

Good deed equals cool treat in police's FREEZE program

Halton police's FREEZE youth program back for another summer

If you're a youngster helping an elderly woman with her groceries and you hear a police officer yell 'Freeze', don't be alarmed.

You're not being admonished, but rewarded.

In partnership with Mac's Convenience Stores, Halton Regional Police are once again

launching their 'Help Promote a Safe City and put a FREEZE on Crime' program.

Through Operation FREEZE, police officers will 'ticket' youth with Froster coupons when they are observed doing something positive in the community, such as volunteer work, following safety rules or deterring crime.

The coupons can be exchanged for a cool

treat at Mac's. The fifth anniversary of the program will see 60,000 Operation FREEZE coupons distributed to various police services in an effort to continue to enhance police relations with the young people in their communities.

"These coupons are excellent tools for police officers who are patrolling our communities," said Sean Sportun, manager of Loss Prevention and Security for Mac's in central Canada. "It's an ice-breaker, a way to initiate communication in a non-threatening, non law-enforcement setting."

Operation freeze recently launched, and coupons can be redeemed at any Milton Mac's.

"The Halton Regional Police Service is proud to participate in a program that rewards youth for responsible and considerate behaviour," said Deputy Chief Bob Percy. "Any initiative that promotes positive interactions with youths in our community benefits us all."

Fine \$265 plus \$60 victim surcharge

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If approved, the cameras will cost \$24,500 per location for the remainder of 2011 and the annual cost, including installation, maintenance and administration is an estimated \$83,000 per location.

Between 2012 and 2013, the Region plans to install red light cameras at another 10 locations. The intersections of Dundas Street and Guelph Line and Dundas Street and Bronte Road are already being considered as possible installs.

"We've heard a lot of concern regarding the big dump trucks coming out of the quarries (off Guelph Line)...we're going to be going out as part of this to let people know these are coming and they need to start thinking about going through red lights because we have had a number of accidents that we're trying to reduce," said Carr.

Halton had red light cameras at four sites in 2001 and 2002 as part of a Provincial pilot project. However, the council at the time opted to discontinue the program, citing the

low number of violations that took place in Halton compared to the other five municipalities participating in the pilot.

In 2004, Regional staff recommended re-evaluating the program after a study of the Province's pilot project revealed a reduction in angle, or T-bone, collisions at intersections with red light cameras. Such collisions are the ones that most likely result in severe injuries or fatalities, a staff report at the time stated. The study, however, also noted an increase in rear-end collisions at those intersections.

The current fine for a red light camera violation is \$265 plus a \$60 victim surcharge for a total of \$325.

Carr said once the cameras are approved by regional council he expects installation, signage and an awareness campaign to begin soon after.

The next set of red light camera locations would be considered next spring.

Christina Commisso can be reached at ccommisso@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

Correction

The front page photo caption in last Tuesday's *Champion* contained an incorrect name.

The BMX performer in the photo was Patrick Aguir.

The *Champion* regrets the error.



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