

Be careful around local rivers, streams, lakes and ponds

The temperature is climbing, snow and ice are melting and area waters are rising.

As spring approaches, so does the spring melt, and Conservation Halton (CH) is cautioning residents to be careful around rivers, streams, lakes and ponds.

With kids on their spring break, parents are being reminded to alert their children to the dangers that exist near the water and to avoid these areas or ensure that children are supervised when anywhere near the water.

Warmer temperatures and rain in the

upcoming days and weeks will result in the melting of snow, which will increase water levels and the speed at which streams flow.

Ice on lakes, rivers, streams and ponds will begin thinning and breaking up.

That creates the potential for unsafe ice,

slippery stream banks and flooding.

CH monitors water levels and flow rates year round as part of its flood forecasting and warning program and is closely watching spring water levels, it reported.

Local students to learn how to speak up about violence

Some Halton high school students will spend their March break speaking up about violence.

Young people from across Halton will meet this Thursday and Friday at Central Arena in Burlington to talk and learn more about violence in their community.

Community Development Halton and ReAct, a program of the Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC), will hold a two-day forum for youth in Halton entitled Speak Up!

The event will send a message Halton youth will eventually deliver to their peers at school and outside of school.

"Bullying and violence in Halton tends to be dismissed as not a serious problem under the premise that social problems occur in other more urban areas like Toronto. This myth that bad things don't happen in Halton makes it even more difficult for young people to speak up against violence," said Abi Salole, spokesperson for the Speak Up! event.

Sarah King, a grade 12 student in Burlington, said, "Everyone needs to learn about violence and oppression, particularly in Halton, where we often think that it either doesn't exist or isn't a problem. We need to make sure that people know about what these issues are, and how to prevent them and deal with the unnoted ones in Halton."

The forum will include specific techniques and practices for young people to speak up against verbal, emotional and sexual abuse.

Devon Spier, also a Burlington high school student, explained that an expansive definition of violence is important.

"Halton youth need to recognize that violence is not merely an act of physical harm, but a state of mind enforced by laws, customs and social attitudes. When it comes down to it, violence is about power and disrespect," he said.

Cassie Van Oort of Burlington said young people need to do this training because "Knowledge is power, and every student or teenager in Halton should have that power. This way we can speak up against violence and protect others; it is about knowing your rights, and knowing what is wrong."

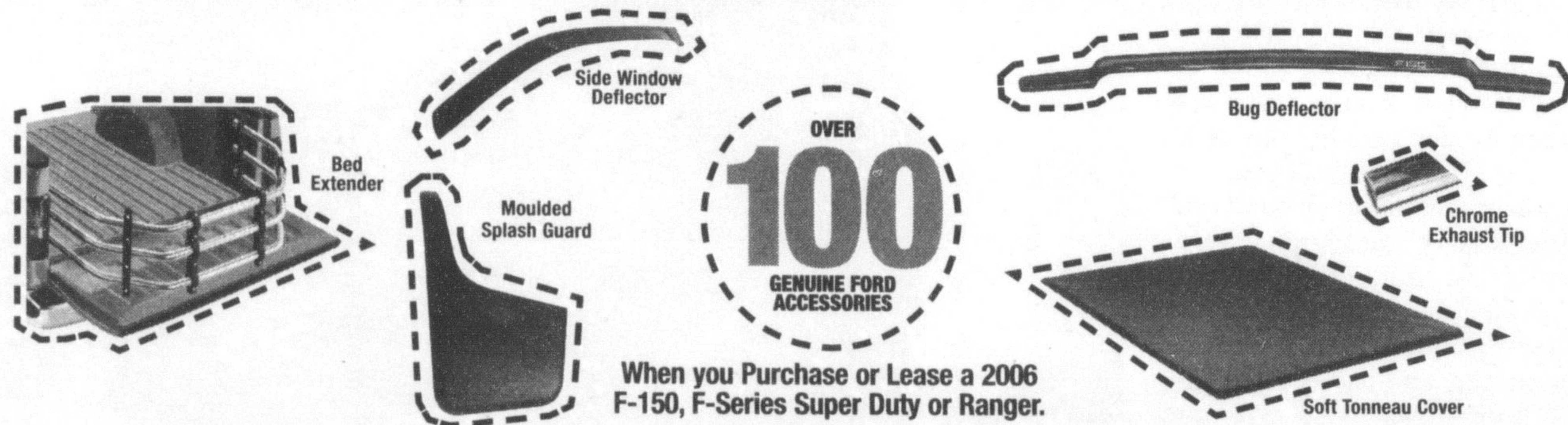
For more information, or if you are a teenager who wants to attend the two-day workshop, call Salole at (905) 632-1975 or e-mail her at speakup@cdhalton.ca.

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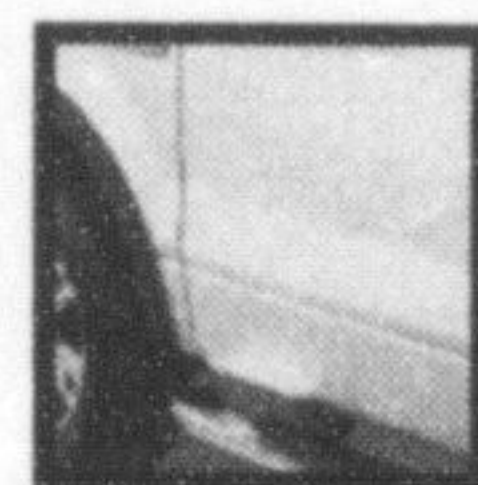
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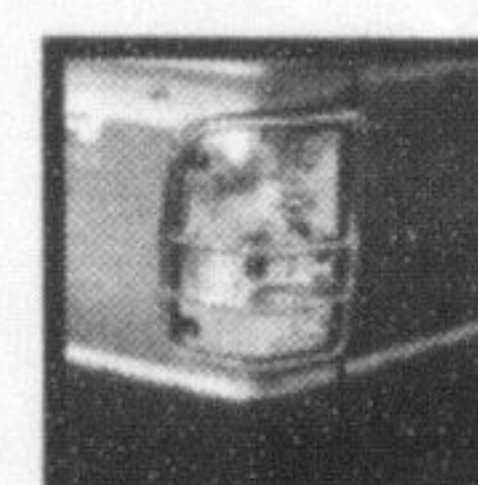
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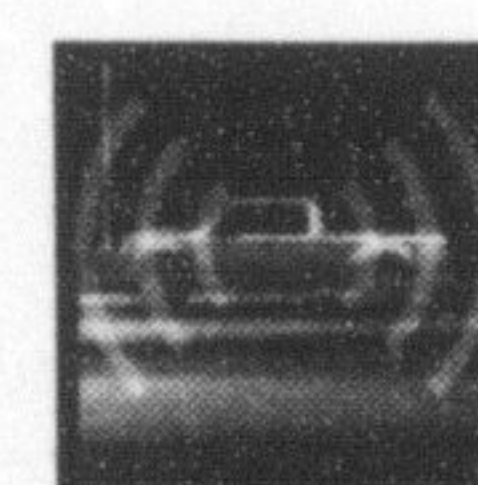
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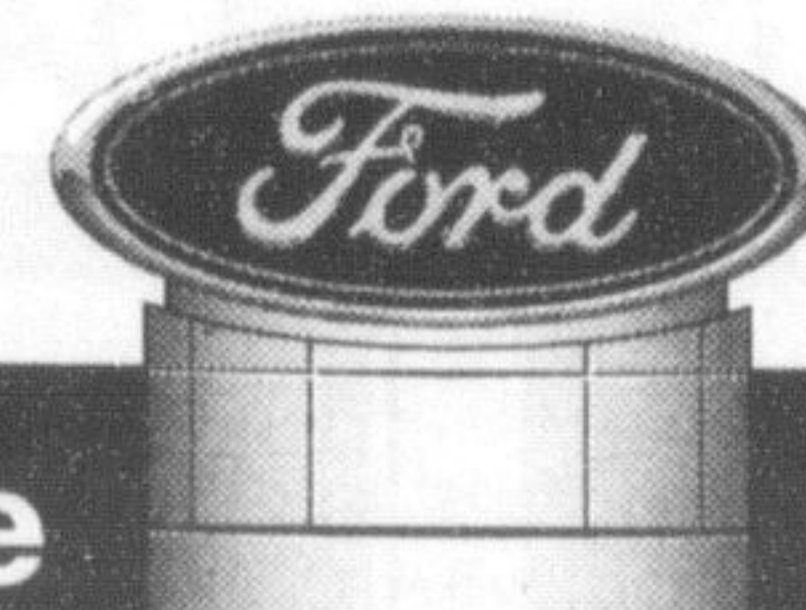


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