

Teacher is charged in sex assaults

A Sam Sherratt School teacher has been suspended for allegedly sexually assaulting three teenage girls during two separate incidents in Hamilton this summer.

Police allege David Pratt, 36, picked up two Hamilton girls aged 15 and 16 near King Street East and Ashley Street July 10 and persuaded them to get into his car where they were assaulted as he drove.

A week later, police allege Mr. Pratt picked up a 17-year-old girl in the same area, held her in the car and assaulted her.

Police say the three girls never met Mr. Pratt before the alleged assaults occurred.

The area is a well-known prostitute working area.

Police won't say how the girls were lured to the car or whether the incidents were prostitute-related.

Mr. Pratt, a Burlington resident, isn't married and was staying at Motel Six in Burlington when he was arrested.

In a press release Tuesday, police said he was suspended from his job with the Halton District School Board as a result of the charges.

Board spokesperson Marnie Denton said, "We can confirm he is not currently teaching in our schools and will not be until the matter is settled in the courts."

Funding to tackle brown water woes

Milton's brown water problems moved closer to extinction Wednesday when regional councillors approved \$254,725 in upgrades to the Kelso Well Pumping Station.

The work, approved by the planning and public works committee, includes installation of filter equipment, a backwash wastewater equalization tank and expansion of the treated water clearwell.

"The engineering reports that we have that lead us to select this option suggests we will be completely suc-


cessful (in eliminating the brown tinge)," said Patrick Murphy, Halton's commissioner of planning and public works.

The brown tinge sometimes seen in Milton tap water is caused by the presence of manganese, a naturally-occurring mineral.

Upgrades must still be approved by regional council before work can begin. Council is expected to address the issue Wednesday.

The work is expected to take about two years to design and complete.

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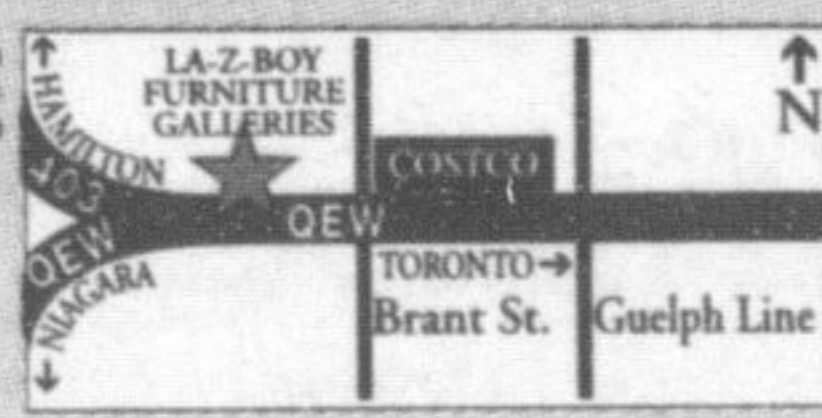
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