

Pipeline to lake or land disposal needed

# Report says creek is "sick"

A sewer pipeline to Lake Ontario, or a system of lagoons for land disposal of sewage treatment plant effluent are two possibilities for Milton's future, according to a Ministry of the Environment report on the quality of water in the Oakville (16 Mile) Creek.

A thorough technical study of the creek from Hilton Falls Dam to the Oakville lakefront was taken by Ministry staff in July of last year and the 64-page report was finally released last week. In a covering letter, Water Resources Branch director G. H. Mills told Milton Council "results of the field studies indicate that degraded water quality conditions in the stream occur during the summer months."

"Increased municipal waste water discharge associated with major expansion in Milton would result in severe degradation of downstream water quality," he continued. Efforts should be made to improve the existing quality of the creek "by minimizing the input of waste materials." Mills suggests "a very high level of treatment" must be provided by the Milton sewage treatment plant and alternatives such as land disposal or piping effluent to the lake should be considered.

**Contamination**  
"Further, a study of Milton's storm drainage system should be undertaken in order to identify and remove sources of contamination."

The report suggests Milton's planned growth to 18,000 will tax the creek's ability to handle the sewage plant effluent and expansion to an eventual 28,000 will need some alternative method.

Although Ministry checks on Milton's sewage plant effluent have always given the plant a good rating, and some engineers claim the treated sewage it discharges into the creek is "drinkable", the newest Ministry report indicates one drink wouldn't kill you but several drinks might make one ill.

The Milton effluent is high in nutrients which causes excessive growth of aquatic plants downstream from the outfall. These plants upset the balance of the stream and cause a shortage of dissolved oxygen. As a result, some types of fish cannot survive and the "benthic macroinvertebrate community" has been considerably impaired.

**Chlorine problem**  
In addition the downstream water quality is degraded by an unfavorably high concentration of residual chlorine which makes the stream unsuitable for bathing and swimming, says the report. Chlorine is one of the chemicals used in the treatment plant.

"The Ministry is not prepared to permit further water quality degradation in Oakville Creek and efforts should be made to upgrade the existing quality," the

report warns. For the extensive tests taken last July 16 to 19, the dam at Kelso was closed to create a low flow condition in the creek. A further study was carried out July 24-27 and other samples were collected between late June and early August.

**Plant expands**  
Milton, with 9,000 population at the time, had just expanded the capacity of its sewage plant and improved the degree of treatment to provide for a population of 18,000. The town recently proposed construction of a larger plant to serve an eventual 28,000. The report indicates the study was taken because "the Ministry was concerned about the water quality problems resulting from the proposed expansion."

A number of physical, chemical, bacteriological and

biological parameters were measured. The report found not only the creek downstream from the sewage plant was impaired — upstream from the plant a lesser degree of impairment was recorded. This was blamed on "problems which normally accompany an urban landscape," such as contaminants in storm water, industrial and commercial outlets.

Downstream the report found the creek used frequently for watering range cattle and sheep, fishing, swimming and picnicking. "Bacterial counts were found to be relatively high. The source of the bacterial contamination appears to be a result of urban and farm activities and not directly attributed to the STP (sewage treatment plant). This is due to the fact that STP effluent was chlorinated to kill off bacteria prior to discharge

into the stream. The chlorination itself results in a residual concentration entering the stream. The residual then becomes a damaging factor itself."

**Fish died**  
The report details experiments with fish known as common shiners, which resulted in the death of the fish in areas closest to the STP. The fish study indicated the STP effluent having "a minor or negligible effect on the fish, however there are good indications that the urban area itself altered the population and species diversity prior to any influence of the STP, so that any effect of the STP would be masked."

Water quality just upstream from the STP is called "marginal" for common shiners but the effluent aggravates the water just below the plant and the caged

shiners "just died." The study shows the "desired" water quality for legitimate downstream uses is not presently being met and while there is "no knowledge of major existing problems with downstream uses, it must be pointed out that the nutrient, organic and bacterial loadings make the stream marginal for a variety of uses."

"A small accidental waste discharge or unexpected low flows could have pronounced effects on the stream" the report warns.

**More pollution**  
Unless storm runoff can be treated (and this degree of treatment does not exist in the province) an increase in Milton's urban area will result in a proportional increase in the pollution load to the creek, the report notes. Much of Milton's storm water enters the creek downstream from the STP via the Ontario and Bronte St. creek drains. There are plans to divert these flows to the creek above the STP which, the report suggests, "will result in degradation upstream from the STP."

The Ministry's report also notes Milton's current channelization program will not help improve stream quality, but will detract from the quality. Construction resulted in an increase in the stream turbidity and silting and the work will remove much of the tree cover resulting in more sunlight reaching the stream and a higher water temperature. This would reduce the dissolved oxygen carrying capacity of the water, notes the report.

**Excessive turbidity**  
The shortened streambed, plus the smoother channel, will result in extending the distance contaminants will travel prior to assimilation into the stream. The stream turbidity is "in excess of this ministry's criteria," adds the technical report.

Among its several recommendations, the Ministry suggests the town's urban drainage system "should be investigated in order to identify sources of contaminants to the stream and reduce the contamination as much as possible." Milton Council has yet to deal with the report.

Lowville

## Squirts win championship

By Mrs. N. Ramshaw  
Mr. and Mrs. Jim Lee from Saskatoon, and their grand-

daughter Jo Anne Fryauf from North Battleford, Sask. have been visiting Mrs. Lee's

brother Tom Ramshaw and family of Lowville and Henry Ramshaw and family of Parry Sound.

Mrs. W. J. Robertson is recuperating at home from an operation last week in Oakville Hospital.

Mark Hall is in Milton Hospital following an accident while helping with the hay. We wish them both the very best.

Coach Ron Postma, assisted by his daughter Sylvia must be very proud of his ball team.

The Lowville Squirts girls' minor ball team won the championship of their division of the Halton Rural Minor soft ball league. They played the last round of the playoffs against Glen Williams. The score for the first game was 3-2 and the second 6-2. They only had one loss during the season. Congratulations girls! Keep up the good work.

Mr. and Mrs. Norman Langton spent the evening at the Bible Conference at Guelph last week. The services at Zimmerman church were very well attended for summer services.



SMALL FRIENDS at the market—Patrick Henneberry introduces himself to one of the wash baskets full of kittens being given away Saturday morning.

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## J. Snow promises to meet Scotch Block Ratepayers

## Large crowd lawn bowls

Scotch Block Ratepayers Assoc., which protested the government's decision to place the 500 kV Ontario Hydro line through the area north-east of Milton, has been promised a meeting with Halton East MPP Jim Snow to discuss the area residents' concerns.

Last week in a letter to Darcy McKeough, Minister of Energy, the ratepayers complained that when the government deviated from the hydro route proposed by Dr. Omond Solandt, "our rights to prior consultation were neatly sidestepped... we are dismayed and deeply upset that we have had no opportunity to offer any input to this government-approved modification simply because we had no warning that such a change might occur."

**Will discuss it**  
In a reply this week, the Halton East MPP said he will discuss the points in their letter with McKeough and assured the group "your concerns will be given every consideration."

"Every consideration has been given during the long — Several local industries are on holiday this week and the town is quiet.

planning process to selecting a route that would have the least detrimental effect on your area. Consideration was given to the use of agricultural land, the many residences in the area, the effect on the environment and the economical factors involved.

"I have had a set of large scale area photographs prepared showing the proposed routes in detail and will be pleased to meet with representatives of the Scotch Block Ratepayers' Association to discuss this matter in detail," Snow replied.

**Mayor writes**  
The ratepayers also received a letter from Milton Mayor Anne MacArthur, who said she was sympathetic to their plight and promised their concerns would be expressed at a meeting councillors will hold with senior government officials. That meeting is expected soon.

The Solandt proposals for the hydro route would have taken the line east of Highway 25 above Five Sideroad before angling south to intercept the main transformer station between the Fourth and Fifth Line. The government modification took the line south along the railway track just east of Highway 25 and over to the transformer station.

The largest crowd of the season was out for regular lawn bowling on Monday night. Prizes awarded to the ladies were won by Jean Vaughan, Florence Bell and Marie McMillan with the winners among the men Walter Eves, Allan Clements and William Marshall.

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