

Dufferin hearing underway

By **JASON MISNER**
The Champion

A joint board hearing of the Ontario Municipal Board and Environmental Review Tribunal into Dufferin Aggregate's massive gravel pit expansion proposal was almost over as soon as it started yesterday.

It was faced with a request from a lawyer representing two environmental groups that the proposal be put on hold due to last month's provincial zoning order that stipu-

lates no development can occur for a year along a huge swath of land around the Golden Horseshoe.

The board ruled the majority of Dufferin's proposal is contained in the Niagara Escarpment Plan, which doesn't fall under the provincial ban, meaning the hearing can continue.

The joint board, which met for the first time to deal with the gravel company's plan, will decide the fate of Dufferin's proposal.

If approved by the joint board,

Dufferin will be granted a licence from the Ministry of Natural Resources to legally extract minerals. The hearing is set to conclude around the middle of next month.

Dufferin wants to expand by 83 hectares its 486-hectare quarry that straddles the Milton and Halton Hills border. It will provide for the total extraction of 52 million tonnes of stone, starting in 2007.

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Blaze at A&P loading area believed to be deliberately set

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**
The Champion

Halton Regional Police say a Saturday night fire at the A&P store was deliberately set.

At 11 p.m., two stations of the Milton Fire Department were called to the Laurier Avenue grocery store.

"At the back of the A&P there was a lot of smoke visible and a small amount of flames," said Acting Capt. Paul Hollingshead, adding fire personnel soon realized it was the bumper guard at the vehicle loading zone that was on fire.

He described the bumper guard as a long, foot-wide piece of foam shaped like an upside down horseshoe. It goes around the sides and top of the garage door-

type entrances at the loading dock.

"It looked like it was deliberately set. There's no other way something like that could be on fire," Acting Capt. Hollingshead said, adding the other side of the foam bumper was scorched but not ablaze, indicating the unknown suspect had also attempted to set the other side of the bumper on fire.

After about 15 minutes of dousing the bumper with water, the fire was extinguished.

Halton Regional Police is asking anyone with information to call Crime Stoppers of Halton at 1-800-222-TIPS (1-800-222-8477) or Halton Regional Police at (905) 825-4777, ext. 2415.

Stephanie Thiessen can be reached at sthiessen@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

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