



5 Representing Stouffville at Miss Teen Canada pageant

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STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

## Sure sign of spring

Preparations are in high gear for the 44th production of Music Mania April 22 to 24 at Stouffville District Secondary School. Liz Lightfoot (left), Doris Harvey, Sharron Brazier and Fenella Smith take part in a recent rehearsal. Tickets for the variety show will soon be available at local outlets.

## 'Minimal impact' from sewer line pumping

BY MIKE ADLER  
Staff Writer

York Region must pump out groundwater to complete a sewer line to Stouffville, but would do so on a much smaller scale than for its stalled 16th Avenue trunk. For the connection to Stouffville along Ninth Line, the region is asking the province's permission to draw 1,122 litres of groundwater a minute when workers are on the job. That's a tiny fraction of what the region is seeking to extract during the second phase of the 16th Avenue project — a maximum of 50,000 litres a minute — and much more than the 12,000 a minute it is taking and

dumping just to protect the tunnel while the project is idle. "It is nowhere close to any of our other projects in the region," project manager Nitti Subramaniam told residents at Latham Hall in Stouffville last week. He predicted only a minimal impact from the water-taking on an aquifer below Ninth Line in north Markham. **HIGH LEVEL OF INTEREST** The amount of groundwater is small enough to escape a required posting for public comments on Ontario's environmental registry, but the Environment Ministry, citing a high level of interest, has

posted it anyway. No more than a dozen wells along Ninth Line might or might not be interrupted on a very temporary basis, and six properties have had new wells drilled already, said Renato Pasqualoni, in charge of fixing well problems for the region. Other properties would be fitted with temporary water tanks as needed. "We think we understand what's going to happen and we're prepared for it," Mr. Pasqualoni said, but admitted the region cannot anticipate all well problems the project will cause. Some residents, however, sounded skeptical.

See **SOME**, page 13.

## RESIDENTIAL RATE CAP INCREASES TODAY

# Prepare to pinch kilowatts, hydro users

BY JEFF MITCHELL  
Staff Writer

Everybody complains about the weather, the old adage goes, but nobody ever does anything about it. Same with the price of hydro: There will no doubt be grumbling throughout the land today when the realization sets in that Ontario's rate cap for residential hydro has been increased. The province's plan to encourage people to use hydro in off-peak periods by installing smart meters that allow residents to be billed less for power use depending on the time may not do much to stop the grumbling. The mandatory devices could result in savings on hydro bills, but could cost homeowners up to \$500 to install. But what are we doing to cut consumption and save ourselves money? It would seem we haven't yet got to the point where we've greatly cut back on the kilowatts. But observers are hopeful about the few signs of progress they see. "Except for a few blips, like the August blackout, residential consumption has remained constant over the past three years," said Eric Fagen, communications and regulatory affairs officer with Hydro Vaughan. Vaughan's 220,000 residents have continued to use their monthly average of just less than 1,000 kilowatt hours — 60 per cent of Ontarians use about that level of juice per month in recent years, despite a remarkable and turbulent time for the province's power generation and delivery system, Mr. Fagen said. His observations were echoed by others who watch our energy consumption, tracking our insatiable

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