

CSL joins Rotrand's fight for plain-packaged tobacco

BY ISAAC OLSON

Throughout the summer, Snowdon/Montreal city councillor Marvin Rotrand has been pushing for a national law requiring that tobacco products be sold in plain packaging. He spearheaded a motion at the city level that demands federal policy be instituted and he urged other municipalities to follow suit.

Now Côte St. Luc has hopped on board and the city's mayor acknowledged Rotrand's efforts during the August 8 meeting.

Councillor Steven Erdelyi read the motion before it was voted on. The motion describes tobacco as the leading cause of preventable deaths in the country and packaging as "one of the most powerful promotional vehicles for tobacco products." The motion encourages Canada to require neutral packaging.

The campaign for plain packaging was first launched by the Canadian Cancer So-

ciety and the Coalition Québécoise pour le contrôle du tabac.

Such a law, the motion notes, should eliminate the use of colours, slogans and graphics as a means to attract customers. Only the name and brand should remain visible, the motion states, and the packaging must fall within standard sizes – eliminating, for example, "slim" packages.

"Côte St. Luc has been a leader in the anti-smoking movement for a number of years, going back to laws prohibiting smoking in public areas such as restaurants and shopping centres," said Erdelyi. "We were recently a leader again. We were one of the first in Canada to prohibit smoking in parks and playground areas where children are, for example, the outdoor pool."

Erdelyi said city officials should be doing everything possible to discourage residents from smoking.

Councillor Mike Cohen said nobody on council smokes.

"I still don't understand why anyone smokes," said Cohen, noting he is proud any time the city passes this type of legislation. "We need to be doing everything we can to discourage people from smoking."

Crews respond in force to gas leak

On August 30, just before 5 pm, residents around Parkhaven Ave. and Kildare Rd. caught the scent of gas and notified police, according to Councillor Glenn Nashen's blog.

Emergency crews arrived quickly, he writes, and one of the first on the scene was the city's public safety director Jordy Reichson.

He dispatched public security agents, and ordered the surrounding streets closed and the evacuation of nearby residents. The city's vCops were called in to assist in



On August 4, the SVPM's Station 9 teamed up with the CLSC, Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ) and Support of Victims of Elder Abuse (SAVA) to educate people about elder abuse, scams and more in the Côte St. Luc Shopping Centre. One particular phone scam, said Constable Marie-Christine Nobert, recently cost a local woman \$1,500 and it has ensnared many others. The caller, she said, claims to be a police officer, immigration agent or a tax collector, insisting people owe money. Fraudsters give convincing phone numbers to call back while, for example, insisting immigrants have out-of-order documents. Be it for back taxes or immigration documentation, the callers convince victims to pay fines by purchasing iTunes cards and sharing the codes. Seniors, she noted, don't know what iTunes cards are and the pressure tactics work.

Photo: Isaac Olson

securing the sector around the responding Montreal fire department vehicles. Police services also responded along with an Urgences Santé supervisor and CSL Emergency Medical Services.

It didn't take long for Gaz Met crews to show up along with Hydro-Québec emergency crews, who quickly cut surrounding power. By 5:30 pm, the fire crews began leaving and two hours later, the power was restored in the outer perimeter. The leak was capped by 9:30 and all was normal by 10:20 pm.

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