

# Trees a leading cause of fires Fire department issues safety list

While Christmas trees are a beloved part of many people's holiday tradition, they can also be dangerous. According to Halton Hills Fire Protection and Prevention Services, accidental household fires and the number of fire deaths are highest during the holiday season, and Christmas trees are often to blame.

"Our lifestyle seems to unravel with all the activities that coincide with the preparations for the perfect Christmas," said Chief of Fire Prevention and Public Education Harry Olivieri. "And not enough time is spent taking those extra precautions necessary for a safe holiday".

"The Christmas tree has unfortunately been named as being one of the leading causes of many, many fires in past years," said Olivieri.

He offers a few safety tips for caring for your Christmas tree:

- Thoroughly check the tree for brown, dry needles when selecting that perfect tree.
- Before placing the tree in the stand, diagonally cut 2-3" off the base of the tree.
- Keep the tree away from any sources of heat such as fireplaces or baseboard heaters.
- Check and add water daily.
- Use only CSA-labeled indoor lights.
- Unplug the lights before leaving the home or going to bed at night.
- Do not overload any wall receptacles or extension cords.
- Make sure each storey of the home is equipped with working smoke alarms.



Sparky the fire safety mascot for Halton Hills Fire Protection and Prevention Services dropped by Tuitman's Garden Centre on Regional Road 25, south of Acton, to give owner Len Tuitman a few pointers on fire safety around Christmas trees. Photo by Ted Brown

# Police blotter Driver flees from officer

A Cardiff man is facing several charges after a vehicle fled from police on Guelph St. early Sunday.

A Halton Police officer on patrol saw a 2000 Honda Prelude being driven erratically on Mountainview Rd. at 1:45 a.m.

The officer followed the vehicle to Guelph St. where he drove alongside the car, looked at the driver, and activated his emergency lights in an attempt to stop the vehicle.

Police say the vehicle sped away at approximately 120 km/h in a 60 km/h zone. The officer did not pursue the vehicle but communicated its direction and speed over the police radio.

The vehicle continued toward Brampton and a short time later it struck a curb in the Lake Louise Dr. area. Police say the driver left the vehicle and fled on foot.

At approximately 4:30 a.m. the same officer who attempted to stop the Prelude on Guelph St. saw a man walking along Hwy. 7 in Halton Hills.

The man was stopped by police and charged.

Charged with two counts of drive while prohibited, breach of probation, criminal flight, failing to stop and possession of property obtained by crime (the vehicle) is Joseph David Iocco, 32, of Maple Rd., Cardiff.

# Rookie trustee unfazed assuming chair's job

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"Excellence can be measured, and not by how many times we repeat the phrase. I think that the only measuring stick that really matters is how often we hear it back from our clients, from our families."

Tuck Kutarna asked for patience from board staff and the public as the first-time trustees learn on the job. The new board members will attend a trustee training conference Dec. 18 in Toronto.

"I have, in the past two weeks, felt inspired by my new colleagues and friends around the table, by your honesty and excitement for what lies ahead. Some of you have shown great courage, put yourself on the line to heal old wounds. Others have taken the lead in building new bridges."

The latter remark appears to be directed at the impression by some that the previous board of trustees was split into two ideological factions. Tuck Kutarna said she doesn't believe one exists.

"Quite the opposite. There is a real comfort among the trustees to work together and to move forward with a common goal."

Tuck Kutarna is carrying on a tradition of north Halton trustees as board chair. She succeeds Milton's Paul Tate. Prior to that Halton Hills' Ethel Gardiner had a long run in the position.



Halton Hills Wards 3 & 4 Trustee Gillian Tuck Kutarna was elected chair of the Halton District School Board in a vote among her peers last week. Tuck Kutarna was elected to the board in the Nov. 13 municipal election.

Photo by Liesa Kortmann

"She kindly called to congratulate me," Tuck Kutarna said of the ailing Gardiner. "It's nice to keep Halton Hills and north Halton on the radar."

Tuck Kutarna has a vast educational and volunteer resume.

She has an honours BA in political studies, a master's degree in public administration and a bachelor of laws degree, all from Queen's University.

In terms of volunteer work, she has served on several boards of directors including Georgetown District Memorial Hospital, Bennett Health Care Centre, Halton Community Legal Services and the Big Sisters Association.

She was also vice-chair of the William Osler Health Centre Board and a member of the Halton Health Care Services transition team.

Tuck Kutarna added she wouldn't identify specific projects or goals that she wants to accomplish during her term until the strategic planning process and four-year implementation period are discussed amongst the trustees beginning next month.

The next meeting of the Halton District School Board will be the regularly scheduled Board meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 17, 2007. The upcoming meeting schedule for the Halton board is available at [www.hdsb.ca](http://www.hdsb.ca).

—With files from Eamonn Maher, staff writer

Halton Police are investigating the theft of a \$20,000 four-wheel utility vehicle from a shed at Eagle Ridge Golf Club on Tenth Line sometime between Friday and Sunday.

Entry was gained into the shed after sliding doors were forced open.

The vehicle, a Toro Workman 3100, was inoperable at the time and police say would it likely have been pushed and trailed off the property.

A 1997 Plymouth Voyager van valued at \$5,000 was stolen from the parking lot at a Park Ave. apartment building sometime between Friday and Sunday.

A Halton Hills man is facing charges after police were called to a Raylawn Cr. apartment at 5 p.m. Saturday because a man was yelling, cursing and pounding on an apartment door.


Charged with cause a disturbance and breach of probation is Ronald Patrick Coffey, 44, of Hwy. 7.

Police report a 1990 Dodge Dakota was stolen from the Mill St. Crossing parking lot in Acton sometime between midnight and 2 p.m. Sunday. The truck, valued at \$3,000, was locked.



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