

# Few at meeting were prepared for emergency

Turns out some of the people whose job is public emergency preparedness need some personal survival skills help.

Acton and Regional

Councillor Clark Somerville thanked Council last Tuesday for sponsoring the Halton Police Services Board as it hosted the Ontario Association of Service Board's

annual meeting.

Somerville recounted how a guest speaker, an emergency coordinator from Brampton who worked with the Red Cross in New Orleans, quickly made her point by asking anyone with more than half-a-tank of gas in their car to stand up.

"That narrowed the room down pretty quick. And then -how many people have three litres of water per person in the house? And, this is a room full of people who deal with emergency planning, and it was surprising how few were actually prepared," Somerville said last Tuesday, during Emergency Preparedness Week.

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# Have fun with fireworks safely

By Frances Niblock

There has never been a fire or injury caused by fireworks in Halton Hills and that's just how emergency officials want to keep it.

With the Victoria Day holiday coming up - a time when fireworks help celebrate warmer weather - fire

officials caution that in the hands of children, fireworks can be dangerous, but in the hands of careful adults, they can be a lot of fun.

The Town's rules for fireworks - a Bylaw to Prohibit and/or Regulate the Sale, Storage, Display and Discharge of Fireworks and Pyrotechnic Special Effects - prohibits firecrackers, and allows the sale and discharge of fireworks, with permits, for anyone over 18 for seven days prior to both Victoria and Canada Day.

Stores must get a permit from the fire department to sell fireworks, and the permit process includes an inspec-



tion of the store to ensure the fireworks are stored and sold safely.

The no-cost permit allows so-called family fireworks displays, including volcanoes, sparklers, pinwheels, roman candles and effects rising less than 50-metres.

Exhibition displays, like the annual Canada Day display staged by the Acton Fire Fighters Association at Prospect Park and Georgetown's Bang-O-Rama require high hazard permits for fireworks like rockets, bombshells, waterfalls and barrages.

Halton Hills Fire Safety Specialist Dave Ford said compliance with the bylaw has been excellent.

"Nobody has been caught illegally (selling or discharging fireworks) and there's been no complaints since

the bylaw was passed in November 2004," Ford said on Monday, adding requests for family fireworks permits for weddings and parties and other events are on the rise.

Since sales of fireworks in Halton Hills are restricted to the seven days prior to and Victoria Day, and the seven days prior to and Canada Day, Ford said no permit can be issued.

"I don't know how anybody that's having a wedding, or Bar Mitzvah or Christening, how they can get their hands on fireworks in order to get a permit. In reality fireworks are only available for Canada Day and Victoria Day," Ford said adding each year they issue permits to two people who want to celebrate Guy Fawkes Day.

Some common sense rules for handling fireworks include:

- maintain adult supervision at all times
- never hold fireworks while lighting them
- keep water nearby
- never try to re-light fireworks that did not discharge
- never discharge fireworks indoors



**THREE WISHES:** McKenzie-Smith Bennett Grade Five student Lindsay MacMillan wrote and produced a book based on three wishes she'd ask for from a genie in a bottle. Her work, and that of other students, was showcased last Thursday during the school's Literacy Fair. - Frances Niblock photo

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