

# OPINION

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## Trash plan a mess

If there is one lesson to be learned from this past Earth Day, in which hundreds of residents spent hours cleaning up Halton Hills, it's that we have a long way to go in changing people's attitudes when it comes to disposing of trash.

This past weekend, under glorious conditions, residents of all ages did their part to help beautify our town by filling hundreds, if not thousands of bags, of trash. The amount of garbage—which included everything from tires to office furniture and even a kitchen sink—was mind-numbing. How can so many thoughtless people treat our community as a dumping ground?

Equally troubling was a warning this week from Gord Miller, Ontario's Environmental Commissioner, who said the Ontario government has failed miserably when it comes to waste reduction.

Despite election promises to divert 60 per cent of Greater Toronto Area garbage through the three Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle) and composting, the Liberal government hasn't made a dent in the garbage piles and even worse, doesn't have a plan on how it can be done.

According to government statistics, Ontarians recycle and compost only 25 per cent of all their garbage. The rate rises slightly to 32 per cent if commercial waste is eliminated from the mix and only residential figures are used. That's still a long way from the 60 per cent target the Liberals set for 2008.

While improvements in recycling numbers have come from municipalities which have adopted green bin organics programs, there are currently no strong markets for finished compost. According to Miller that won't change unless the government establishes province-wide standards for what can be in compost and the techniques used to produce it.

While the province has indicated it is open to energy from waste incineration as a replacement for landfills, strict limits on what can be burnt must be established so as not to undermine recycling efforts, said Miller.

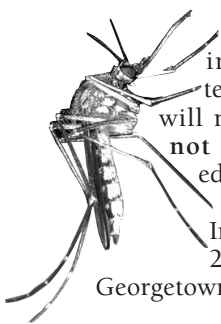
Forcing businesses—from restaurants to the construction industry—to recycle must also be part of the plan. A survey of 260 businesses last year indicated 93 per cent did not comply with provincial recycling regulations.

The efforts of all who took time this past weekend to clean a river bed, a park, a schoolground or a ditch, should be commended.

However, we would like to see less work for them on future Earth Days.

## Something bugging you?

Send us a letter!



Letters to the editor must include an address and daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 200 words and may be edited for content and/or length.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### No reason Ctk students can't walk to school

Dear editor,

I must comment on the ongoing letters and articles regarding busing (or lack of) for the Christ the King students beginning this September.

My child will have to walk from Stewart's Mill to Georgetown District High School, which is maybe five minutes closer than Ctk. I do not see this as a problem.

Since when is it a bad thing that kids actually get out and walk? Why do parents feel that their children must be driven everywhere?

Exercise is a good thing, and it's no wonder that we have such a problem with childhood obesity in this nation if no one expects their kids to walk anymore.

I must refer to a recent letter to the editor where the writer stated it is dangerous to their child's health to walk this distance, because they don't dress properly for the weather. Please, it's called actions and consequences, something we often enforce upon a two year old. If the child gets cold enough, one can assume they will start dressing properly.

As well, the most recent article in the April 18 edition, stated that children from Stewart's Mill will have to walk a good portion of the route through an undeveloped ravine and would be a long way from any homes. Nowhere along the mentioned route are you more than five minutes from either a residence or business.

The main reason there was busing

in place for both high schools in the first place is because there were no sidewalks along Eighth Line. Now that they are in place, there really is

no reason why kids cannot get to school on foot, like many of us had to do.

Pat Akey, Georgetown

### Safety better for joggers on roadways

Dear editor,

Over the past several months I have noticed a few letters complaining about joggers on our roads, saying we should stick to sidewalks or parks.

A letter from Bianca Lewis specifically asked why joggers feel they must run in the street instead of on the sidewalk. As an both a professional engineer and a regular runner for 20+years, I feel I am qualified to give an answer.

There are actually several reasons why the roads are the best place, not only for joggers but all cyclists, including youngsters, as well.

The main reason is safety. This may seem counter-intuitive as there are cars on the road. The problem is the cars pulling off the side streets.

You will find that most drivers, if they even stop at all, will only stop at the point where they can see if there are any cars coming. The point is that drivers can see the joggers when we run in the street—they might not like sharing the road with us, but at least they can see us. The same goes for kids on bikes.

The roads are also preferable over sidewalks for injury prevention due to camber and hardness. Sidewalks are cambered (slanted) at intersections and driveways. Running over many of

these causes the leg on the lower side to underpronate and the leg on the upper side to overpronate. Basically this means a biomechanically sound runner will become unstable at every camber and over time will be at risk of developing knee and hip injuries.

Hardness is also a concern for long distance runners. Roads are made of asphalt and sidewalks are made of concrete. Depending on the material used, the concrete will be between 2-10 times harder than the asphalt. Running on the harder surface puts the runner at a greater risk of stress fractures.

Two letters over the past several months complained that when they came around a curve with cars parked in the street that they nearly ran in to some joggers. They should realize that the problem is not the joggers, but rather their driving speed and their ability to control their vehicle. It is the drivers who need to realize that they do not own the road and they need to operate their vehicle in a manner that is safe for everyone in the street.

And remember that my fellow joggers and cyclists are also taxpayers, so it is our right to be in the streets.

Lesley Grice, Georgetown