



On the loose

with MURRAY TOWNSEND

In search of a cougar...

I'm drawn to danger like police officers are to Tim Hortons. Or maybe it's that I'm drawn to Tim Hortons like police officers are to danger. One of those.

In any event, these stories of a cougar loose near Milton have intrigued me. First, there was the story by *Champion* reporter Stephanie Hounsell. There was a sighting, but no conclusive evidence.

I believed the story, mostly because I wanted to believe it. A cougar? Cool.

Then there was a letter to the *Champion* by Ashley Mabee. That was even more convincing. Two possible sightings, one in Campbellville and one in nearby Moffat. Where there's smoke, there are cougars.

The two sightings weren't identical. One said the animal was black, the other tan. Tan would be the correct colour, but it was night so a mix-up is surely possible.

But, as I looked a little closer, I got a little more suspicious. Woodward and Bernstein have nothing on me.

Was this some kind of hoax? Were they all sitting around the corn roast one night after running out of things to talk about and came up with this plan to play a joke on everyone?

The last name of the letter writer got me thinking. Mabee? Yeah, OK. Ha. You thought you could fool a Woodward and Bernstein clone? Not likely.

I attempted to look up the name, quite certain I wouldn't find it. If her name was Kitty Mabee, I wouldn't have even bothered trying to look it up.

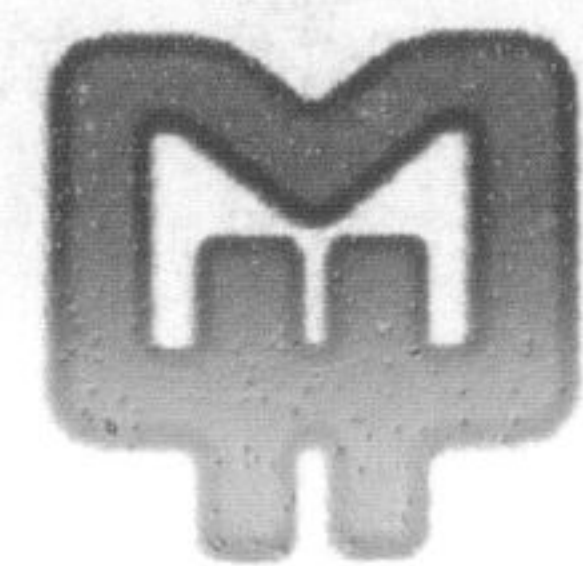
Well, there was such a name. But, it could have been part of the hoax. I called the number.

So much for that idea. Not only legitimate people, but nice legitimate people. The hoax theory went right out the window, and I was even more convinced that it wasn't a big dog as was suggested, but a cougar. Ashley — a university student who doesn't take herself too seriously and whose nickname is not Kitty — knows the difference between a dog and a cat, and even better than that, since her letter was published, other people have come forward and told her they too had seen a cougar.

I kept digging. Then I found out something from an anonymous source who shall never be named. You could threaten me with death and I wouldn't tell. You could cut off my toes and fingers and I wouldn't reveal this source. OK, if you threatened to make me go see Mamma Mia! I might tell.

Anyway, there's a story alleging that some people had kept three large cougar-like pets, including a black one — a puma — and they were released when the couple separated. It was a rumour, nothing I could confirm.

• see FEAR on page B8

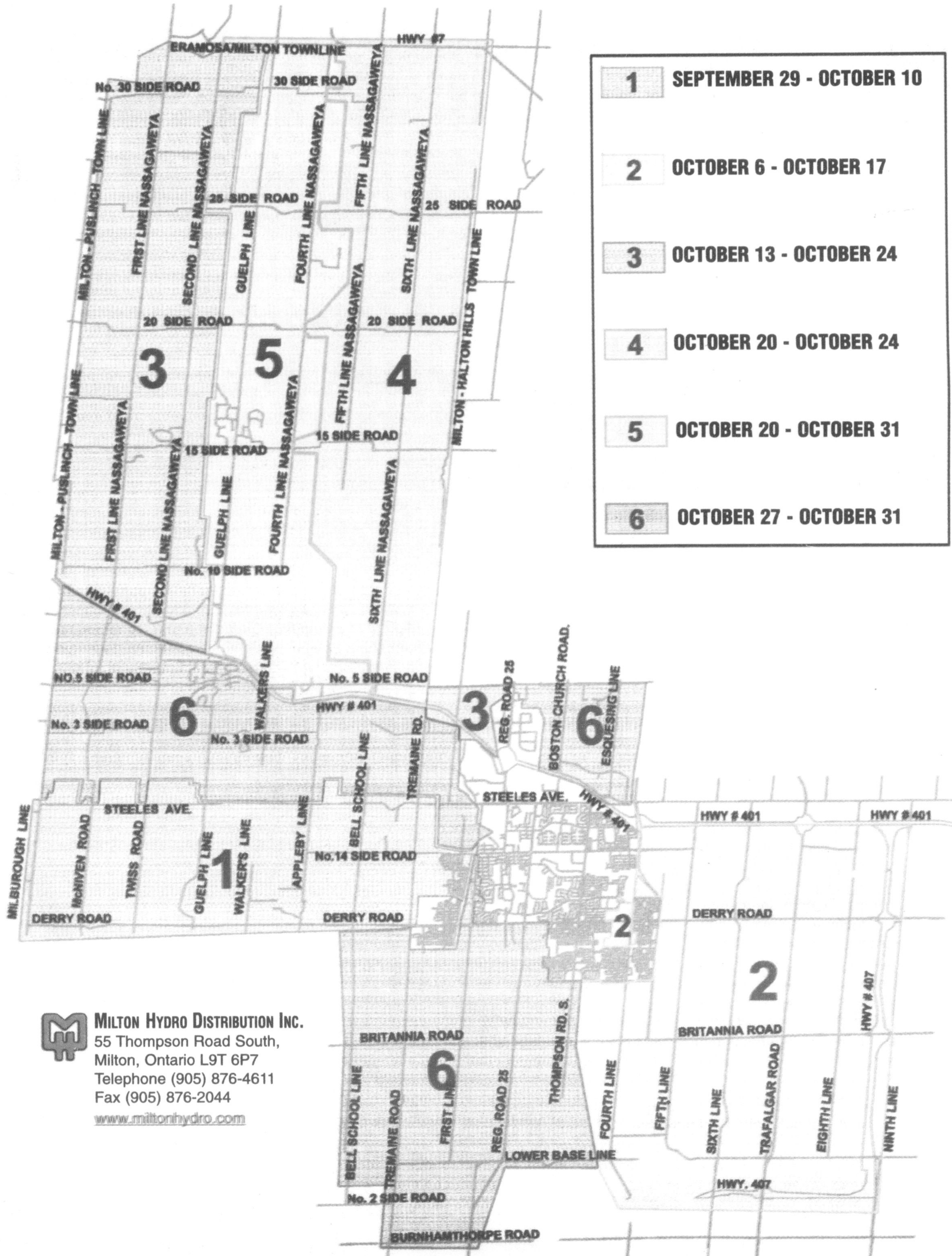


Smart Meters Are Coming to Rural Milton!



On September 29, 2008, Milton Hydro commenced its smart meter rollout to residential customers in rural Milton. It is expected that the rollout will be completed on or about November 1, 2008 (see map for approximate timing for your area). Once your smart meter has been installed, customers will be provided written notice in advance of moving to Ontario Energy Board (OEB) approved time-of-use pricing. Until such notice, customers will remain on OEB approved two-tiered pricing. If you have signed a contract with a retailer, the pricing as per the contract will remain in place.

Visit www.miltonhydro.com for information on smart meters, conservation programs and more!



MILTON HYDRO DISTRIBUTION INC.
 55 Thompson Road South,
 Milton, Ontario L9T 6P7
 Telephone (905) 876-4611
 Fax (905) 876-2044
www.miltonhydro.com