

# Police say auto theft 'a problem' in Georgetown

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"We have a problem with auto theft right now in Georgetown," said Gordon. "It's our belief these vehicles are being used to commute to and from areas outside of the region."

On the decline is the number of possession of stolen property charges by 66.7 per cent (from 12 to 4), offensive weapons, 62.5 per cent (from 8 to 3), break and enter 22.6 per cent (from 106 to 82), and theft under \$5,000 by 23 per cent (from 243 to 187).

Gordon said the decline in break and enter occurrences is linked to a break and enter project police conducted last year in which several arrests were made.

"Our pre-court diversion program is going well," said Gordon

about the fewer theft under \$5,000 charges laid so far this year.

In Halton crime involving stolen property decreased by 38.6 per cent (from 88 to 54) and offensive weapons offences also decreased by 34.1 per cent (from 124 to 81).

Region-wide hit and run occurrences increased 8.4 per cent (from 666 to 722). In Halton Hills the number of hit and run occurrences actually declined by 8.3 per cent (from 96 to 88). Property damage collisions, personal injury collisions were also both down in town from last year however, fatal collisions increased



JACKIE GORDON

from 0 in the first six months of last year to 2.

Gordon believes police efforts, such as the recent Project Gateway, which targeted speeding drivers has had an effect on the number of accidents.

Impaired driving occurrences also went down in Halton 6 per cent (from 199 to 187). In Halton Hills the number of impaired driving charges dropped 46.5 per cent from 43 to 23, while 12-hour suspensions were up 41 per cent (46 to 65).

Algar said he had no meaningful reason why sex offences and domestic assaults have increased in Halton.

He said perhaps domestic assaults are "a sign of the times" and a reflection of problems in the family such as unemployment.

—By Fannie Sunshine, special with files by Lisa Tallyn, staff writer

# High school teachers to resume extracurriculars

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Recent provincial legislation increases average class sizes, but reduces secondary teachers' aggregate workload. Harwood said special teacher duties, such as remedial work, instruction in technology, guidance and various supervisory responsibilities, now will count towards the extra half-class.

"The agreement will provide teachers with the time and opportunity to pursue the enjoyment of the array of sports, clubs and other activities that enrich the lives of so many students," he said.

The union leader said the amendment will provide other benefits such as allowing more work in computer labs, improving the report card process, providing more staff preparation time, and more support for library and guidance duties.

"The staff in our schools want stability and certainly the parents and students do as well," Gardiner said. "I think this agreement will provide the stability

that's been missing the last two or three years."

Harwood said he was very pleased at the strong support for the amendment.

"I'm relieved that the crisis is settled."

After the teachers' vote, trustees unanimously approved the change. The board's executive officer of human resources said the change will improve morale.

"It will help teachers find time to do things they had problems with before. Overall, we'll be starting on a positive note," said Dawn Beckett-Morton.

"Increasing extra-curricular activities in high schools benefits the majority of students and will be welcome news to students, parents and the community."

Teacher Advisory Program work can also be used for remedial support and special duties, she noted.

However, the increased class sizes will mean consolidation and cancellation of some classes.

"Each secondary school is carefully reviewing their staff

plan to ensure that program integrity is maintained," said Keith Johnson, the superintendent responsible for secondary school staffing.

"We are making every effort to make these changes with minimum disruption to students' schedules."

A letter will be distributed at registration next week to all students and parents regarding the changes at their particular schools.

Gardiner said staff have been working to adjust schedules under the new guidelines.

"There may be some short term pain in the first few days of school but overall this will lead to a much more enriching and valuable school life for students."

The agreement maintains existing staff and does not affect the budget.

—By Dennis Smith, special with files from Herb Garbutt, staff writer

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