

Acton's growth tied to its toilets

By Frances Niblock

The crude observation that Acton's growth is tied to its toilets is as true today as it was several decades ago when the Halton chairman of the day was asked why development was stalled in town.

The prospects of Acton growing to 11,000 people from the current population of approximately 8,800 depends, in part, on results of an environmental assessment Halton is conducting to determine if its Third Line wastewater treatment plant can be expanded by 25 per cent.

Study manager Laird Smith said the plant's current raw waste treatment capacity – 4,545-cubic metres per day – will not service all of the existing urban area Official Plan, so a 1,000-cubic-metre per day expansion is being investigated in a comprehensive class environmental assessment.

"Because of the nature of Black Creek, and how small it is, we certainly have to do a lot of background data collection," Smith said, adding Black Creek, which accepts discharge from Halton's plant, is a "fragile receiver" and a cold water fishery.

Smith said the technology exists to expand the plant, but the project is not a foregone conclusion and will be a political decision by Halton Council.

"Technology exists now that can basically produce effluent out of this plant that is essentially drinkable – the real question is, is it economically feasible, and will that become the issue if we find we have to do so much work there that the costs are so high," Smith said, adding the study matches a similar one already underway to determine how much more water can be pumped from

the Region's Prospect Park well.

The Class EA process allows for two public information centres (PICs) and consultation with municipalities, conservation authorities and local agencies.

The first PIC will be held in the New Year after the municipal election and the Prospect Park well study will be discussed at that meeting.

The uncertain water and wastewater situation led Halton to place a moratorium on development in Acton until the studies are complete.

Students find syringes in clean-up of School Creek

By Frances Niblock

The Robert Little School students who found three syringes on the bank of Black Creek during a clean-up on Monday knew they shouldn't touch them.

They called for their leader, a volunteer Grade nine student from Acton High, who carefully collected the three plastic syringes, without needles, and disposed of them in a "sharps" container.

The stretch of Black Creek between the school and library bridges yielded a host of debris and litter during the day-long cleanup blitz by 61 Grade four and five students from Robert Little and nine Grade nine volunteers from the high school – none as dangerous as the syringes, but still harmful to the environment.

The pile of waste included a rusted bicycle, piles of broken bottles, construction pipes, wooden boards, car parts, tires, electrical wiring and fast food litter.

The students cleaned the creek as part of a national



DANGEROUS LITTER: Students who found these three syringes, without needles, while they were cleaning up the creek behind Robert Little School on Monday immediately called their leader, Acton High School Grade nine student Christine Scovell, who disposed of them safely. The cleanup was part of the annual Canadian Shoreline Cleanup. – Frances Niblock photo

junk, they carefully recorded what they found and made a pile for the Town to pick up and dispose of.

Livra Remacka, a teaching assistant at Robert Little, who helped organize the event said the students were eager to clean up the area near their playground because they understand they are responsible for the earth.

"We are thinking that the planet is our house and we are treating this like our house – this creek has a lot of garbage in it and it is hurting what is living in and around it," Remacka said.

For Grade five student Kyle Summers, the green attitude is a lesson already learned.

"I want to help the nature around me. I think it (the litter) is very disappointing 'cause this isn't cool."

Canadian Shoreline Cleanup sponsored by Canada Trust and the Vancouver Aquarium.

As the students combed the creek bed and banks for

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