

Resident confronts premier over sewage spill at duck farm

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often are the lagoons monitored?" he said. "What assurances do we have that duck waste is not leaching through the supposedly impermeable clay walls of the lagoons?"

He approached Premier Dalton McGuinty about the spill at a tree-planting event in King City yesterday.

E. coli levels in the creek, which begins near the spill site and ends at Bogart Pond in Newmarket, shot up after the April 15 spill, Ministry of the Environment spokesperson John Steele said.

"There is a significant amount of E. coli in Bogart Creek," Mr. Steele said.

"It is not unexpected. You're going to get E. coli when you're dealing with partially treated sewage."

Most recent stream sampling tests conducted by the ministry along the route of the spill indicate levels of E. coli that typically could be found in rivers and streams due to various sources of contamination, including animal wastes from pets, wildlife, water fowl and farm animals, Mr. Steele said.

Tests carried out on area wells by York Region's health services show no signs of E.

coli contamination.

The lagoon is tied to a private sewage-treatment plant at the 55-year-old family business, which processes two million ducks a year.

"The water that ran from the holding pond was partially recycled agricultural wastewater; it is screened, runs through a series of five lagoons, a filtration and aeration system before trickling through three holding ponds," King Cole Duck general manager Rob Grant said.

King Cole is rebuilding the lagoon, Mr. Grant said.

"We apologize to our neighbours and area residents for

the inconvenience and worry that this accident caused," he said.

A boil water alert in the neighbourhood was lifted Monday.

People who live near Bogart Pond in Newmarket are still advised to stay clear of the creek.

It is too early to know if

charges are warranted, Mr. Steele said.

In 1989, King Cole Ducks was convicted of discharging duck manure into a watercourse, while in 1995, the company was fined \$32,000 for discharging raw sewage into a stream and not properly reporting it, he said.

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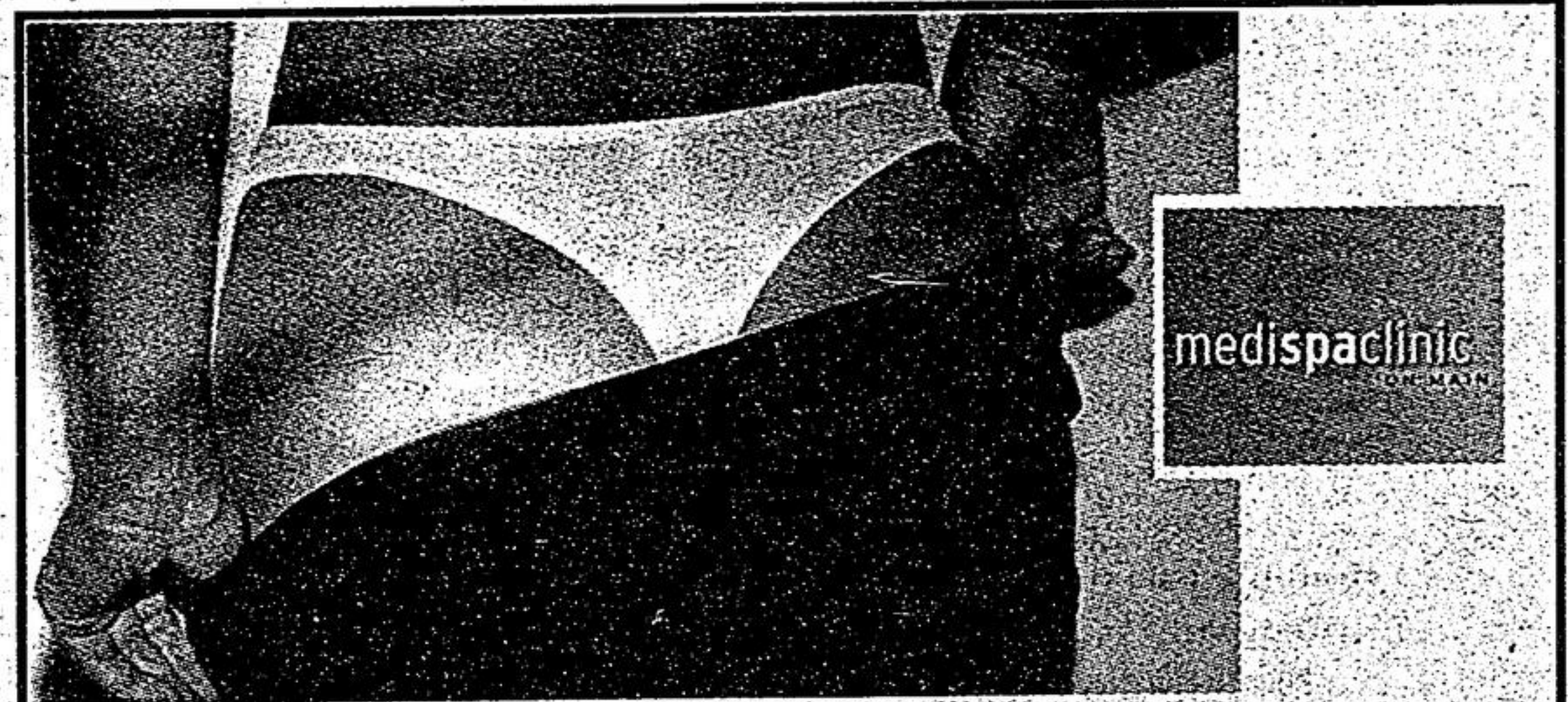
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Whitchurch-Stouffville resident Grant Purdy confronts Premier Dalton McGuinty yesterday over last weekend's duck spill following a scum during an Earth Day tree planting event at King City Public School.



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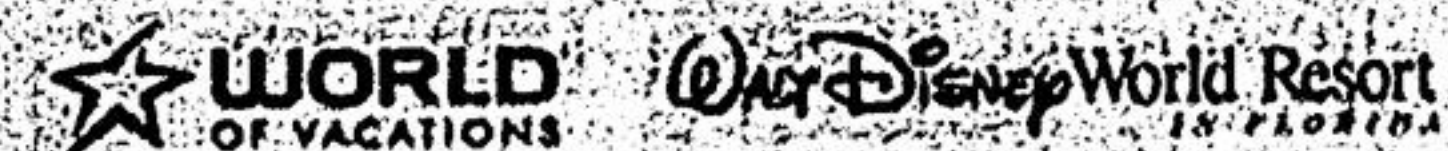
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