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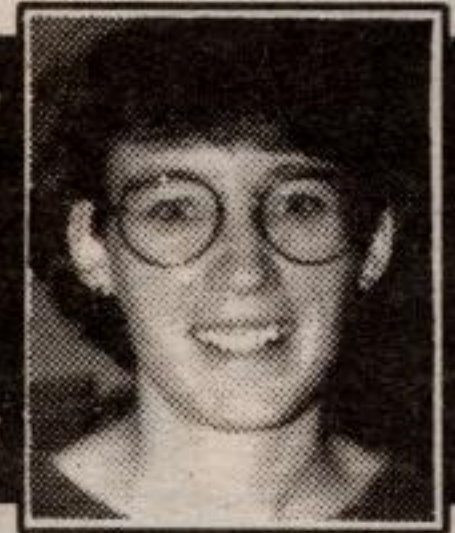
House apartments must meet new fire standards

If you own a house with two apartments, make sure you know what July 14, 1996 should mean to you.

As of this date, all two-dwelling units must meet fire standards. These standards came into effect July 14, 1994, but homeowners have been given two years to bring their properties up to code.

Ontario Regulation 385/94, also known as Retrofit Section 9.8, applies to detached houses, semi-detached houses and row houses

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WITH KAREN WETMORE



that contain two apartments. Each apartment must have its own living and sleeping area, kitchen and bathroom, such as basement apartments.

Halton Hills Fire Prevention Officer Don Maveal is urging homeowners to install smoke alarms in each apartment, proper doors and walls between apartments to help contain a fire if one should start, and safe electrical systems.

Even if you're just thinking about building a basement apartment in your house, you must get your application in by July 14.

"I don't think the government

has given enough advance notice to people," said Maveal. "I want to let them know that they need to apply by July 14, because after that it's game over."

No applications for basement apartments will be accepted for Halton Hills after that cut-off date.

Maveal also wants homeowners who may not have claimed having an extra apartment in their home, to do so. Each application will be looked at from its date,

with no penalties being given for past infractions.

"I'm looking strictly after life-saving issues," he said. "Every thing in the past is history."

Extensions can be granted to homeowners, so long as their application is in on time. Fines of up to \$25,000 can be imposed on anyone convicted of violating the new standards.

For details, call the Halton Hills Fire Department at 877-1133.

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