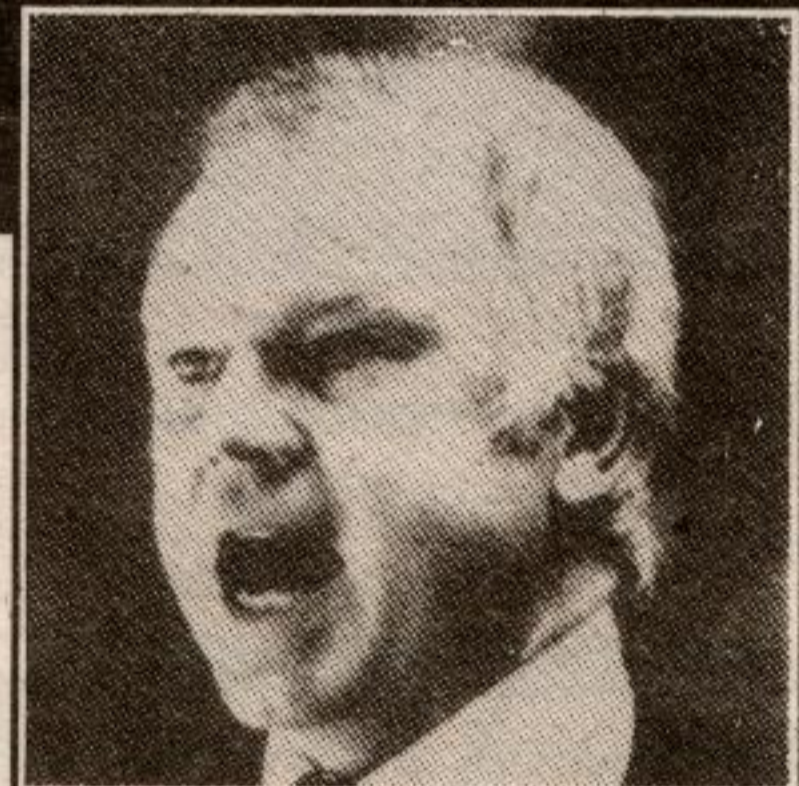
Land Transfer Tax refunds are available only to those first-time home buyers who opened plans before January 1, 1994 and who qualify for the OHOSP Tax Credit. The amount of the refund will depend on the amount paid for the home:

- For homes costing up to \$150,000, plan holders will be entitled to a full refund of Land Transfer Taxes paid.
- For homes priced between \$150,000 and \$200,000, plan holders will be entitled to a partial refund.

For more information, please call the Ministry of Finance's Information Centre toll-free from anywhere in the province: all areas 1-800-263-7965; french language inquiries 1-800-668-5821; telecommunication device for the deaf 1-800-263-7776.

## THE WRATH OF GRAPES

WITH DON CHERRY



### Eddie retires and turns to AHL

Eddie Shore retired in his thirties over a contract squabble. That's where the troubles for a lot of players start. For as wonderful a hockey player as he was, he was a tyrant as owner of his team, the Springfield Indians, of the American Hockey League. (Even the name sends chills down my back, as I played for him for three years).

Let me give you an idea of how bad it was playing for Shore and the Springfield Indians. If a player was acting up or giving the coach a hard time in the NHL, he would be sent to Springfield. (It was like you were being sent to Devil's Island to be punished.)

In fact, it's a true story that players had it written into their contracts that they couldn't be sent to Springfield for punishment.

Eddie was hard on himself and hard on his players. He was so cruel that he ruined lives of many people. Not only that, he thought he was a doctor and that he could cure cancer with what he called the "Marot treatment."

More on "the doctor" next week.



The Wrath of Grapes is brought to you each week by the area businesses featured here. Your support of these merchants is appreciated. If you have any comments or questions about an item in this column, you may contact Don at: Wrath of Grapes, The Acton Tanner, P.O. Box 150, Acton, L7J 2M3.

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