

Milton's property values going up — What does it mean for property taxes?

By IRENE GENTLE
The Champion

Christmas spending isn't the only thing going up this time of year.

With the new provincial current value property assessments recently mailed out, the value of individual homes may be rising as well, Milton council heard Monday.

In a provincial attempt to bring both clarity and fairness to property values, another round of assessments is underway. And in this go round, the average value of both Halton and Milton homes has increased by about 16 per cent.

In Milton, that breaks down to a 17 per cent increase for detached homes, a 13 per cent increase for condominiums and a 23 per cent increase for farm properties, said Cathy Farr of the Ontario Property Assessment Corporation (OPAC).

But whether those increases add up to hikes in property taxes will depend on a number of factors, said Ms Farr.

"It's complicated by provincial legislation and what's going to happen to your budgets," she said. "If your budgets remain the same, then some properties will decrease."

Despite that, value hikes of more than 16 per cent will likely result in higher taxation, said Ms Farr.

But there are options for homeowners who can't easily swallow a dramatic rise in their assessment.

"First of all, they should phone us," said Ms Farr.

OPAC numbers are 1-800-387-5909 or (905) 813-9930. These numbers can be found on the assessment notices. Or residents can drop by OPAC offices at 6745 Century Ave. in Mississauga.

"We're a good deal closer to Milton than we were last time," said Ms Farr.

But before doing so, she suggested property owners do their homework. "Before contacting us, I'd recommend they look around at comparable properties."

If the assessment still seems out of whack, the property owner can file a request for reconsideration to OPAC.

While there are forms available to do so, what's basically needed is the assessment roll number, phone number where the complainant can be reached and the nature of the problem, said Ms Farr.

"There's no fee for asking us to reconsider an assessment," she said. "We'll be looking at these

probably within the first week of the new year."

Though a reconsideration can be filed as late as December 31, 2001, there's no point in delaying if the property owner wants to take further action in the future.

That's because there's a spring deadline for actually appealing the assessment.

"For some reason probably known only to God, an appeal has to be filed by March 31, 2001," said Ms Farr.

To help residents beat the clock, OPAC will attempt to respond to all reconsideration requests by mid-March.

There is a cost attached to filing an appeal, set at \$50 for farm or residential properties and more than \$100 for commercial and industrial properties.

The fee is non-refundable, which irked Councillor Ron Furik. He believed it should be returned should the property owner win the appeal.

"You've put me into a position where I have to pay money to appeal," he said. "Why don't I get it back?"

Ms Farr responded that the fee is administrative and isn't set by OPAC.



play it safe
Don't Drink & Drive.



Merry Motoring

Dear Patrons,

We're proud to know you as our good friends and customers. With sincere appreciation, we say,

Thanks and Happy Holidays

Holiday Hours

Friday	Dec. 22	8-4	Thursday	Dec. 28	8-6
Saturday	Dec. 23	Closed	Friday	Dec. 29	8-5
Monday	Dec. 25	Closed	Saturday	Dec. 30	Closed
Tuesday	Dec. 26	Closed	Monday	Jan. 1	Closed
Wednesday	Dec. 27	8-6	Tuesday	Jan. 2	7-6

Brian's

Auto Repairs & Tire Centre
For all Your Auto Needs!

390 Ontario St. N. Unit #1, Milton

HOURS: Mon. - Fri. 7-6, Sat. 8-12 except long weekends

875-1522

Group held for victims of assault

The Halton Rape Crisis Centre offers support groups for women who have survived sexual violence.

These confidential groups provide a safe, supportive, encouraging environment for women aged 18 years and older to talk about the issues they face.

This free service is facilitated by trained volunteers from a woman-centered, empowerment perspective. For more details, call 825-3622.

WHAT'S ON IN MILTON!

Charley FitzWhiskey's
TAP & EATERY
Come out to the Dog House for
NEW YEAR'S EVE — Reserve now
55 Ontario St. W. 878-6697

The Dickens
189 Mill Street • 878-6680
JOIN US NEW YEAR'S EVE TO WELCOME 2001

KFC
276 Main St.
878-4171
Happy Holidays from all of us to all of you!

Mohawk Inn
Celebrate New Year's in Style!
Reservations Recommended
Hwy. 401 & Guelph Line • Milton/Campbellville 854-2277

Kelsey's
Express Lunch: 15 Minutes or FREE
A TASTE OF ITALY
BARNEY THE MAGICIAN
Every Wed. from 6-9pm
45 Chisholm Dr. 876-4731

Knight Cap
Tonight: 3MDM
9:30pm - close
270 Main St. E. (905) 876-3780

Spikes SportsTown
575 Ontario St.
876-1186
CELEBRATE NEW YEAR'S
DEC. 29 & DEC. 31
NO COVER CHARGE
CHAMPAGNE

Crowne Hill
New Year's Eve Festive Holiday Menu
575 Ontario St. 876-1186

GEORGETOWN CINEMAS
235 GUELPH STREET 873-1999

1 **THE FAMILY MAN** PG
Daily 6:45 p.m. & 9:10 p.m., Sat. & Sun 2:00 p.m.

2 **HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS** PG
Daily 6:45 p.m. & 9:00 p.m., Sat. & Sun 2:00 p.m.

3 **MISS CONGENIALITY** PG
Daily 7:00 p.m. & 9:05 p.m., Sat. & Sun. 2:10 p.m.

Gift Certificates Available for Christmas
Theatre Parking Available at Rear

01 2001 2001 01 2001

Charley FitzWhiskey's
TAP & EATERY

New Year's Eve Celebration!

Come Celebrate with Charley and the gang!

Time: 7:30
DJ & Prizes
Champagne & Party Favours!
Light Buffet!
Balloon Drop!

In advance \$30.00 per couple.
At the door \$20.01 per person.

55 ONTARIO ST. N. 878-6697