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# GEORGINA Post

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FREE ISSUE

## Province puts hold on Upper York Sewage Solution EA

By MIKE ANDERSON

The province officially hit the pause button on the Upper York Sewage Solutions (UYSS) project last week, introducing new legislation – the York Wastewater Act – that will put York Region’s Environmental Assessment (EA) application on hold until a panel of experts can review options to address the Region’s wastewater needs.

The \$715-million UYSS project, a state-of-the-art sewage treatment plant to be built in Queensville, would handle wastewater servicing for future growth in Aurora, East Gwillimbury and Newmarket, potentially discharging up to 40 million litres of treated wastewater daily into the East Holland River, which flows directly into Lake Simcoe.

The move follows an earlier announcement that the province was considering alternatives to the UYSS, including sending Upper York’s future wastewater south, through the “Big Pipe” to the Duffins Creek Water Pollution Control Plant in Pickering, to be treated and discharged into Lake Ontario – which was the original plan before the previous Liberal government instructed York Region to find a “Lake Simcoe” solution to its wastewater servicing.

“Protecting Ontario’s water resources, now and in the future, is a top priority for our



HAYLEY, STEVEN AND LIONEL

## Neighbours make street a tribute to the 215

By MIKE ANDERSON

When Steven Loweth and his partner Lionel Ketola, both United Church Ministers, heard the news that the remains of 215 children were discovered in a mass grave at the Kamloops Residential School in B.C.,

they decided they had to do something to honour the lost children.

But they weren’t sure what to do. So, they turned to a neighbour, Hayley Williamson, who recently moved from Georgina Island.

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UYSS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

government – but any changes to that system need to be based on the most current and accurate information,” said Environment Minister Jeff Yurek.

“That is why the province is proposing legislation that would put a hold on the current application from York Region to expand its sewage servicing capacity using infrastructure going to Lake Simcoe. The proposed legislation would also establish an Expert Advisory Panel to provide the province with recommendations on a path forward.

Although we recognize the need to improve infrastructure for the rapidly growing York and Durham Regions, many years have passed since the assessment of this project began. In that time, it became clear that more information from technical and other experts is needed to better understand the changing environmental, social and financial implications of this proposal.”

According to Minister Yurek, the expert advisory panel, which is yet to be appointed by the Ford government, will “provide information and advice to the government concerning all potential options to provide additional wastewater capacity to accommodate anticipated future growth in both Regions.”

The panel, made up of experts from various fields like land use planning and wastewater infrastructure, will consult with key stakeholders and “meaningfully” engage with Indigenous communities.

“We will continue to work closely with York and Durham Regions, municipalities and Indigenous communities to plan and implement this important work while protecting our vital water resources,” Minister Yurek said.

However, York Region is not happy with Minister Yurek’s

plan to have experts review the UYSS project, which it considers the “best alternative” to service future growth.

“The Regional Municipality of York is extremely disappointed with the Ontario Government’s proposed legislation. If enacted, the Act would put a hold on any decision on the UYSS EA application”, said Mike Rabeau, York Region’s Director of Capital Planning and Delivery.

“This is the most expensive EA in the Region’s history, reflecting the significant level of review, technical and environmental work and consultation completed,” he said.

Mr. Rabeau says the Region has already spent more than \$100 million on the UYSS – \$25 million on the EA alone – without breaking ground on the project.

“Continuous delays approving this project have put the Region’s mandate under the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe in jeopardy,” he said.

“Local municipal growth requires water and wastewater servicing; continued delays in approval of the UYSS EA is disrupting planned employment and residential growth within Aurora, East Gwillimbury and Newmarket.”

UYSS CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

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215 CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Together they came up with the idea to line their street, Dalton Rd. in Jackson's Point, with 215 lawn signs displaying a beating orange heart.

"When I first heard the news, it impacted me quite a bit emotionally, as I'm a minister in the United Church of Canada. And our church was partly responsible for some of this — 10 per cent of the residential schools were under the guidance of the United Church," Loweth said.

"My job is to fight for justice and advocate for reconciliation with our First Nations people. So I approached our neighbour Hayley, who is from Georgina Island, with the idea of doing something within our community. And she thought it was a beautiful thing to do."

Loweth, who owns a small printing company, was able to get the 215 signs printed and mounted on bamboo sticks, then, last Saturday, neighbours pitched in to get the signs in front yards.

The trio also invited their neighbours to a small vigil for the 215, held on Sunday, at their road-end beach. Williamson conducted a smudging and spoke about the challenges facing Indigenous peoples. "It meant so much to me that our street came together at a time like this to honour these children in such a good way," Williamson said.

"I felt so grateful to live in a community like this, especially since I moved here from Georgina

Island to buy my first home. And I couldn't have asked to be in a better community."

But, despite the warm feelings, Williamson told her neighbours that there could be no reconciliation without truth.

"I said if you are just learning of this now, you have so much more to learn. And I don't say that to make people feel guilty. But to know the real truth of Canada, and to continue educating yourself and others is necessary to move forward in this reconciliation."

Loweth also sees the need for more education. Still, he wants to see action in the form of a formal apology from the Catholic Church. He also wants the federal government to act on all the recommendations made by the TRC report. "We just need to advocate and push the government to do that, regardless of what government is in," he said.

While Indigenous people feel anger, sadness and grief over the lost children, Williamson believes it's a turning point of sorts. "If there is a positive, I think the positive would be all the non-Indigenous people that are joining us in honouring these children's lives and realizing that Indigenous children and families are still struggling in this country today," she said. "The discovery of these children has brought awareness about the rest of the residential school sites across Canada and will hopefully reveal their truths as well."

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UYSS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Still, Minister Yurek’s plan to re-start consultations is being applauded by those who oppose the UYSS, particularly Regional Councillor Rob Grossi, who actively campaigned against the project during the last municipal election.

“I am the only regionally-elected official who has questioned this proposed facility from its beginnings,” Mr. Grossi said in a statement emailed to The Post.

“I welcome this review. The expert panel should take as much time as needed to examine all issues and options. East Gwillimbury, Newmarket and Aurora deserve an answer and a solution to their current issues and future needs. But I have always believed that Lake Simcoe isn’t the solution.”

“I think everything is up in the air, and the expert panel should be able to look at the effects of

other proposals, including Orbit, a 150,000 person development in Innisfil, initially approved by a Ministers Zoning Order, bypassing all planning processes that keep in check Lake Simcoe capacity.”

The Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation (CGIFN), currently under a boil water advisory, has also actively opposed the UYSS, arguing that the plant could discharge unacceptable levels of pharmaceuticals, micro-plastics and personal care products into the Lake, which is a source of drinking water for some community members.

The Post reached out to CGIFN for comment, but a spokesperson said that the province’s new legislation would have to be reviewed by the Band Council before an official response was made public.

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SNAPPING TURTLE

## Watch for turtles on roads

By MICHELLE POIRIER

Turtle nesting season has begun and residents are asked to keep their eyes on the road to avoid injuring female turtles that may be crossing the road on their way to lay their eggs.

Gail Lenters, the founder of Shades of Hope Wildlife Refuge in Pefferlaw, said they are starting to get frequent calls about injured turtles on the road as turtle nesting season begins.

“It is turtle time, please be careful on our roads,” she said.

Ms. Lenters said turtles are laying their eggs roadside because they like the sandy gravel, they’re looking for sand and warmth.

“It’s hard to miss or not see them this time of year. If they’re crossing the road stop and help them cross the road in the direction that they’re trying to go, or encourage them to go faster to get them off the road,” she said.

Shades of Hope is a first response location that provides emergency care to injured turtles before sending them to the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre in Peterborough.

Provincially, seven out of eight of the turtle species in Ontario are at risk; federally, all eight are labeled at risk.

“A snapping turtle has to live for 20 years before it’s even breeding age, so it’s maneuvering our roadways and landscape for

many years before it’s even able to reproduce,” Ms. Lenters said.

“Some of our Ontario turtles will travel as far as seven kilometers to lay their eggs; they have a memory and GPS, something built in. They know where they want to go. Considering that distance, there is no way that turtle is not going to cross a road.”

Sutton resident Sabrina Fahselt helped a turtle cross Highway 48 on the morning of June 9.

“Once I realized it was a turtle I pulled over to the side of the road, put on my four ways and reversed back to the location of the turtle. I jumped out of my car and waved to the people going north bound to slow down,” she said.

“Once I approached the turtle, I was thankful to see it hadn’t been hit. Because on Monday, I was driving home and saw a turtle hit and killed in the same area.”

She said the turtle kept trying to bite her as she tried to help it across the road, and the traffic was starting to get backed up. But a man from another car joined her in helping the turtle cross the road in the direction it was headed.

If you come across an injured turtle, you can call Shades of Hope at (705) 437-4654 or the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre at (705) 741-5000.



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with Samantha Bodger

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Still, even after you’ve got the right amount in place, it doesn’t mean it’s set in stone. You should review your coverage regularly, and especially when you change jobs, get married or remarried, have children or experience any other major life event.

Life insurance should be a key part of your overall financial strategy, along with your retirement accounts and other investments. Make sure you’re properly covered - for today and tomorrow.

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VICKY AND KELSEY

## Shining Water Paddle raises awareness about Lake Simcoe

By MIKE ANDERSON

Despite the threat of an afternoon thunderstorm, three canoes set off from Virginia Beach Marina on June 7 to complete a two-week journey around Lake Simcoe.

The six paddlers are part of the first-ever Shining Water Paddle trip organized by the Chippewas of Georgina Island. Shining Waters or Zhooniyaangzaaga'igan is the Anishinaabe name for Lake Simcoe.

The paddlers will camp at various spots along the Lake and offer prayers and conduct traditional tobacco ceremonies to help heal the waters, as well as the waters that flow within us.

Elder Shelley Charles conducted a smudging ceremony and sang the Prophecy song for the paddlers. And, when they left the shore, she offered a prayer, which set the tone for their spiritual journey.

Vicky Wolske, who is leading the trip and conducting the traditional ceremonies, says the idea for the paddle came to her in a dream.

"I'm honouring that dream and I'm having my family join this

paddle. We're going to head west and we plan to go right around Lake Simcoe. We're following the direction that we do in our traditional circles," said Wolske, who is also a Midew or medicine woman.

"We're offering gifts, prayers and songs to help maintain the purity of the water and also to raise awareness — to let everybody know what needs to be done, that we need to pay attention and take care of the waters, and not only specifically the Lake waters, we all carry waters inside our own bodies."

She also stressed that the trip had a universal message for all peoples.

"The waters is the one thing that unites us all over the world. So this journey is inclusive. The traditional ceremonies and everything that we're doing is Anishinaabe.

But we didn't want to just say that it's just for the Anishinaabe people. Everybody needs to pay attention that water is life and how important it is."

Kelsey Trivett, who is also taking part in the paddle, agrees.

“It’s important to raise awareness about access to clean water and the safety of water. It’s all of our responsibility to care for that water,” she said.

“If we don’t have access to clean water, we won’t survive. And there are so many things globally that are impacting our water and the safety of our water and access to clean water.

I’m hoping that the paddle raises that awareness and that it’s all of our responsibility to take care of it.”

Trivett, who’s an Ojibwe language and culture teacher at the Waabgon Gamig school on Georgina Island, wants to see the federal government take action on the recommendations made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), including making clean, safe drinking water available to all First Nations — the Chippewas of Georgina Island have been on a boil water advisory for the past five years.

“There have been actions, but there hasn’t been the actions set out by Indigenous communities and the TRC, it would be nice to see access to clean water and more communities coming off boil water advisories,” she said.

While she acknowledges the two-week canoe trip is going to test her endurance, Trivett is grateful for all the support she’s received from her family and friends, including her seven-

year-old son Carver, who helped her train for the paddle.

“It’s a big trip. But I’ve got my family and community members supporting us. And I think our ancestors will be there with us supporting us.”

“I think it’s a great idea to raise awareness for the Lake, the healing of the Lake,” said Chief Donna Big Canoe, who along with Band Councillors and MP Scot Davidson came to show their support for the paddle.

“These ladies have done a tremendous job in organizing this event and bringing prayers to help with the healing of the Lake. It’s so much needed at this time, especially with the concerns we have with Lake Simcoe.”

“We need to protect the water and heal it. We need to start. Everyone needs to start. That’s the awareness. It’s proven our traditional ways work. You can see that it changes when the water has been prayed for.”



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## Short-term rental owners charged for violating ban

By MIKE ANDERSON

The owners of two short-term rental accommodations (STRAs) in Georgina were charged last month under the Reopening Ontario Act for operating in violation of the provincial ban on short-term rentals.

According to a Town spokesperson, a total of three short-term rental owners have been charged so far under the Act.

The ban, which officially ends on June 11 as part of step one of the province's reopening plan, only permitted bookings for people in need of housing; no short-term stays were allowed.

The owners of 327 Lake Dr. N and 1976 Metro Rd. N. were each fined \$880 by Georgina bylaw officers for hosting guests.

However, the 1976 Metro Rd. N. owner was also charged with operating without a Town STRA license and fined \$500 plus fees and surcharges. The charge carries a maximum fine of \$25,000 for a first offence.

Both properties were advertised on popular short-term rental platforms, including Airbnb and VRBO (Vacation Rentals by Owner), during the ban. And at least one posted

guest reviews during the stay-at-home order.

David Marchese, whose house is next door to 1976 Metro Rd. N., was happy to see the Town charge the owner for operating illegally during the stay-at-home order.

"I was livid," said Mr. Marchese, who lives with his wife and two young children.

"I've taken the stay-at-home order very seriously. I've been working from home for 18 months now. I've been respecting that, but the owners of this property are not," he said. "There's been no oversight on this property. And the guests have not been respectful"

He says previous guests at the residence have let off fireworks, fired BB guns and shot arrows at his fence. And, on one occasion, a guest even flew a drone over his property while he was in the pool with his wife.

"I'm happy the Town has been taking the right steps. But they need to go further. All they can really do is issue a fine if it's not licensed. They should be able to shut it down."

Georgina Council approved a bylaw in 2019 that established

a licensing and regulatory system for short-term rental accommodations (STRAs), which were becoming a nuisance to residents, who were upset over excessive noise, littering, illegal parking and other bylaw offences.

Under the licensing system, short-term rental hosts are required to purchase an annual license.

The license is \$250, plus the cost of a fire inspection (\$122) and septic inspection (\$106) for properties not municipally serviced. The annual renewal of the license fee is \$150, plus the cost of the fire inspection.

Both the hosts and guests of licensed STRAs must also adhere to a Renter's Code of Conduct, which allows bylaw officers to issue demerit points for violations — a noise complaint is one demerit point. After a total of 15 demerit points, the Town can revoke the license.

While the licensing system was hailed as one of the first of its kind in Ontario, compliance remains an issue.

According to a Town spokesperson, only 18 short-term rental accommodations have obtained a license to date. The Town had initially planned to cap STRA licenses at 150 a year, which means the vast majority of short-term rentals are operating illegally.

Meanwhile, only a dozen demerit points have been issued, with none of the STRAs accumulating enough demerit points to have their licenses revoked.

According to Thorben Wieditz, Director of Fairbnb Canada, which promotes government regulation for short-term rental platforms, achieving compliance is harder for smaller communities that lack the resources to enforce licensing systems.

"Smaller communities don't have the infrastructure nor the

resources in terms of bylaw enforcement to accommodate a huge amount of short-term rental guests and also enforce local bylaws," Mr. Wieditz said.

"In some areas, it's fairly black and white, and short-term rentals are considered a commercial use, and as such cannot exist within a residentially zoned area. So they are literally not allowed to operate in certain areas."

"Once townships or smaller municipalities start to legalize short-term rentals by coming up with licensing regimes, then it becomes a cat and mouse game very quickly. And that's a problem because the burden of proof can be quite high for the regulator to claim that someone is running an illegal short-term rental property."

Mr. Wieditz also warns that with the province reopening, Georgina, like many lakeside communities, can expect to see a major influx of short-term rental guests this summer.

"People that are not allowed or won't travel internationally are going to make use of what is available to them in closer proximity to their home," he said.

"There are certain travellers that are very responsible and bring their own groceries and aren't going to mingle. But I'm not very hopeful. We are still living through a pandemic where it's only safe if we can keep a physical distance; until everyone is vaccinated."



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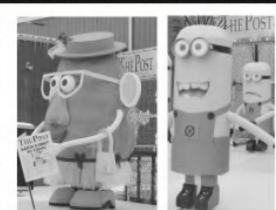
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# YOU'RE INVITED!

From the comfort of your own home, find out York Region's plans to continue providing safe, cost-efficient and reliable water and wastewater services to residents, businesses and communities.

Visit our third and final Water and Wastewater Master Plan Update Online Open House to explore recommended infrastructure projects to meet the needs of our growing communities.

**PARTICIPATE IN OUR ONLINE OPEN HOUSE | JUNE 24 TO JULY 8, 2021**  
[YORK.CA/WATERPLAN](http://YORK.CA/WATERPLAN)

Please let us know if you require accommodations to participate. An accessible version of this notice and Open House materials are available upon request. To submit questions, comments or to be added to the project mailing list, please contact:

**Laura Alpi, Project Liaison**  
The Regional Municipality of York  
17250 Yonge Street, Newmarket

P: 1-877-464-9675 ext. 73029  
F: 905-830-6927  
[water@york.ca](mailto:water@york.ca)

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## 2021 WATER AND WASTEWATER MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Online Open House #3

York Region is updating its Water and Wastewater Master Plan through the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment master planning process. The Master Plan update will identify long-term infrastructure projects for future water and wastewater servicing needs to 2051. Feedback gathered through this Online Open House will help shape the final report to York Regional Council in early 2022.

**DID YOU MISS OUR PREVIOUS OPEN HOUSES?**  
Get caught up at [york.ca/waterplan](http://york.ca/waterplan)





COURTESY UNSPLASH

## OPP calls on boaters to wear life-jackets after 32 fatalities

By SARAH GRISHPUL

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) say many accidental deaths on the water can be prevented if boaters wear a life jacket.

Sergeant Dave Moffatt, the OPP provincial marine coordinator, believes that people don't want to wear a personal flotation device (PFD) or life jacket because they don't understand the dangers of boating.

Last year, 32 people in Ontario died in boating accidents, the highest number of boating fatalities in the past 10 years. This year already, four people have died in boating accidents.

Moffatt reveals that 91 per cent of those fatalities could have been prevented by wearing a properly fitted life jacket or PFD.

With many life jackets and PFD products available for boaters, Moffatt believes there shouldn't be an excuse for not wearing one.

Inflatable PFDs are designed for wearability and can automatically inflate when a person has fallen overboard. Although they are over \$200,

Sergeant Moffatt says that they are worth every single penny.

With Lake Simcoe's shallow waters and high waves, boaters should also be aware of the dangers and identify the risks before going out.

Boaters can avoid boating accidents by checking the weather conditions, being mindful of their vessel's capabilities, telling people their location, being aware of the effects of cold water immersion, taking a boating course, and of course, wearing a life jacket or PFD.

According to the Canada Shipping Act, the fines for not wearing a properly fitting life jacket or PFD is \$200 for the operator of the vessel and \$100 for every passenger.

"When you leave your dock during the day, you're expecting to go home at night, and we want to make sure everyone goes home at night," Moffatt said. "So, wear your PFD, people."

View Transport Canada's Safe Boating Guide at: [www.tc.gc.ca/boatingsafety](http://www.tc.gc.ca/boatingsafety).

## Ask The Expert

with Dylan Henderson

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**Q: I am a unionized employee dealing with an employment matter, but I feel as though my union has not been representing me to the best of their ability. When should I consult an employment lawyer?**

In most unionized instances, you cannot simply hire your own lawyer. This is because once registered with a union, the union itself becomes your exclusive bargaining agent. You are instead represented by an elected member of the union known as a representative. It is this representative, with the assistance from the union, who is to ensure that the employer is complying with the collective agreement.

Often, collective agreements outline the process for workers to address their employer's non-compliance with terms. Accordingly, if you were to retain a lawyer it is likely your employer would not accept their jurisdiction to address your matter. However, under certain circumstances you may be able to pursue legal counsel outside of your union. The most prominent avenues recognized are human rights complaints, workplace health and safety issues, or claims against the union for a breach of their duty of fair representation.

- Under Ontario's Human Rights Code (or Canadian Human Rights Act for federal worker) employees are ensured equal rights and opportunities without discrimination. If your complaint is about a breach of your human rights, you may be able to bring an application to the Human Rights Tribunal;
- Workplaces within the province must adhere to Occupational Health and Safety legislation. Pursuant to legislation, you are entitled to procedures and protections from unsafe work. If your employer responds negatively because you acted on your rights, then you may be able to make a complaint at the Ontario Labour Relations Board;
- Finally, if the union acts in an inappropriate manner you may have a complaint for a breach of their duty of fair representation. Grounds for pursuing this complaint include allegations of bad-faith conduct, discrimination, or arbitrariness on the part of the union in its decision-making process.

To discuss the particulars of your case and whether an employment lawyer is able to assist, please contact our office.

**905.476.9100**

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# PEFFERLAW POSTINGS

By Karen Wolfe

Seven Pekin ducks, which have grown up on the Pefferlaw River and were hatched in a kindergarten classroom, have come under the long arm of the Town's by-law department and have been given two weeks to be relocated.

Four years ago, Kathy Crawford, an ECE teacher, released the ducks on the Pefferlaw River after they hatched in her kindergarten class. Since then three more have been added and the "girls" spend their day paddling up and down the river. According to Ms. Crawford, they have never been a problem for anyone and no one has ever complained to her about them. In fact she said, they have charmed the village of Pefferlaw because they are so enjoyable to watch. But a neighbour did complain and a Georgina bylaw

officer responded and told Ms. Crawford the ducks would have to be relocated within two weeks.

A statement from the Town of Georgina reads: "The zoning bylaw prohibits the keeping or raising of animals in a residential area except as allowed by a specific municipal bylaw which sets forth regulations for keeping of the same. Town of Georgina Exotic Pet Bylaw No. 2003-0072 only allows ducks to be kept on rural zoned properties. Agricultural uses are not permitted on a residential zoned property."

But Ms. Crawford insists these ducks are not exotic and they are not agricultural livestock. "They are part of the natural environment here and I don't believe they should be treated any differently than the Canada geese, mallards,

common mergansers and blue herons that I often find on my property," she said.

She said Pekin ducks cannot fly so in order to protect them at night from predators, she has provided them with a shelter. "Yes, I feed them but I also feed the geese and mallards that come onto my riverfront property on a daily basis. The only difference between these ducks and the other waterfowl that live on the Pefferlaw River is the fact that these ducks cannot fly."

Ms. Crawford plans on asking council for an extension of the two-week notice so she can attend a council meeting to explain and provide details on why these ducks should be treated no differently than any other Pefferlaw River waterfowl.



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