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NEWSLINES

Train leak not dangerous

A No. 5 Sideroad resident was evacuated from his home Sunday after a citizen spotted a liquid leaking from a passing train.

The northbound CN train was stopped at about 8 p.m. near No. 5 Sideroad and Highway 25 so officials could examine the unknown substance spilling from the railway tanker.

The liquid turned out to be super-cooled carbon dioxide which posed no great danger, said Steve Beaty, the Region of Halton's spills control officer, who was on the scene.

"The safety valve (on the tanker) had frozen open," Mr. Beaty explained. "So it was venting carbon dioxide."

As a precautionary measure, regional police closed No. 5 Sideroad and later No. 10 Sideroad while the train was being transported to be repaired.

A resident and his dog evacuated from the area were allowed back into their home after about an hour.



Photos by GRAHAM PAINE

All washed up

Two-year-old Brent O'Neil combined soapy water and some elbow grease to help out at a recent charity fundraising car wash at E. C. Drury High School. Young Brent was doing his part to make money for the Milton Children and Youth Centre. The budding car buff managed to give his clothes quite the laundering too.

Taxman suffers as arrears hit new high

By ROB KELLY
The Champion

Property and business tax arrears are more than \$2 million higher than they were last year in Milton, standing at \$6.1 million as of June, 1992. In June of 1991 the

figure was approximately \$3.9 million.

That means 15.27 per cent of the roughly \$40 million levied annually in Milton was outstanding by June. A year earlier, only 11.06 per cent of taxes were in default.

The delinquency rate is the highest "since I've been here," said Milton's finance director of eight years, Jim McQueen. On average it usually hovers in the five per cent range, Mr. McQueen noted.

The municipality has no intention of seizing "people's fridges and stoves" if they fall behind on their home property taxes, but Mr. McQueen said he's contemplating asking town council to let him use a bailiff to collect realty arrears, something that hasn't been done to date in Milton.

The Town is willing to work with people facing hard times, Mr. McQueen said, allowing them to make partial payments until they get back on their feet. Also, no residential property is seized for tax sale until the landowners owe for three years.

But in the meantime, the Town may pursue other avenues, such as attorning rents. That means diverting rental income tenants would normally pay a landlord to the municipality if the landlord's taxes have lapsed.

Looking at the bigger picture, Milton's situation isn't out of the ordinary in today's economic climate and may actually be better than in surrounding areas, Mr. McQueen said.

Tax debts in York Region, the fastest growing area in greater Toronto, were proportionally worse in 1990 than Milton's 1991 figures, Mr. McQueen pointed out.

As well, in Halton, "I suspect we're holding our own, and likely below average. We have not had any wholesale plant closings. Milton has a lot of residents still working."

However, "when you look at the way things are, the interest rates

and taxes are still too high for (economic) confidence. I think tax arrears are going to be fairly high for another year or two."

The main problem with overdue business and realty taxes is that "it decreases the cash flow" coming into municipal coffers, Mr. McQueen pointed out. In the long term the Town is almost guaranteed the bulk of the funds since the only alternative for landowners is to forfeit control of their property.

So while the shortfall in taxes means Milton has less money available to devote to interest-bearing accounts, that will eventually be offset by penalty interest applied against the outstanding taxes.

However, the cash flow crunch meant that in January and February, for the first time in Mr. McQueen's memory, Milton had to borrow to meet day-to-day operating expenses (approximately \$1 million in dribs and drabs during those two months).

Mr. McQueen could have instead cashed in some of Milton's long-term fixed-interest investments, but most of those were purchased when interest rates were higher than they are now, and they'll continue to deliver those returns for years. He opted to borrow at today's lower interest instead.

In related developments, the primary source of building activity in Milton, industrial development, has slowed to a relative crawl. Overall, Milton building activity is one-third of what it was last year, according to a first-quarter report recently released by Halton Region.

Between January and March of 1991 more than \$10 million worth

INSIDE



An English tourist was seriously injured and evacuated by air ambulance when he fell from the Rattlesnake Point cliffs Tuesday while visiting the conservation area with his family.

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Miltowne Enterprises

SUPPLIERS OF QUALITY

- Topsoil
- Limestone Gravel
- Bark Mulch
- Rockery Stone
- Beach Pebbles
- Sand

876-2888



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Danilko (left) and Anton Krushelnycky are happily settling into their new home after parents Ed and Natalie persevered to adopt them and bring them to Canada from the Ukraine.

Orphans adopted

Love beats red tape

By KAREN SMITH
The Champion

Ed and Natalie Krushelnycky say fighting through red tape for more than a year was worth it when they stepped off the plane with two new additions to their family.

Pride continues to shine on the face of Mr. Krushelnycky who, at the age of 47, has become the father of two one-year-old boys from the Ukraine.

He and his 44-year-old wife are the second Canadian couple ever to adopt from a Ukrainian orphanage. They brought the children to their new Milton home last week.

"I couldn't believe the kids were ours until we had them on the airplane," says Mr. Krushelnycky, who 18 years ago moved to town

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