

Crash on QEW now an SIU investigation

■ By David Lea
OAKVILLE BEAVER STAFF

The province's Special Investigations Unit (SIU) is investigating a car accident that took place during a Saturday morning police chase.

Police said that at 5:20 a.m. an OPP officer was on patrol when the officer noticed a Mazda 626 driving erratically and at extremely high speeds on eastbound QEW.

"The officer turned on the lights, the guy continued with the same behaviour, didn't change," said Sergeant Cam Woolley, OPP spokesperson.

"I don't know if the suspect even knew the police were there."

The pursuit continued until just east of Third Line where the Mazda crashed into the rear of a slow-moving dump truck.



THE AFTERMATH: An OPP officer at the scene of a crash in which a Mazda collided with a dump truck on the QEW near Third Line Saturday. The Mazda's driver had been swerving erratically, say police. He was airlifted to hospital with serious, but non life-threatening injuries.

MICHAEL IVANIN / OAKVILLE BEAVER

"The officer turned on the lights, the guy continued with the same behaviour, didn't change."

■ Sgt. Cam Woolley,
OPP spokesperson

The 24-year-old occupant of the vehicle was airlifted to hospital with serious, but non-life threatening injuries. The driver of the dump truck was not injured.

Motorists were forced off the eastbound QEW at Third Line when police closed it for their investigation.

The SIU, a civilian agency, which investigates cases of serious injury or death where police are involved will be looking into this incident to see if the actions of the officer who pursued the Mazda were appropriate.

Police noted the incident is still under investigation and, due to the SIU investigation, would not comment on whether any charges have been laid.

Training bullet shortage is global

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"However, there are sufficient savings in other areas of the budget to offset the overrun."

The use of lead-free bullets is preferred for training purposes because when they are fired there is less lead dust, smoke and barrel residue.

Crowell noted because lead is a toxic, regulated metal that can cause health problems, firing regular bullets at a police firing range is not advised.

This is particularly true because the police training course is five months.

It could significantly increase the lead dust to which training officers are subjected.

The international shortage

of lead-free ammunition, resulting from increased use by the United States military, other U.S. government agencies and U.S. law enforcement groups, has manufacturers rationing available supply.

A shortage in the raw materials needed to make training bullets is also being blamed for the current supply problems.

Currently, lead-free ammunition obtained by distributors is being allocated to police agencies on a first-come first-serve basis with police agencies being told as recently as Friday, July 18, that they should plan on a six-to-eight month wait from the time a purchase order is received by lead-free ammu-

nition suppliers.

Crowell noted in his report that the manufactures of training bullets have taken steps to increase production and are planning to invest in infrastructure upgrades to increase capacity, however, Crowell said this is a long-term plan and will not help the current situation.

In the meantime, the Halton Regional Police Service training unit will reduce the number of rounds given to each member for training purposes from 700 to 500.

Halton police currently have 90,000 rounds of training ammunition available, but need 300,000 to meet requirements for the remainder of 2008.

Police seek suspect after CIBC robbed

Halton police are looking for help in apprehending a bank robber who held up the CIBC branch at 1011 Upper Middle Rd. Saturday.

Police said shortly after noon, a man entered the bank and approached a teller, asking questions, then passing her a note demanding money. He received an

undisclosed amount of cash.

The man then fled the bank on foot in an unknown direction. No one was hurt during the incident.

The man is described as having a dark complexion, 6-foot-1, with an average build, short hair and clean-shaven. He wore prescription eyeglasses, an orange baseball

hat, a white Nike golf shirt with a black collar and blue shorts.

The man did not indicate he had a weapon and none was seen.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the Oakville Criminal Investigations Bureau at 905-825-4777, ext. 2215 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

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