

Water rates to rise 7.5 per cent

Water rates are going up 7.5 per cent next year — as approved by regional council Wednesday.

For the average household, the jump means spending an additional \$33.21 annually on water — based on an annual consumption rate of 300 metres cubed.

"The rate increase ensures we can do what is necessary to keep our water safe," Regional Chair Joyce Savoline said. "These are things we need to do."

The driving factors behind the increase are new water quality standards — mandated by the Province in the wake of the Walkerton water tragedy — and capital projects.

With the implementation of the new water quality standards in August, the Region saw the cost of chemicals and hydro expenditures related to water quality grow. In the coming year, the increased costs are estimated to total \$1.8 million.

The Region is also undertaking several large capital projects funded by water rates in the coming year — totalling more than \$47.8 million. "We believe these projects will take us through our 10-year forecast," said Dave Birkett, Halton's director of budget and fiscal policy services.

Among the major projects is the expansion of the Burlington Water Plant (\$14.7 million), Third Line trunk wastewater main to service growth in north Oakville (\$9 million) and water treatment at the Kelso Pump to eliminate Milton's brown water problem (\$4.5 million).

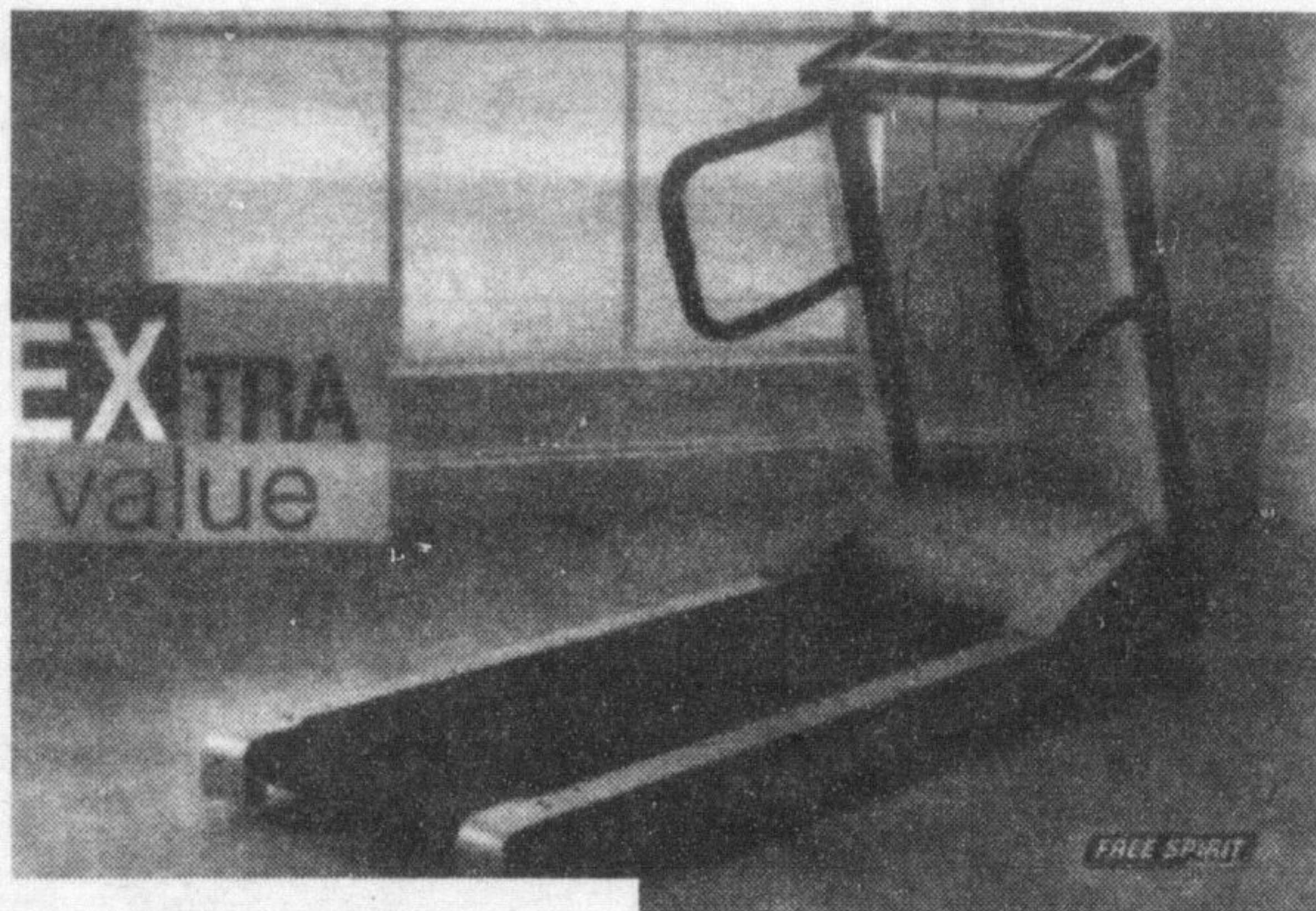


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

✓ Pretty crafty

E.C. Drury High School student chefs Tasha Ayles (left) and Cole Tarrant put the finishing touches of icing on a gingerbread house centerpiece for the school's annual Christmas lunch Tuesday. The Food School invites the staff and community to the annual event to enjoy the culinary skills of students.

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Map showing location at the intersection of Main St and Nipissing Rd. Sears is located at the corner.

Garbage pick-up schedule changing

Waste collection will take a new shape on February 4.

Rather than collecting waste Monday through Thursday, all collections will occur on Wednesdays. The time of day for collections may vary from the current schedule.

The shift in scheduling is intended to better manage Halton's growing population and the demands it places on the waste collection system.

Blue Box collection will also occur on Wednesdays, but will remain on the existing bi-weekly schedule.



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