

Town Hall conserving energy

By **JASON MISNER**
The Champion

The Town of Milton will do its part to conserve Ontario's precious supply of electricity in the wake of the worst power outage ever to hit North America.

It will shut down computers overnight when the municipal offices are closed, scale back its air conditioning and turn off the lights powering non-essential Town signs, like the one at the corner of Main and Ontario streets that notes upcoming events.

"We're basically trying to follow provincial and regional directions on this thing and trying to reduce energy consumption," said acting Town CAO Mel Iovio.

As of yesterday, the Town was still trying to get a handle on how many residents and businesses were without power and for how long.

Milton Fire Chief Harold Penson said generators kept the three fire stations in town running.

A problem the fire department had to remedy was the issue of pagers running low on power. Because there was no electricity, the pagers couldn't be recharged.

Chief Penson said some firefighters dashed to hardware stores to buy as many batteries as possible and delivered them in person to firefighters who had pagers.

Milton District Hospital didn't experience any major problems related to the blackout, said Cindy McDonell, the hospital's chief operating officer.

The hospital received power from a back-up generator until full power was restored late Thursday, she said.

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Garbage pick-up remains on schedule

• from **PEOPLE** on page 1

cally wants those reservoirs no lower than 40 per cent capacity. During the blackout and when power was being restored throughout Halton, capacity was between 60 and 80 per cent. A water crisis was never a real concern, he said.

Regional officials want to ensure the supply remains adequate and have instituted a watering ban. It's been in place since the outage started five days ago. That means no watering of lawns or washing cars and no topping up pools. Businesses must turn off their automated sprinkler systems. Failure to comply with the water ban carries fines as high as \$2,000.

The blackout meant that for a number of hours refrigeration systems weren't working and food risked spoiling. Mr. Murphy said the Region will send out health inspectors to various restaurants, eateries and bakeries to test food that hasn't been thrown away to determine if it's safe for consumption.

Garbage, recycling and bulk item pick-ups in Milton and throughout Halton are on schedule, said Rob Rivers, Halton's director of waste management.

The Region's landfill site is also open for business between normal weekday hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. The Region is also relaxing its six-garbage bag limit to allow residents the chance to throw out extra bags that contain spoiled food.

Meanwhile, the Region has in operation an emergency centre team that consists of staff from the Region, its four municipalities, police, fire, hospitals and local hydro companies that converge to

deal with a crisis. That team was pulled together within an hour of the blackout hitting Thursday. It's in effect until further notice.

"We're all able to get up-to-date information and co-ordinate it and send resources where we needed it," Mr. Murphy said. "We've had an emergency plan in place for a number of years and we do periodic practices. But nothing works like the real event."

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Special thanks go to Cation Excavating, Collier Wood Working, the May Family, Gordon Food Service, Loblaws and Waycor Trucking. Without the help of these people donating barbeques, food, lighting and time it would have been impossible to offer the complimentary barbeque during the blackout.

On behalf of the hardworking employees of the Fifth Wheel, Thank You!

Hope to see everyone again soon!

Troy Newton
General Manager

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