

Town conserving gas for emergencies

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But he, too, doesn't know when more gas is coming. No limit is imposed as to how much regular and premium fuel drivers can pump here. That's the rule at stations in some Ontario communities.

One customer, Stefanie Davies, didn't come into Stouffville Monday because she heard there wasn't any gas available.

The previous time her gas gauge was heading to empty, she had to use premium gas because "there was nothing else," she said.

Lineups can often be seen at Beaver Gas, although the Main Street station has also faced shortages for short periods.

But since last Thursday, business was "non-stop", an attendant said.

It did stop yesterday, after the pumps went dry.

When it comes to keeping fire trucks, ambulances and snowplows moving, the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is being pro-active. It has a reserve of fuel specifically to keep vehicles going in case of emergency.

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At the same time, public works employees are making sure to keep vehicles topped up with fuel by looking for gasoline stations that are open, as they go about their day.

"We are keeping our tanks filled up all the time," Peter Alcorn, public works supervisor, said.

He noted fuel suppliers seem to be bringing fuel to stations that have higher volumes of business.

None of the public works operations have been affected by the fuel shortages so far.

"We are lucky we haven't had any big snowfalls in the last few days," Mr. Alcorn said.

Some jobs, such as removing piled-up snow from cul-de-sacs and from small residential streets, are being put on hold temporarily. That's to conserve fuel that would be consumed as trucks idle during snow removal operations.

"We are trying to conserve as much as we can," Mr. Alcorn said.

Large trucking companies, such as Don Anderson Haulage Ltd. in Stouffville, are keeping a very close eye on the situation.

Trucks are still moving and going where they have to, especially for local trips, but the situation is more serious in northern Ontario, Andy Jarrett, the trucking company's IT manager, said.

The company will be monitoring the situation daily, he added.

Imperial Oil was expecting to have its capacity back to normal by yesterday, Mr. Jarrett said, but it could take weeks before inventories are up to where they were before the fuel shortages.

The Ontario Trucking Association sent a press release to its members Tuesday saying it had no reports of truckers having to park their rigs as a result of the current fuel shortage. But the situation appears to be growing worse daily.

Truckers looking for diesel fuel are advised that some stations in the Mississauga, North Bay, Sudbury, New Liskeard and Cochrane area may face serious shortages.

To help alleviate the situation, the



STAFF PHOTO/HANNELORE VOLPE

Stefanie Davies fills up at Mac's Milk in Stouffville Tuesday.

association is planning to start a make-shift fuel matching service on its website at ontruck.org where members with sufficient supplies of diesel fuel could sell it to a member company who

is short.

The shortages are being blamed on a fire on Feb. 15 at Imperial Oil's Nanticoke refinery on the north shore of lake Erie and on last week's CN Rail strike.

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The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is enhancing regulations to help eliminate bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or mad cow disease, from Canada.

Beginning July 12, 2007, there are new requirements for cattle producers; slaughterhouses; feed, pet food and fertilizer manufacturers; waste management facilities and others who handle, transport or dispose of cattle remains.

Everyone involved must be prepared.

Visit www.inspection.gc.ca/bse or call 1-800-442-2342 to learn more.

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