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Rural home gutted in blaze

The Ontario Fire Marshal's Office has been unable to determine the cause of a blaze that destroyed an unoccupied Trafalgar Road home Thursday.

"The cause is undetermined because of the great extent of damage," said Milton Fire Department spokesman Captain Mark Cross. "It's a total loss."

A neighbour called the fire

department shortly after 11 p.m. to report flames and smoke coming from the framed bungalow.

All three Milton stations responded to the blaze, said Captain Cross. The Oakville Fire Department was also on the scene.

Because the home was unoccupied and sat back from the road, it's unclear how long the fire had been burning before it was noticed,

Captain Cross said.

"The flames had to been really large before someone noticed it," he said.

Tenants had just moved out of the 5157 Trafalgar Rd. house located just north of Lower Base Line. The owner had been renovating.

No damage estimate was available.

Jail has received few complaints

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he added.

Current release policies will likely stay in place when the \$79 million transformation of Maplehurst into a mega jail is completed, likely by next spring.

But exceptions will be made if the remanded inmate is judged mentally disturbed. In those cases, staff will ensure the person is safely hooked up with the appropriate community services, said Mr. Leithead.

"We'll get them to that location even if it means our own staff taking them there," he said. "Certainly that's something that concerns me. We want to make sure."

Though rare, Mr. Leithead is aware of at least two complaints regarding former inmates approaching residents.

When construction is complete, the Maplehurst mega jail will have the capacity to hold 1,200 male inmates.

About 200 of them will be serving provincial sentences of up to two years less a day in medium security conditions.

The remainder of the male inmates will be awaiting sentencing in maximum security.

When female inmates arrive at Maplehurst, about 150 will be sentenced. All others will be on remand.

Tories hold barbecue at Chudleigh's

Chudleigh's apple farm turned into political party central Sunday when members of the Ontario PCs celebrated their fifth anniversary in power.

Festivities — hosted by Halton MPP Ted Chudleigh and attended by hundreds of party supporters along with several cabinet ministers and MPPs — were highlighted by an address from top dog Premier Mike Harris.

The premier touched on the reasons why the party first swept into office in 1995 and its successes since then (including, he said, wide-spread job creation).

He also offered thanks to PC supporters and their families.

"Basically, it was an appreciation day for the party," said event organizer Brett Kelly.

The picnic drew roughly 800 visitors, but no protestors.

MILTON MALL

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