

In all town facilities

Gumball machines pulled after child survives choking incident

After a child choked on a jawbreaker at the Mold-Master's SportsPlex the Town of Halton Hills has decided to remove the machines that dispense the candy in all town facilities.

On Thursday, April 22 a seven-year-old Moffat boy, whose mom did not want him identified, choked on a jawbreaker he bought in a vending machine at the arena after a hockey tryout.

The boy's uncle Darren Corpe of Acton said although the boy couldn't talk at the time, he "saw the panicked look on his face" and knew he was choking.

While 911 was called, Corpe attempted to dislodge the candy by doing the Heimlich maneuver, but was unsuccessful. Two off-duty Toronto police officers who were at the arena, also tried to dislodge the jawbreaker but with no luck.

"As we waited, what seemed like an hour, but was really closer to 7 to 11 minutes for the ambulance, he turned blue and lost consciousness," said the boy's aunt Janet Corpe.

The paramedics were able to get the boy's oxygen level back up to 100 per cent and while at the hospital the jawbreaker had dissolved enough for the boy to be able to cough it up.

He is fine now.

A press release issued by the Town of Halton Hills said the decision to replace the vending machines was made in the interest of public safety.

"While we can't completely eliminate the risk of children choking on food or candy, in this case, we can certainly choose products that represent a lower risk," said Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette. "Most importantly the young boy is doing well, and we're happy to do our part in preventing a similar incident from happening again."

"It was simply a responsible thing for us to do," said Paul Stover, the town's manager of facilities.

He said until the incident last month there had been no reported incidents or issue with the type of candy available in town vending machines.

He added reducing the risk of choking is a joint responsibility and while the town has taken measures to reduce the risk through the sale of certain products "this reminds all of us about the importance of proper supervision and the safe consumption of food."

The Corpes have expressed concern that firefighters and police did not respond to the call, as there is no tiered response in Halton Hills, which means all



Recreation and Parks employee Alan Dunn shows the smaller-sized candy that is now sold in all vending machines at town facilities.

Photo by Ted Brown

emergency services respond. Halton Hills Fire Chief Bob Meads said there is no automatic tiered response in Halton Hills as the town does not have a full-time fire department and an ambulance would likely arrive before or at the same time as firefighters.

He said however they do respond if called from the ambulance dispatcher because the ambulance is going to be delayed getting to a call.

Jim King, director of Halton Region Emergency Services, said the ambulance was on the scene in under eight minutes from the time the call came into the 911 operator, which is within the 8:59 North American response standard.

"We've looked at the call from our perspective. The response was appropriate given where the vehicle was," said King.

—By Lisa Tallyn, staff writer

MIKE CHONG

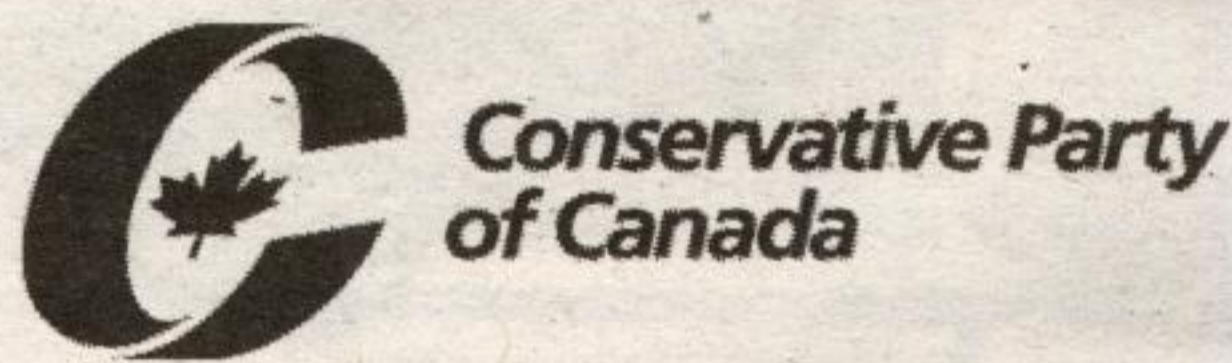
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HELP DETERMINE BUDGET PRIORITIES Public Budget Meeting - May 26

The Halton District School Board invites members of the public to provide input regarding spending priorities for the public School Board's 2004-05 budget.

All members of the public are welcome to attend the

PUBLIC BUDGET MEETING
Wednesday, May 26, 2004
Milton District High School
396 Williams Avenue, Milton
Presentation - 7 p.m.



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Mary Chapin, Chair of the Board Dusty Papke, Director of Education

Region's Tire Drop Off day nets 2,100 tires and 300 kg of food

More than 400 Halton residents dropped off over 2,100 tires free of charge during the seventh annual "tire amnesty" held last month at the Halton Waste Management Site. Halton residents are normally charged the minimum fee of \$5 to dispose of up to five tires at the site.

During the tire drop-off day, Halton staff also collected food and cash donations for area food banks. Twenty-eight boxes of food, weighing around 300 kilograms (660 pounds), were collected during this year's event, along with more than \$475 in cash donations for the food banks.

The tires Halton Region collected will be turned over to a recycling company that finds secondary use for the tires. Some will be reused as tires in developing countries, while others will be made into items such as boat dock bumpers, wheel chocks, blasting mats for road construction activities, as well as other uses.

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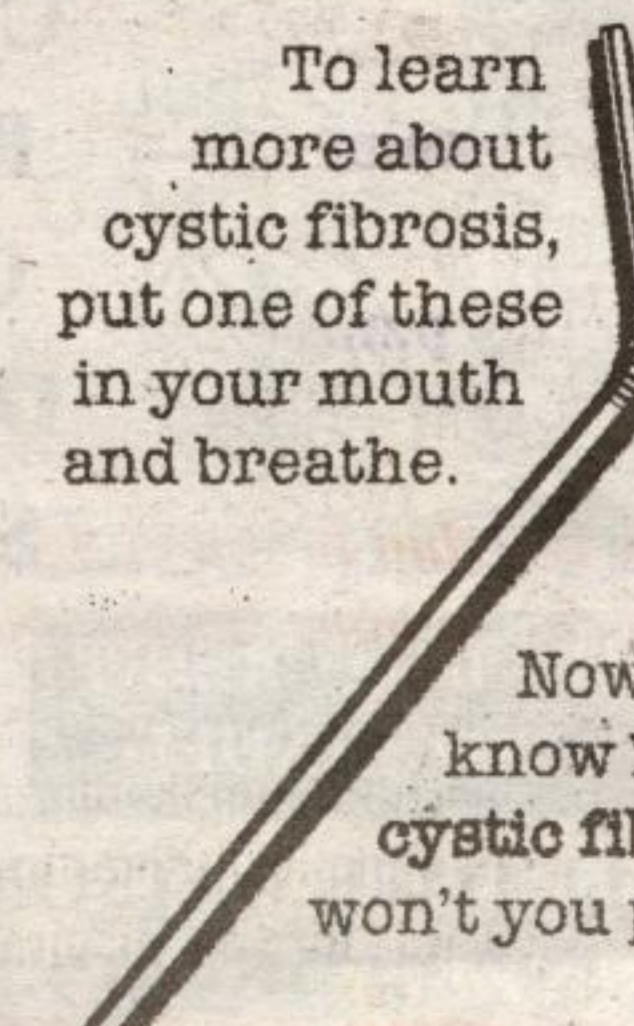
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