

# Region seeks to monitor air quality

**MELANIE HENNESSEY**  
Special to The IFP

Halton Region is looking to kick off a new program that would assess air quality across Halton.

The proposal, which was supported by the health and social services committee recently, calls for the health department's 2007 budget to be increased by \$50,000 to develop a community-wide air quality modeling initiative that can be used to assess air quality and evaluate the contribution of new emission sources.

A report from Halton Medical Officer of Health Dr. Bob Nosal to the committee explained that while air quality monitoring can't identify the contributions from different sources to local air quality, modeling can estimate those impacts.

The modeling would use meteorological information, topography and emissions data to estimate the concentration of different air pollutants across the community.

Kim Perotta, a senior policy analyst with the health department, told the committee about the major sources of air pollution, which include the transportation sector, fuel consumption and the industrial/commercial sector.

"Ontario's air is significantly affected by U.S. sources, particularly coal-fired power plants in the mid-western U.S.," she said. "However, local emission sources also have an important impact on local air quality and health."

She pointed out that in four major Ontario cities—two of which neighbour Halton (Toronto and Hamilton)—air pollution is responsible for seven to 10 per cent of all non-traumatic deaths each year.

The committee went on to endorse a lengthy recommendation on the topic that directs the Region to:

- Examine the portable monitoring equipment and/or resources that could be used to assess air quality in micro-environments such as traffic corridors
- Examine the policy instruments that might be used to support the development of 'complete communities' that reduce the reliance on vehicles, in turn reducing emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases across Halton
- Develop and implement a health promotion program that educates the public about the link between air quality, human health, climate change and the environment and about actions that can be taken to improve air quality and/or slow down climate change.

In addition, the committee supported a motion put forward by Oakville Councillor Fred Oliver to approve—in principle—the purchase of stationary air quality monitors, subject to a report back from staff on May 24.

Halton Hills Councillor Clark Somerville said this would present a tremendous opportunity to do monitoring on the Niagara Escarpment.

# Ask The Professionals

Send your questions for any of these professionals:  
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280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown L7G 4B1



324 Guelph St.,  
Georgetown  
905-702-1774



**Brad Keeling**  
Personal Trainer

www.powerzone.ca www.bkathletics.com  
brad@bkathletics.com

**Q:** How can I get my child to stay on the right path?

**A:** One of the most important responsibilities of being an adult is to help children and teens get on and stay on the "right path". Logically, part of the right path is to be involved with fitness, since involvement plays a huge role in the prevention of diabetes, hypertension and obesity, not to mention that it helps our young people to be stronger, more flexible, more alert, more confident, and more optimistic. As is true of most things in life that are "good for you", sometimes our kids need a gentle push in the right direction, and sometimes we, as adults, need to be reminded to provide that push. The Canadian Revenue Agency has announced a new "Children's Fitness Tax Credit" to help make fitness a more important, and affordable part of their lives. The credit is available to children 16 years of age and under. So what programs qualify for this tax credit? Well, for starters, a membership at PowerZone qualifies! And specialized programs (for members & non-members) like Personal Training, Self Defence, Sport Specific Team Training and Teen Training also qualify. If you would like more information on the Tax Credit, our membership and specialized programs that we offer, come into PowerZone and we'll be glad to go over it with you! And let's help keep our young people on the "right path".



324 Guelph Street., Georgetown  
905-877-3163



**Shari White**  
Education Director

**Q:** Shari, I need help! I just had my interview with my son's teacher and he said that Dave is "not writing enough". How can I help him?

**A:** This problem has become more and more common lately. Chances are your son only does his writing at school and doesn't always have the opportunity outside of assignments and reports to practice his writing and to see just how useful it is. Here are just some suggestions to get him into the "writing habit".

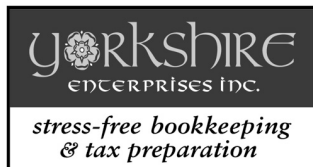
**WRITE TO YOUR CHILD.** These notes can take the form of reminders, thank-you notes, invitations to do something together and so on. Place these notes in fun places.

**SHOW YOUR OWN ENJOYMENT OF WRITING.** Let your children see you writing letters and cards. Show them how helpful it is to make lists for groceries and other things that need to be done. Reveal your own excitement when you receive notes or letters.

**WRITE WITH YOUR CHILDREN.** Let them see that you make mistakes and revisions. Children will learn that writing takes time and that reviewing and rewriting is part of the process.

**ENCOURAGE RISK TAKING.** Don't concentrate on spelling and sentence structure on the first draft. This will come after all the ideas are down. Encourage experimentation with new words and stronger vocabulary. On the semi-final draft, begin the editing process.

If you need more suggestions, or would like to register for our summer programs, please call me at 905-877-3163.



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**Marion Murchison**  
Tax Consultant

**Q:** I only have a few slips and no expenses to claim, so why should I pay you to prepare my taxes?

**A:** Many people think that tax returns are just basic math. This is mostly true. However, a seasoned tax consultant knows more questions to ask of you than a computer program or a T1 General does. You can fill in what is provided on your slips, but if you don't know of a deduction you could claim due to your particular situation, you won't be prompted by computer software to add anything else to your return.

Revenue Canada has conveniently made questioning of allowable expenses the concern for the taxpayer. If you don't claim a deduction you are entitled to, they will not let you know that you deserve it. Neither will tax preparation software. It will tell you, after you've entered something, if it is O.K., but it won't prompt you for additional information, not on a slip.

A seasoned tax consultant may very well prompt you to recognize an expense that could save you more money than the actual cost of preparing your return.

As well, the price you pay for someone else to prepare your return is tax deductible for the next tax year if certain conditions apply. Such as business, employment or rental expenses and investment income.

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**Christoph Summer**  
Owner/Administrator

**Q:** I am thinking of moving into a retirement residence. With so many variables and prices, how do I make a choice?

**A:** This is a seemingly daunting task but one that can be made easier if you give yourself the time and plan ahead.

A good place to start is with residences that come highly recommended by family and friends. Secondly, residents with membership in ORCA (Ontario Residential Care Association) have met the industry's high standards, ensuring quality care. Next, do a realistic assessment of your needs. For example, what help are you receiving now and what added help would you like?

Add to this, a "wish list". What added features are important to you? What type of setting would make you feel most at home? How does the home look? Is it a bright, clean, friendly place to live? Can you bring your own furniture... and so on?

Compile a list of questions and fill out a separate evaluation for every residence you visit. That way, you will have a consistent assessment of each home without the worry of forgetting the details. Consider too, staying for a meal and comparing this important aspect of retirement living.

Your evaluation of homes can be based on all the things that are important to you and your needs including, of course, the cost.

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**MANON DULUDE**

**Q:** My marriage is in trouble and we do not seem to connect any more. Can Relationship Coaching help us?

**A:** With life moving at the speed of light, it seems inevitable for couples to stop prioritizing themselves and their relationship. Many believe that it is normal to neglect their relationship and that in time things will get better. However, the more time passes the greater the gap becomes.

These days, much time is spent commuting, working and driving kids to various activities. As a result, the relationship is left unattended and suffering. In my opinion, the relationship between spouses is the corner stone of the family, and can be compared to the foundation of a house. If left unattended for too long, cracks attack the foundation and eventually you find yourself with a seriously compromised and leaky foundation. Coaching for couples offers an opportunity to reevaluate how a couple prioritizes and attends to each other. It is a time to measure the impact of current behaviors on the relationship. Spouses explore how their values and needs may have changed over the years. Coaching assists them in developing a new vision and plan to move forward in a manner that will nurture both individuals and the relationship. As couples commit to a new direction, they become accountable together to revive their love and passion and strengthen their bond. Coaching is a positive and forward thinking approach to strengthen your relationship whether you have been together a few months or several years.

Manon Dulude is a certified member of the Ontario Association of Consultants, Counsellors, Psychometrists and Psychotherapist and a Certified Professional Coach with the International Coach Federation. You can reach her at 905 873 9393.

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**DR. ANOOP SAYAL**

**Q:** How do I avoid bad breath?

**A:** It's everywhere. Buy this and prevent foot odor; buy that and avoid body odor. It's no surprise that bad breath is socially unacceptable. Every year, advertisers spend millions to sell their mouthwashes for bad breath.

You must understand that using a mouthwash for chronically bad breath can actually mask periodontal, or gum, disease. Diseased gums and tooth decay are the two most common causes of bad breath, or "halitosis." If you smoke, you're not only more likely to have bad breath, but also to get periodontal disease. Eating strong foods, like onions and garlic, is rarely the real cause of chronic bad breath.

If you must, a saltwater rinse can be used instead of a mouthwash. You may have guessed by now that the best way to keep your breath fresh is by daily brushing and flossing, and keeping regular dental checkups. Your gums need your help in this so they can fight off plaque and deposits.

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