

## Remember Walkerton?

With the memory of the Walkerton water tragedy still reasonably fresh in our memories, you would think Halton residents wouldn't be so cavalier when it comes to the quality of their drinking water.

However, a report presented to the Region's health and social services committee recently revealed that of the 261 wells randomly tested by the Halton Region Health Department in 2007—largely in Halton Hills and Milton—37 per cent had unacceptable water quality in terms of bacteria.

That number was almost on par with a similar study in 2006 that showed 38 per cent of wells had unacceptable levels of bacteria.

Halton Medical Officer of Health Dr. Bob Nosal called the results "disconcerting".

The good news is that the health department has not received any reports of residents becoming sick by drinking tainted water. However, on the downside, that study showed that approximately one third of the tested wells had deficiencies that could lead to the water supply being contaminated by surface and rain water runoff.

"Many of these deficiencies, such as cracks in well casing or poor drainage around the well head allow bacteria to contaminate the well, making it an unsafe water source," Nosal said. "Proper well construction and maintenance is the first line of defence to safeguard drinking water from contamination."

Unfortunately many Halton well owners simply aren't having their water tested. In 2004 the Region tested 7,000 well water samples but last year that number dipped to 4,000.

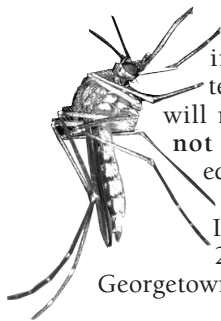
For such a simple—and free—procedure you would think more well owners would have their water tested. After all, is bacteria-laden water something you want to ingest on a regular basis?

Sample bottles are available free of charge and can be picked up or dropped off locally at the health department's Georgetown office (93 Main St. S.) Monday-Thursday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. The bottles can also be mailed out to residents at their request.

Water, and its quality, is not something we should take for granted.

## 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 Unsigned letters will not be published.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.

Mail or drop off:

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Steve Nease



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Policy does a disservice to students

Dear editor,  
I couldn't agree more with Ted Brown's Feb. 8 column about the asinine policy of the Ministry of Education with regard to late assignments.

I hear that many school boards have tried and discarded this policy as unworkable for precisely the reasons you listed in your column. Unfortunately, the Halton board is

clinging to the "letter of the law", so to speak.

You alluded to university and college applications, where marks are very important. The other thing that's important in this regard is getting those applications in on time. Sending a university, college or even residence application in late just won't cut it. Similarly, there is no "feel free to hand in assignments when you feel like it"

policy at any of the universities or colleges in this province or any other.

Not having late penalties does a disservice to students, who will graduate without any realization of the very real deadlines in the world outside the classroom. Missed getting that dream job because you were late for the interview? Too bad! Missed your wedding because you and your girlfriends were out shopping and lost track of the time? Bad luck!

Unless the Ministry of Education and the Halton Board discard this ludicrous policy, voters just might decide to be too late to vote in the next municipal and provincial elections.

Maggie Laidlaw, Guelph

### Ministry producing a generation who can't fail

Dear editor,  
Re: Feb. 13 editorial (Schools out... to lunch).

Does the Ministry of Education understand that time management is absolutely essential in our busy society today? Getting assignments in on time, as well as other planning, is necessary to any form of accomplishment in this world. Does the Ministry of Education have meetings and agendas they have to plan, prepare for, and attend and if they miss

these time lines is it OK?

There are now more daily planners, planning software and other electronic devices than ever before to help us organize our time.

We are producing a generation of people who can't fail because they get a number of chances to do it over again and now they don't need to plan for now or the future.

WAKE UP MINISTRY OF EDUCATION!

Ross Pechaluk, Georgetown

### Mystery plow thanked

Dear editor,  
Like everyone we're struggling to cope with this crazy winter.

Recently I came home from work expecting to break my back (again) trying to clear the mountain of heavy snow left by the snowplow. As I approached my driveway I couldn't believe what I saw—the driveway was cleaned perfectly.

My neighbour said she saw a man operating a "plow with a snow blower on the back". As she went to thank him he had finished and left. She followed in her car but seconds later there was no plow to be found.

We want to thank this very kind gentleman for such a huge favour. It made my week and I wish he could know how much we appreciate it.

Liz Zahara, Georgetown

### School policy wouldn't work in working world

Dear editor,  
I was thinking the other day how the new student 'better late than never' policy for assignments would play out in the business world.

"George, that important assignment is three days late. What's the holdup?"

"I'm sorry, Mr. Edwards, but I haven't had time to get around to it... what with skiing last weekend and a

very demanding girlfriend."

"That's OK, George, we have a 'pyramid of intervention' here at Widget International. We'll help you with your time management skills and break the assignment into smaller stages so that we don't interfere with your social life. After all, it's better late than never."

Yeah! Right!

Ian Barrett, Acton