

The Regional Municipality of Halton

For Immediate Release
October 17, 2001



Halton Region: Emergency Plans in Place

The first incidents of suspicious substances in Halton were reported on October 16, 2001. The Halton Region Health Department assisted Emergency Service workers (Police, Fire, Ambulance) in responding to two isolated incidents.

"There are protocols in place to respond to these types of incidents. Police, Fire, Ambulance Services and the Health Department follow a specific protocol but should the need arise Halton Region has an emergency plan in place. Ongoing communication between Emergency Services, the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care, ensures Halton's emergency plan can be activated in a timely manner," said Brent Marshall, Chief Administrative Officer for Halton Region.

Halton Region is advising residents to use caution and limit concern in response to the increasing number of reports about suspicious packages and unidentified substances.

Police Chief Ean Algar is urging residents to use judgement in response to any thing they think may be a suspicious substance. "We are encouraging people to really assess the situation before they call Police to report an unidentified substance. There are significant resource implications when Police are called to respond to incidents that are unlikely to be linked to a criminal act. We do not want people to take any unnecessary risks but we also want people to be certain that there is a legitimate concern." The Chief emphasizes that the police service will not tolerate any public pranks or racially motivated crime. "We have a safe community and we will endeavour to keep Halton one of the safest communities in Canada."

Health Department staff have been working closely with Halton Region's Emergency Planning Coordinator to ensure the emergency plans include contingencies for bioterrorism.

"We have informed the medical community about our emergency preparedness and have forwarded information regarding bioterrorism. In addition, we have asked that they report any unusual clusters of disease, " said Dr. Bob Nosal, Medical Officer of Health.

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Events in the world since the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States have put many organizations on a heightened state of alert. Halton Region, like many of its counterparts, has emergency plans in place to respond to different types of emergencies that may arise in the community.

If you notice a suspicious package or substance at work or in your home, call 911.

For more information, please call Halton Region at 905-825-6000. Toll Free: 1-866-442-5866. Information is posted on our Web site at www.region.halton.on.ca.

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