

Peru Rd. homes evacuated in standoff

A handful of households were evacuated early Wednesday morning after police responded to the home of a troubled man and tried to take him in for medical attention.

A lengthy standoff continued for about 16 hours.

The incident started at about 3:30 p.m. Tuesday when the family of a 50-year-old Peru Road man called police for help in dealing with the distraught man, Halton Regional Police said.

Police wouldn't disclose his condition, but said they were concerned about the man's mental state.

Officers began searching for the

man, who returned to his home just before 6 p.m. and retreated inside.

Det. Sgt. Peter Hodgson said officers spoke with the man and tried to calm him, but he wasn't co-operative and wouldn't allow medical treatment.

The area was secured and a safety perimeter established around the home.

Police negotiators maintained dialogue with the man from outside the home in an attempt to get him to surrender.

Due to the lengthy nature of the incident and the cold weather, police called in Waterloo Regional Police's

Tactical Rescue Unit to assist, Hodgson said.

Officers maintained contact with the man and had continual dialogue with him throughout the night.

The situation became more tenuous when police learned the man had potentially dangerous devices inside. A search later on revealed he had an unloaded handgun and two deactivated grenades, which police seized.

Halton police's Tactical Rescue Unit and the Explosives Disposal Unit were brought in, and five homes were evacuated just after 5:30 a.m. Wednesday

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No plans to close Milton warehouse

• from SOBEYS on page A1

"Some of these guys used to live in Scarborough," he said. "They've got mortgages, and now their jobs could be pulled out from under their feet. It's a big hit."

A press release from Sobeys Inc. states the company is assessing what role its Milton and Whitby facilities will play in product distribution to stores in Ontario once the new centre is up and running. At this point, the company doesn't plan to close down either location.

Sobeys spokesperson Andrew

Walker said the number of employees to be laid off hasn't yet been identified.

When asked about what kind of supports Sobeys will provide to those who lose their jobs, Walker told The Champion that all options will be explored as the company moves closer to opening the new centre.

The largely automated centre in Vaughan is expected to significantly increase Sobeys' warehouse and distribution capacity while reducing overall distribution costs.

Its management, automation technology and equipment will be provided

by Witron, a European logistics specialty firm. Construction is slated to get underway next year.

Walker said the change is all about expanding capacity in the Ontario market. "We've been exploring many different options to increase capacity, and we determined this is the most feasible option."

Sobeys Inc. owns or franchises more than 1,300 stores in 10 provinces under retail banners that include Sobeys, IGA, Foodland and Price Chopper.

Melanie Hennessey can be reached at mhennessey@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

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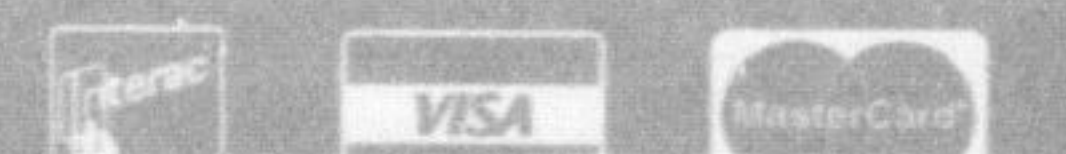
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