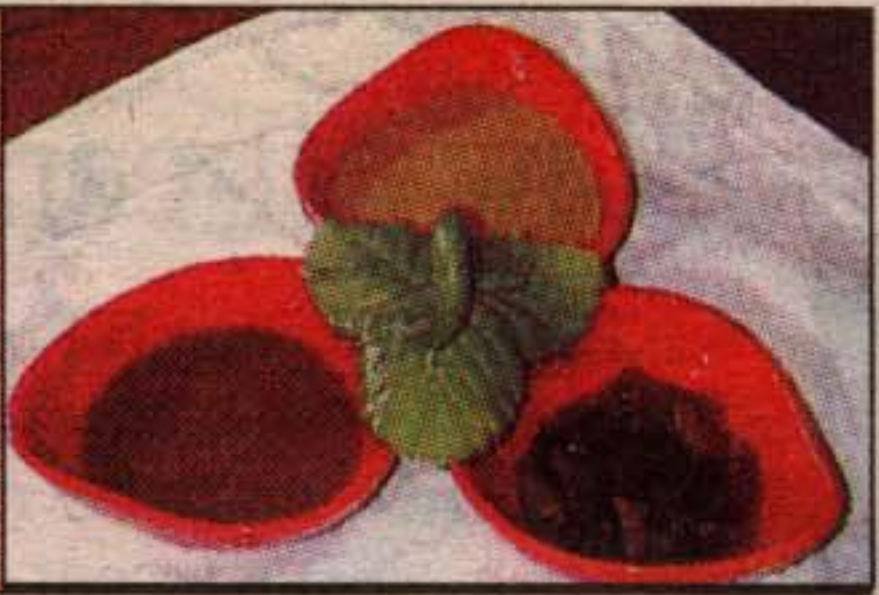


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**Wolfpack howling**  
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# The Independent

## Weekend Edition & Free Press

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**NEWS AT A GLANCE**

**Talks to premier**  
■ A local parent got her chance to take her concerns regarding a new school for Georgetown to the top. Valerie Pakkala, the school council chair for Centennial Middle School, got through to Premier Mike Harris on a CFRB call-in show Thursday and asked him what the government could do to get new schools built in Halton. Harris said he didn't know the specifics of Halton's situation, but acknowledged it was a growth area and that the province has money set aside for building new schools. "I thought his response was reasonable," Pakkala said. "I liked the fact that he said they would step in if the board wasn't going to do its job." See story, page 5.

**Stereo stolen**  
■ Halton Police report a \$3,500 stereo and CD player were taken from a 1995 Hyundai parked at a Tenth Line home sometime Tuesday night or Wednesday morning.

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## Norval wells unsafe, says health department

Water in 17 out of 18 wells tested at Norval homes and businesses on Winston Churchill Blvd. south of 10 Sideroad has been called unsafe by Halton Region Health Department.

All but one of the dug wells tested in that area also have nitrate levels that exceed provincial drinking water guidelines.

Tony Amalfa, Halton Region's environmental health area manager, said deeming the water unsafe has more to do with the bacteria levels in the wells than the nitrates. He said bacteria contamination could be caused by dirt getting into the wells when it rains.

He also said most of the dug wells in that area are at least 30 years old and due to the area's shallow groundwater table and sandy soil they are vulnerable to pollution. The water from the one drilled well tested in the area did not have any problems.

Amalfa said sources of nitrate contamination include decay of plant or animal matter, fertilizer or domestic sewage pollution.

At least two of the residents believe Sheridan Nurseries, which has an 83-acre farm in the area, is responsible for the high nitrate levels in their water but the well survey by Halton Region Health Department didn't pinpoint the nursery as the source.

Amalfa said nitrates are scattered in the whole area where the wells were tested and "it's not concentrated near Sheridan Nurseries or any one spot."

Amalfa said the nitrates "could have been in the soil for many years and is probably a result of a combination of sources such as septic systems, fertilizer use by homeowners, or greenhouse practices. The region well survey suggests fertilizer is the likely source of nitrate pollution in the water supplies and the degree to which commercial horticulture operations have affected the groundwater compared to greenhouse activities or farming could not be determined. Amalfa said the region doesn't have sampling records of the wells so he doesn't know how long they have been contaminated.

The maximum allowable concentration of nitrates in drinking water is 10 mg/litre according to the Ontario Drinking Water Objectives. Sixteen of the 17 dug wells tested had nitrate levels that exceeded the safe level, and the one that was under that level was very close at 9.85 mg/l. The average was 16.31mg/l and the highest was 57 mg/l. The one drilled well

Norval resident Lloyd Owens examines some water from his well which, along with water tested from many other wells in the area, was recently deemed unsafe by Halton Region Health Department.

Photo by Ted Brown See NORVAL, pg. 3

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