



Timber!!!

Steve Deschenes of King Street was surprised Wednesday as he watched an old Norway Maple on his property blow over, covering both his and his neighbour's driveways, until the Town of Halton Hills works department staff could cut it. Halton Hills Hydro also responded to reconnect lines that were taken down. Upon closer inspection, Deschenes found the trunk of the tree was rotten and infested with carpenter ants. Photo by Ted Brown

After high levels of un-ionized ammonia found Quarry resumes Phase 3 pumping operation

Dufferin Aggregates has just resumed pumping water from the third phase of its Acton quarry after operations were stopped temporarily because higher than acceptable levels of un-ionized ammonia, which can be toxic to aquatic life, were found in water samples.

Sarah Lowe, a spokesperson for Dufferin Aggregates, said when the issue of water quality arose last month, the quarry voluntarily decided it would rather stop producing in that area "until we got it sorted out."

"We moved from phase 3 into phase 2 while we were sorting out the concern," said Lowe.

Lowe said Dufferin had resumed pumping again yesterday (Thursday), in the third phase of the quarry.

"We have moved the location of where we were pumping from, and as far as we know, things should be fine," said Lowe. None of the water is currently being dis-

charged, added Dufferin general manager Bill Galloway. He said they are monitoring the test results and working closely with the Ministry of Environment (MOE).

Galloway said they believe the un-ionized ammonia is a residue from the explosives used in blasting at the quarry.

Dorienne Cushman, senior environmental officer with the MOE, said the maximum allowable level in discharge water of un-ionized ammonia, a component of ammonia, is .02 mg per litre. Any level higher than that has to be reported to the MOE, said Cushman.

She said on July 29 the amount of un-ionized ammonia found in a water sample pumped during dewatering from Dufferin's Phase 3 quarry, located south of 22 Sideroad and west of Third Line, was .024 mg per litre.

Following a sample that had a result below the acceptable level on August 10, Cushman said a sample taken on August 24 exceeded the level again, with a

reading of .047 mg. She said the quarry immediately stopped pumping water.

She said another sample of water was analyzed on September 1, and the level in that sample was below the acceptable level.

Un-ionized ammonia levels are impacted by temperature said Cushman, and it's not unusual to get a higher than acceptable level once a year, but twice in a row is "unusual."

Lowe said the higher levels of un-ionized ammonia in the water from the quarry are "partly related" to the hot summer.

As a result of the elevated levels Cushman said the MOE is requiring Dufferin Aggregates increase its monitoring frequency from monthly to weekly, meet a 24-hour turnaround on test results, and if there is an unacceptable level, they are to stop discharging water until the level is acceptable. These measures are in place through the end of November, she said.

—By Lisa Tallyn, staff writer

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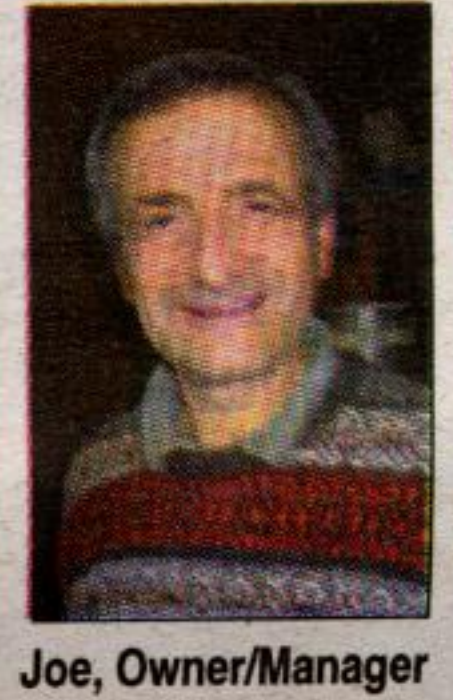
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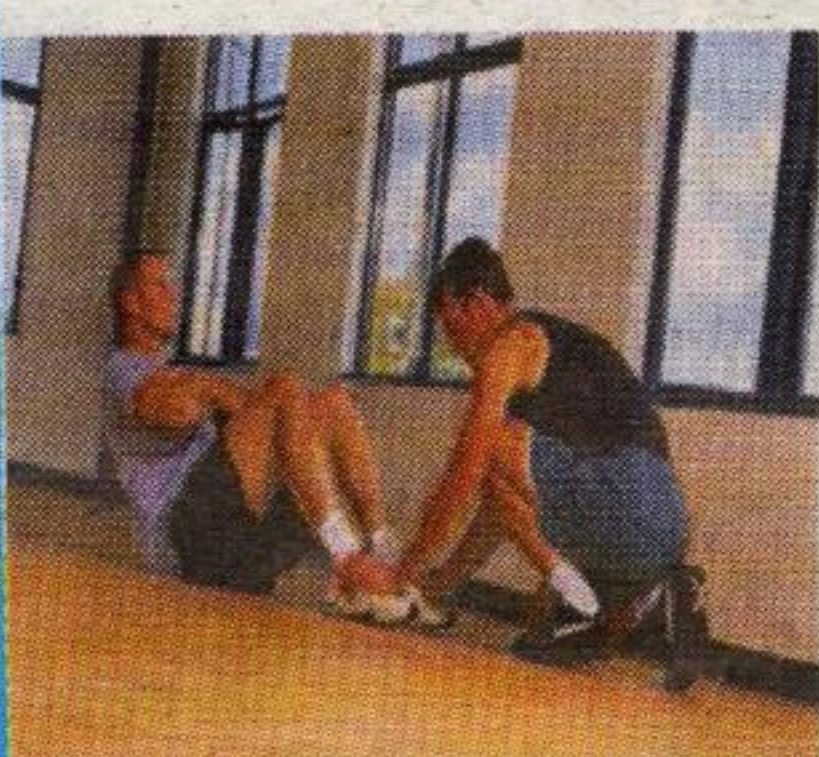
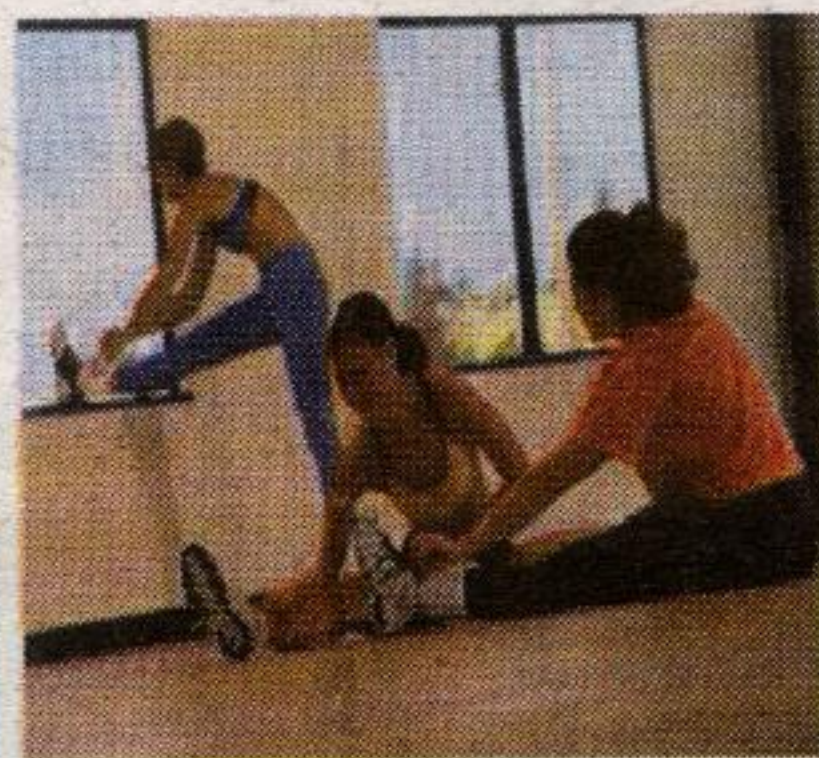
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