

OPINION

Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Beach should have lifeguard

Re: Drowning accidental, autopsy reveals, July 5.

We were greatly saddened by the response of Janet Davies, owner of Cedar Beach Park, to the drowning at her private resort July 2.

The person who drowned was a 27-year-old man, so this was not a question of parental supervision at all.

While we understand municipal bylaws do not require her to have a lifeguard at a private beach, the presence of a lifeguard might have saved this man's life by witnessing the man going under before his girlfriend noticed or initiating resuscitation as soon as the man's body was brought to the surface.

This was the first time, and probably the last, our families will use this facility.

We are strongly appealing to Ms Davies to:

- Re-institute a lifeguard on the beach. This is done by many other facilities that serve large groups of adults and children and it is the responsible thing to do.

- Ensure there is lifesaving equipment available at the beach such as a boat and/or other rescue equipment for bringing a person to shore. In this way, you don't have to rely on neighbours, or waste time hauling a person on to the trampoline.

Ms Davies might also want to investigate

the installation and maintenance of the trampoline equipment.

- Follow up with the local emergency response team to ensure a more rapid response to emergencies such as these.

While Whitchurch-Stouffville Fire & Emergency Services says it took four minutes and 36 seconds from the time the call was placed until their arrival, we were on the beach and it seemed like a good 15 minutes before any emergency crew arrived.

ILENE HYMAN, RUTH BIDERMAN,
MITCH MOLDOFSKY
& PREMIKA RATNAM
TORONTO

Train dogs not to bark

Stouffville is still a nice town, even though it is growing and getting very busy.

But why do people become mute then own a dog that barks constantly? Do they not hear it barking or yelping on and on at any time of the day or night?

I think it is just ignorance. The owners do not care about anyone else.

Why can't they train the dog to only bark when necessary? Maybe they should watch a dog-training show on TV.

How do the neighbours listen to it constantly without saying something? I await replies from dog owners with their excuses.

C. PERCIVAL
STOUFFVILLE



Putting price on pollution could lower levels

Mention the concept of a new tax to politicians and most will run screaming out of the room to go vacuum their cars or mow their lawns — anything to avoid talking about an issue they think could lose votes, no matter how sensible or reasonable the concept may be.

But that's going to have to change soon because we need to have a serious and open discussion about initiating a mechanism for pricing pollution — specifically carbon.

By now, everyone is aware of the mounting challenges we face from global warming.

The science, while still ongoing, is clear. The heat-trapping gases, such as carbon dioxide, we're pumping into our atmosphere from our homes, cars and industries are warming the planet and disrupting the climate.

If left unchecked, the consequences will be severe, to our envi-

ronment and our economy.

So, it's in everyone's best interest to start curbing our carbon output.

There are many ways to do this, but most experts agree market-based solutions can play a critical role.

Two such solutions are a cap-and-trade system and a carbon tax.

Under a cap-and-trade system, governments put a limit on the amount of carbon that can be released into the atmosphere. Industries have to stay within their limits.

Innovators who go below their limits can sell their leftover emissions as credits to those who go over the set amount.

Under a carbon tax, the more you pollute, the more you pay.

Such a tax could be applied to all products or activities that have a substantial carbon footprint — producing and burning gasoline, coal and other fossil fuels, for example.

This would encourage industries to become more efficient and



David Suzuki

reduce costs, while encouraging consumers to save money by being more environmentally friendly.

Recently, a report by the government-commissioned National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy found, regardless of which mechanism we choose, the longer we wait to put a price on carbon, the more costly it will be.

The report stated that because businesses and investors make long-term decisions about capital

costs, such as buildings, technologies and equipment, they need a clear idea where the government is heading. "In essence, inadequate and delayed communication by the government of a (greenhouse gas) price could lead to substantial long-term economic costs."

Politicians have a knee-jerk reaction to taxation, as do many Canadians.

However, I don't think Canadians feel taxes are necessarily bad, so much as they think wasting tax dollars is bad and unfair taxation is bad.

By its very nature, a carbon tax should be reasonably fair because it directly taxes the product that causes the harm and expense to society as a whole.

The more you pollute, the more you pay. That seems pretty fair.

But Canadians would also revolt if they felt their tax money was being wasted.

That is why it would be essential to dedicate the money gained

from a carbon tax to developing and promoting more sustainable alternatives.

Proceeds from a carbon tax could be put toward providing better public transit, for example, thus improving the service or reducing the cost of a more sustainable transportation option. For electricity production, proceeds from a carbon tax on say, coal, could go toward cleaner, renewable energy sources such as wind.

Global warming has really changed the environmental discussion in Canada and much of the world. Suddenly, people are much more aware of our environmental challenges and eager to get moving on sustainable alternatives. Government plays a key role in this movement and if our federal government isn't already seriously looking into a carbon-pricing mechanism, it should be.

Take the Suzuki challenge at david Suzuki.org

LETTERS POLICY

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