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Milton tops pack keeping the cigarette selling rules

By IRENE GENTLE

The Champion

Rebel retailers may be the smoking gun in the provincial Tobacco Control Act, Halton Region's health and social services committee heard last week.

In Oakville, a startling 31 per cent of retailers were willing to sell cigarettes to four underage buyers, one as young as 15 years old, according to a report by Halton's medical officer of health, Dr. Robert Nosal.

The minors were hired by the health department last June. They were to attempt to buy smokes from retailers across the region to monitor compliance with anti-smoking legislation.

The Tobacco Control Act makes it an offence to sell cigarettes to anyone under age 19.

Ninety retailers monitored

Of the 480 tobacco retailers in Halton, 90 were monitored for the survey. That's broken down to 30 individual retailers in Burlington, 32 in Oakville, 15 in Milton, and 13 in Halton Hills.

Overall, 16 per cent of the 90 Halton retailers sampled proved they were willing to sell smokes to minors. That's down from 21 per cent in 1997 and 29 per cent in 1996. It also beats the 1998 province-wide average of 26 per cent.

Oakville had the highest percentage of non-compliance in the region, followed by Acton, where 28 per cent of sampled retailers were willing to sell smokes to the youthful hired guns. That's up slightly from the 1997 result of 25 per cent.

In Georgetown, not one of the six retailers sampled was willing to sell to the minors. In 1997 18 per cent

of those surveyed failed the test.

Milton wins the prize for the most drastic retail rehabilitation, dropping from a whopping 50 per cent in 1997 to just six per cent in 1998.

Burlington retailers also clocked in at six per cent, dropping from 15 per cent in 1997.

Enforcement could be the key to smoking out dissident cigarette dispensers.

In 1997, 24 retailers were ticketed in Halton. That breaks down to five in Oakville, four in Georgetown and three in Acton.

In Burlington, 12 retailers were ticketed for selling to minors in 1997. Two of them were nailed for multiple offences.

No retailers in Milton were ticketed.

Though the penalty for a first offence is a fine up to \$5,000, in reality it is more likely to be in the \$200 range, said Dr. Nosal.

A second offence carries the much more serious penalty of a six month ban from selling smokes.

Oakville councillors outraged

Oakville's high rate of retail rebellion caused a ripple of outrage at the committee level, with Oakville Councillor Kurt Franklin demanding that the 1999 survey be revamped to show just which types of retailers are the real tobacco villains.

"Is it more convenience stores, or is it gas stations?" he asked.

With the guilty parties clearly identified, council could apply pressure at the head office level or through the media, he suggested.

**Got a hot scoop?
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878-2341.**

Hot off the press

Health directory out

Choices 4 Health, Halton's Heart Health and Cancer Risk Reduction Network, has created a directory that provides information about services and resources available.

Included are listings of programs, resources, contact names and telephone numbers.

To receive a copy of this free manual, contact the Halton Regional Health Department at 825-6060, ext. 7489.

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THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF MILTON

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

for
CONSULTING ENGINEERING SERVICES, P-051-918-42-98

Sealed Tenders on forms supplied by the Town of Milton will be received by the Corporate Services Department until 2:00 pm local time on:

JANUARY 27, 1999

Specifications and forms may be obtained at the Town Hall, 43 Brown Street, Milton, Ontario, Corporate Services Department, during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

The lowest or any bid will not necessarily be accepted.

Any inquiries regarding this tender may be directed to Leslie Williamson, Purchasing Administrator at (905) 878-7252 ext. 138.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

for
SENIORS LUNCH COUNTER OPERATIONS

Sealed Tenders on forms supplied by the Town of Milton will be received by the Corporate Services Department until 2:00 pm local time on:

FEBRUARY 10, 1999

Specifications and forms may be obtained at the Town Hall, 43 Brown Street, Milton, Ontario, Corporate Services Department, during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

The lowest or any bid will not necessarily be accepted.

Any inquiries regarding this tender may be directed to Leslie Williamson, Purchasing Administrator at (905) 878-7252 ext. 138.

APPLICATIONS FOR 1999 TOWN GRANTS PROGRAM

The Town of Milton is now accepting applications to the Town Grants Program. Funding is available to community organizations in three areas:

- Development Funding — for new groups, or expansion activities
- Project Funding — one time funding for specific projects or events
- Sustaining Funding — support for the continuation of existing programs

Applications can be picked up at Town Hall — deadline February 1st, 1999

For further information, please contact:

Joy Anderson, Coordinator Community Development & Partnerships at 875-1681