

Ruralcheck

MTRCA pollution probe continues

Bacterial sources and amounts will be probed this summer as part of an ongoing study to pinpoint pollution in York Region rivers.

The Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (MTRCA) will be approaching rural landowners this summer as part of the Rural Beaches Project.

The study will focus on Bruce Creek in Whitchurch-Stouffville as well as Caledon's Centreville Creek, and the East Humber River in Vaughan, King, and Richmond Hill.

The study, funded by the Ontario Environment Ministry, began in 1986 when MTRCA staff collected water samples and assessed water quality.

During the winter, livestock farmers in the three watersheds were interviewed, and a questionnaire is being sent to other landowners.

"The support we've received from landowners has been tremendous. We're looking forward to the continued support of the rural community to complete the project," MTRCA general manager Bill McLean said.

He said a main pollutant in the three streams is fecal coliform bacteria, which originates in human and animal wastes.

The bacteria enters streams via suburban communities and septic systems, but agricultural areas are also sources.

Contact with water containing large concentrations of fecal coliform bacteria can cause eye and ear infections in humans, and other illnesses in livestock.

In recent years, the bacteria forced the closure of beaches at Bruce's Mill, Claireville, Boyd, and Albion Hills Conservation Areas.

Beaches at Bruce's Mill and Albion Hills were re-opened after the installation of swimming curtains and chlorine systems.

The data gathered by the study will determine the amount of bacterial pollution caused by livestock farms.

MTRCA staff will then approach livestock operators to alleviate the pollution.

Landowners wanting more information about the study can call the MTRCA at 661-6600, ext. 246 or 302.

Cop car chase ends in arrest

A 21-year-old Markham man was charged with numerous offences after engaging police in a high speed car chase on Major Mackenzie Dr. last week.

Police charged the Milne Lane resident with engaging police in a pursuit, driving without insurance, driving disqualified, driving without proper license plate identification and failing to remain.



Name that building

Name this building (above) and you could win \$25 in the Weekender's Name That Building contest. Entries must be submitted to either the Economist & Sun at 9 Heritage Rd. in Markham or the Tribune at 54 Main St. West, Stouffville, by 9:30 a.m. Thursday. Last week's winner was Elizabeth Giona of Markham who correctly identified Markham District High School (at left).

Antiques taken in local theft

Several antiques and a stereo worth \$615 were stolen from a 19th Ave home Wednesday morning, police said.

According to police thieves broke into the home by forcing open a bedroom window.

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