

# Survey says 12% of retailers sell smokes to minors in Halton

By IRENE GENTLE  
The Champion

Make it tough for kids to buy cigarettes and they'll find it tough to start smoking.

That's the premise behind a Halton Regional Health Department (HRHD) initiative to track the willingness of local retailers to sell smokes to underage teens.

Under the Tobacco Control Act (TCA), Ontarians must be 19 to legally buy cigarettes, the Region's health and social services committee heard Tuesday.

And according to a recent survey conducted by the HRHD, most retailers are adhering to the law. But 10 outlets have been charged under the TCA for selling smokes to underage customers.

In total, the survey found that 12 per cent of Halton retailers were willing to sell cigarettes to minors.

## Retailers approached twice

This is how it worked: 155 gas stations and variety stores — about half those found in the region — were visited twice by 15 to 17 year old teens hired by the HRHD.

In the first run, 19 outlets sold the teens cigarettes. At that time the smokes were returned to the retailers along with a warning by a health inspector.

About three weeks later, the offending outlets were approached by a second underage teen. Of those, 10 once again went through with the cigarette sale. They were subsequently charged.

In Milton, 19 outlets were approached by underage teens. Of those, two gas stations and two variety stores, or 21 per cent of the surveyed retailers, were willing to

**"Enforcement as an overall strategy has been shown to decrease (teen smoking). Access to tobacco, even the price of tobacco, is so important."**  
.....  
**DR. BOB NOSAL**

sell.

Of 48 Oakville retailers, three gas stations and two variety stores, or 10 per cent, sold to the teens.

In Burlington, 60 outlets yielded six gas stations and one variety store willing to sell, for a 12 per cent total.

Of 28 outlets hit in Halton Hills, all variety stores refused the sale but three gas stations, or 11 per cent of the total, did not.

Throughout Ontario, about 27 per cent of gas stations and 20 per cent of variety stores are willing to sell tobacco to minors.

But cutting off the supply may not cut down on the numbers of teen smokers, pointed out Burlington Councillor Jack Dennison.

Instead, they could just lasso others to get the illicit smokes for them.

"Are we really thinking this is true or are they just getting others to buy it for them," he asked.

Enforcement does have an effect on teen smokers, said the Region's medical officer of health Dr. Bob Nosal.

"Enforcement as an overall strategy has been shown to decrease (teen smoking),"

• see ATTENTION on page 9

# Drunk driving down, says OPP

A 51-year-old Moffat man was one of 27 people charged with drinking and driving during the OPP's five-week holiday season RIDE program.

"We checked about 10,000 more vehicles and we had about a third less incidents of drinking

and driving offenses," said Constable Lisa Anderson of the Port Credit OPP, which patrols Milton's portion of Hwy. 401, east of Hwy. 25.

More than 16,000 vehicles were checked between November 25 and January 2. Overall there were

26 90-hour suspensions and 73 12-hour suspensions issued.

The number of 12-hour license suspensions was up by 135 per cent compared to 1998, but the number of people charged with drinking and driving was down 19 per cent, according to the OPP.

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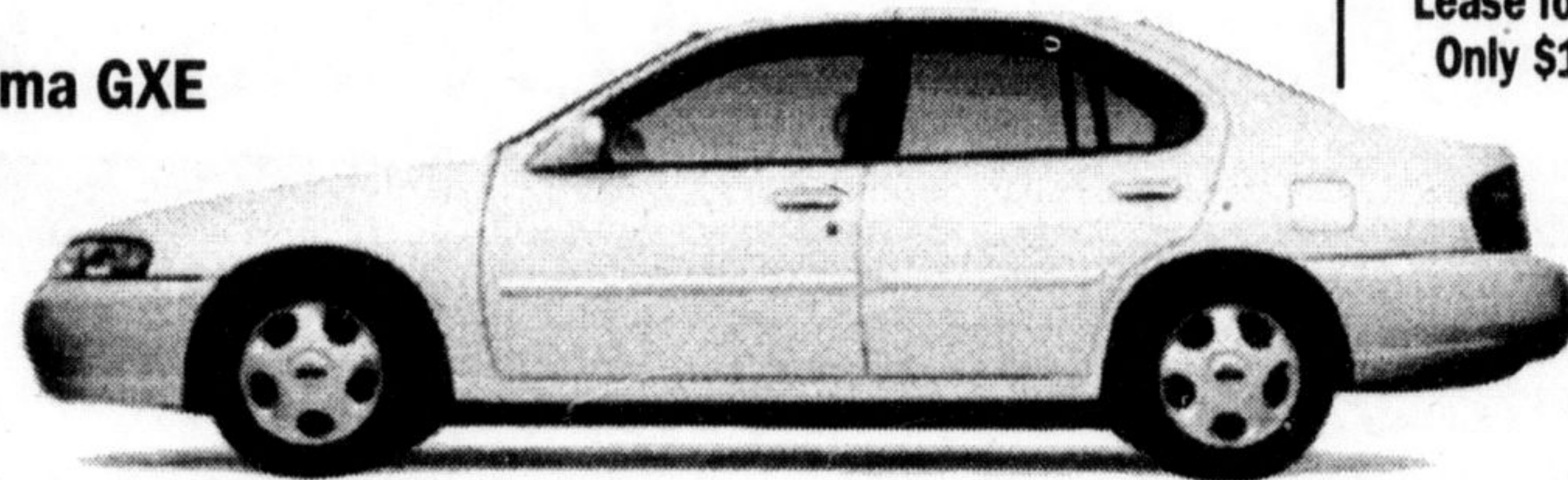
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## 11 High Cost Home Inspection Traps You Should Know About Weeks Before Listing Your Home For Sale

MILTON - According to industry experts, there are over 33 physical problems that will come under scrutiny during a home inspection when your home is for sale. A new report has been prepared which identifies the eleven most common of these problems, and what you should know about them before you list your home for sale.

Whether you own an old home or a brand new one, there are a number of things that can fall short of requirements during a home inspection. If not identified and dealt with, any of these 11 items could cost you dearly in terms of repair. That's why it's critical that you read this report before you list your home. If you wait until the building inspector flags these issues for you, you will almost certainly experience costly delays in the close of your home sale or, worse, turn prospective buyers away altogether.

In most cases, you can make a reasonable pre-inspection yourself if you know what you're looking for. And knowing what you're looking for can help you prevent little problems from growing into costly and unimaginable ones.

To help homesellers deal with this issue before their home is listed, a free report entitled "11 Things You Need to Know to Pass Your Home Inspection" has been compiled which explains the issues involved.

To hear a brief recorded message about how to order your FREE copy of this report, call 1-888-475-8645 and enter ID# 1003. You can call anytime, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call NOW to learn how to ensure a home inspection doesn't cost you the sale of your home.

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