

Stouffville's Joe Burnett, who has ploughed snow off area roads for 35 years, has had to deal with high winds, heavy snow and a growing number of bad drivers this winter.



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Extra-early days for operators

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sign, he decides to pull around".

"Some drivers are polite," he said, "but with others, you can have 100 flashing lights and they would never see you."

Mr. Burnett is seeing more and more drivers talking on cellphones, eating or putting on makeup.

To find out when and where snow plows need to be deployed, snow plow operators take turns getting up, at about 2:30 a.m., to be on the job from 3:30 a.m. to noon, patrolling the municipality's roads.

The patrollers are undeterred by the wee hours, however, and work a seven-day stretch.

The patrollers give danger spots on major roads the first priority. The town makes sure to clear major roads such as Main Street and the Tenth Line first and then roads with less traffic such as Millard Street, Hemlock Road and Stouffer Street.

"There is no use doing the subdivisions first," Mr. Burnett said. "If the main road is not done, they (residents) are not going to go any place anyway."

Plows clear 235 km of road. It might take three passes to clear all the snow.

There are more rural than urban roads, (57 per cent rural; 43 per cent), Denis Chartrand, the town's public works manager of operations, said.

An average of 3,500 tonnes of salt is used each year.

Winter road reminders

Tips on clearing snow and roads for residents:

- Overnight parking restrictions are in place until March 31.
- The town requests that vehicles are not parked on the street during the day until snowplowing is done
- Don't push snow from driveways on to the travelled portion of the road
- Residents are asked not to allow children to play on snow piles located on or at the sides of roads. Snow plow operators may not see children playing there.

—Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

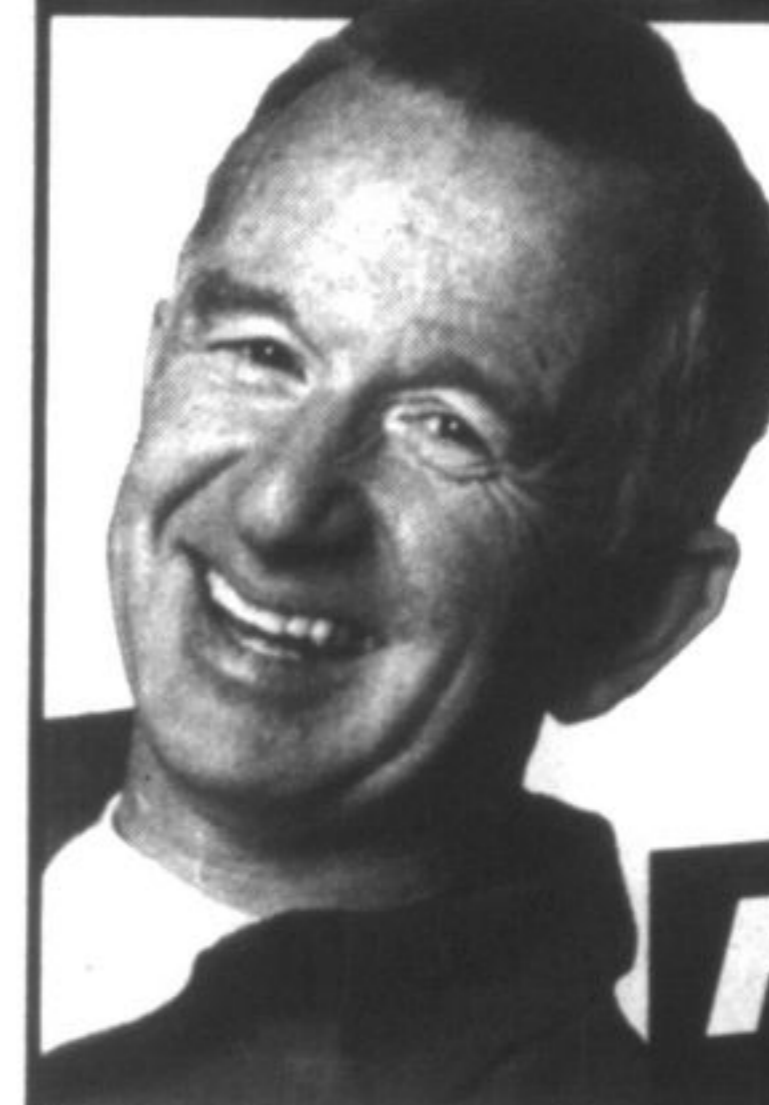
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