

# 'Old' Milton could see water shortage

By **Stephanie Hounsell**  
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Milton comes from Lake Ontario through the Big Pipe.

The well systems that supply "old" Milton are susceptible to water shortages at times of peak demand, such as on hot summer days.

The finding regarding water quantity issues means a more detailed hydrological investigation is recommended, states a press release issued by the committee.

The water quantity issue was one of the key findings of the recently-released Halton Region Source Protection Area's draft tier 1 water budget report.

In addition to looking at water quantity stress, another purpose of the tier 1 investigation is to describe the general nature of the surface (lake-based) and ground-water (well-based) systems.

It isn't new information, but it's been pinpointed in a more specific way through studies leading up to the report, said Doug Cuthbert, chair of the Halton-Hamilton Drinking Water Source Protection Committee.

The role of the source protection committee is to guide the development of the drinking water source protection plans — which arose from the Walkerton tragedy — for both Halton and Hamilton. It's also to ensure that all relevant information is taken into account when protecting municipal drinking water sources.

Miltonians are invited to comment on the draft report until Monday.

The committee is responsible for developing three documents — a terms of reference, an assessment report and a source protection plan.

The purpose of the report is to determine if the municipal drinking water sources within the Halton and Hamilton source protection areas are stressed with respect to quantity.

The tier 1 report is part of the assessment report, which is due one year after the approval of the terms of reference, which was submitted to the Minister of the Environment in October.

Water quantity was found to be an issue in subwatersheds that contain the Campbellville, Kelso and Walkers Line municipal well fields, from which old Milton draws its water, Cuthbert said.

Cuthbert said that in the

Drinking water in "new"

• see REPORT on page A7



RIZIERO VERTOLLI / METROLAND WEST MEDIA GROUP

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!:** Residents were invited to exchange New Year's Day wishes with Mayor Gord Krantz, members of council and the Milton Historical Society during the annual Mayor and Council New Year's Day Levee Thursday. From left are Councillor Cindy Lunau, May Bell, Mayor Krantz, Elenor Jackson, Audrea Lear-Costigan and May Johnson. In front, showing a bag with the Town's new address on it is Charlie Imus, 7.

## Developers to respond this Friday

• from **BALL** on page A1

roadworks and new and expanded water and wastewater treatment plants over the next 12 years. Otherwise, current residents would be forced to pay for it on their property taxes, Carr said, which is something council doesn't want.

This Friday, developers are expected to reply in writing on whether they will pay the extra freight and continue building in Halton region, Carr said. He admitted a slowdown in residential growth is likely.

"Certainly, it won't be as fast as anticipated," said Carr. Halton's planners had forecast the population of the region to grow almost 50 per cent, to about 630,000, by 2021.

However, he said his reduced expectations aren't due to overly onerous development charges but rather the current credit crisis, which has made borrowing for houses more difficult.

There has been a big slowdown in home sales during the last quarter of 2008, Carr said.

Another slowdown likely to affect Halton in 2009 is the economic one, said Carr. The automotive sector, comprised of the massive Ford assembly plant in Oakville and auto parts manufacturing plants throughout the region, has been hurting. It's Halton's largest exporting industry and includes many of its largest employers.

However, the Region isn't solely dependent on this one industry, said Carr, as 90 per cent of area businesses are small, with less than 10 employees. He added that Halton's wealthy, well-educated and young population should help the region survive the economic downturn.

"We'll be able to withstand it much better than other communities in Canada."

Getting through rough econom-

ic times would be easier with provincial and federal assistance, he added.

The federal government is expected to announce an economic stimulus in its budget Tuesday, Jan. 27, with a focus on job-creating infrastructure projects.

The provincial government has already committed to helping municipalities by announcing the phasing out of the GTA pooling program by 2013, as well as the elimination of municipal funding of Ontario Disability Support Payments over the next few years and the 20 per cent of welfare payments the region currently pays for by 2018. However, Halton's health department has stated the Province would still fall short about \$7.5

million this year in its funding for health and social services programs.

"We still have a long way to go," Carr said. "What we're pleased about is that the province recognizes that a lot of these social services need to be taken off (the property tax base)."

The next year will also be an important one for environmental issues, said Carr. The Region intends to finish its Sustainable Halton plan for growth between 2021-31 and the public works department is continuing its efforts to divert much of the Region's waste away from landfills.

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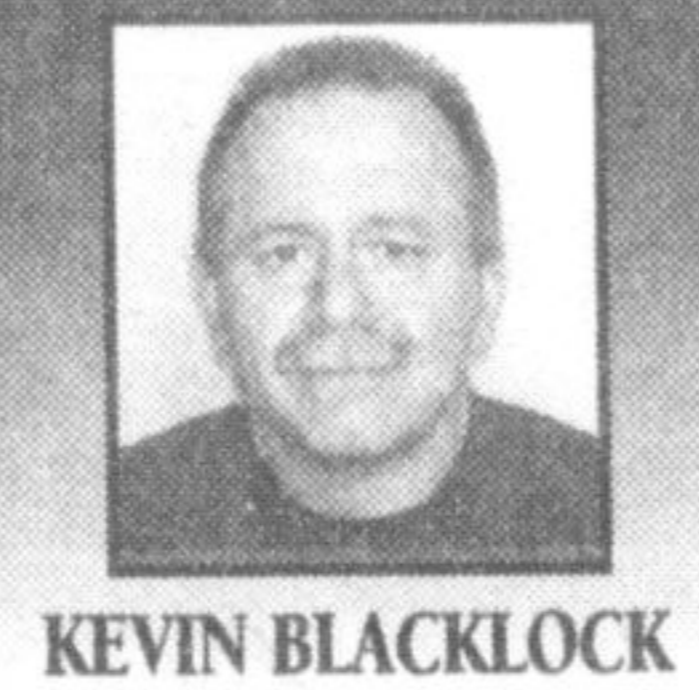
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