



OUR READERS WRITE

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

Wearing seat belts is the law and it could save your life, says reader

Dear Editor:

Gordon Vinkle stated in a recent letter to your paper that seat belt use should be a personal choice. He was obviously angry that he had received a fine for not complying with the law. The cost to the community, the family and the individual themselves is enormous when anyone is involved in a serious accident while not wearing a seat belt.

In Ontario in 1996, which is the last year statistics are available, there were 135 people killed while not wearing seat belts. About 355 people suffered major injuries - brain damage, paralysis. About 780 had minor injuries -- broken bones. These statistics are from the Ontario Road Safety

Annual Report.

The cost to the rest of the taxpayers of Ontario in 1996 -- for hospital care \$125 million and for non-hospital costs and rehabilitation care \$125.4 million. The cost of motor vehicle collisions including lost productivity, all the direct and indirect costs for 1996 comes to a staggering 19.2 billion. These figures come from a report called the Economic Burden of Unintentional Injury in Ontario.

Look at your fine as a small pay-back to the rest of us, Mr. Vinkle. If you wear your seat belt to avoid another ticket, it may save your life.

The saddest effects are at the family and personal level. If you happen to survive

being thrown from your vehicle, paralysis and brain damage are among the many injuries you may receive. You could wake up with tubes in every body opening, incapable of movement and unable to perform even the simplest function for yourself. Do you really want your family sitting by your bed day after day wondering if you will ever gain consciousness?

The OPP has two demonstration items that may convince you to buckle up. One

is a rollover vehicle, which demonstrates how an unbelted person is tossed around as the car rolls over. Even if one person is belted, an unrestrained person can seriously injure the other. The other device is the seat belt convincer, which simulates the effect of a very slight collision.

Wear your seat belts. It's the law and it could save your life.

Jean Woods

Milton Road Safety Committee

Have your say. Fax letters to 878-4943.

Yes, Conservation Halton should be reviewed

Dear Editor:

What do we have a conservation authority for? It seems to ravish nature and the environment, instead of protecting and preserving it.

We have lived in beautiful Campbellville for 40 years, surrounded by forests, lakes and parks. One day we went for a walk to our favourite spot in the bush and got the shock of our lives.

The spot, mostly the neighbours property and always so well taken care of, looked like a war zone, as if a bomb had hit it. A total of 129 beautiful, healthy 60-foot trees had been taken out with the consent of Conservation Halton from the middle of the forest, adjacent to a wetland. The unwanted tops branches and stumps were

scattered all over. We couldn't walk on the far side of our land because of the rubbish littered about two metres high across our path.

Should the neighbours not be consulted before allowing this type of destruction?

After contacting the owners, Conservation Halton, the contractor and the Town, it took one-and-a-half years and many excuses before our property was cleaned up, while nothing was done about our new neighbours' mess, which still looks like a war zone.

Yes, it's time the action and administration of Conservation Halton be reviewed as James Snow, former MPP, has said.

Boyke and Dicky Deumer
Campbellville

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