

Be wary of solicitors: Region

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**

The Champion

Halton Region is giving Miltonians a heads-up warning to keep their doors closed to solicitors of any sort until they've seen proper identification.

This caution comes on the heels of several recent complaints from Acton homeowners reporting that individuals had said they were with a "water project" and wanted to check metres.

According to Patrick Murphy, Halton Region's commissioner of planning and public works, the homeowners said two men in their early 20s entered the houses and looked around before leaving.

He thinks the individuals may be posing as staff from Canadian Water Services, Halton Region's contractor on its current water metre replacement program.

This program is currently wrap-

ping up in Halton Hills and will be coming to Milton in the next few weeks.

Mr. Murphy said local homeowners involved in the replacement program — which will see old, outdated water metres replaced with new remote-read models — will be notified beforehand by letter and will also be phoned to set up an installation appointment.

The contractors won't show up unannounced, he stressed.

"There should be no reason for any of our staff to enter a rate payer's house if they haven't phoned in advance," he said.

About 4,000 Milton households will be affected by the water metre replacement program.

All legitimate water metre installers carry two pieces of identification — one from Canadian Water Services and one from Halton Region.

Their vehicles also bear Canadian Water Services or Halton

Region identifiers.

Sgt. Val Hay of the Halton Regional Police said Milton residents should always keep the door locked while requesting and seeing photo identification for their own safety.

"All legitimate municipal workers, utility company employees, even uniformed police officers carry photo identification, which should be produced upon demand," Sgt. Hay said.

Halton Regional Police gave the following safety tips: front doors should be equipped with door viewers; if a stranger requests phone use, offer to make the call for him instead of allowing access to your home; don't reveal personal information to anyone on the phone or at the door; and children should be told not to answer the door.

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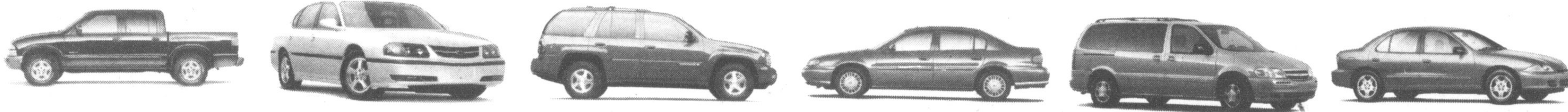
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