

Making Welland a safer city

From Page 7

"...son died in a workplace accident back in the 90s. In Welland, there was a tragedy three years ago when two young people went to John Deer as part of Take Your Kid to Work Day and there was a workplace accident. So we had an incident that is related to what started this initiative and I think people want to see something positive come out of it," explained Mayor Goulbourne. "It is a big initiative."

The six sub-committees will be responsible for developing goals and objectives. It is possible that the steering committee may decide to pursue one or all of the six possible focus areas of the sub-committees; however, a decision has not yet been made.

For example, the committee may decide to focus on seniors' safety issues after reviewing information such as hospital statistics on the number of seniors who visit the hospital and why they are admitted.

"Maybe it's a result of slips and falls. So the next step from there would be to discuss what we can do to help prevent it. Maybe there is already a program in place, we just have to get the partners together. The sub-committees will conduct an assessment of the statistics and move forward from there."

A target date is set for the spring of 2005. The committee hopes by then to have a business plan developed and to be designated as a safe community.

Such a designation is an incentive for attracting economic development, as businesses in a safe community receive a reduction in WSIB premiums.

"It's about recognition, assessment and control," added Mr. Demers. "If we can identify hazards and implement control we can enhance the city's safety. With the enthusiastic support of Mayor Goulbourne and with Coun. Chiocchio as chair, this is sure to be a successful program."

Since the sub-committees have not yet set goals and objectives, now would be the best time for concerned citizens to jump on board.

As such, people are being asked to contact Laura Ip at (905) 735-1700 ext. 239 for more information on how to become involved in the Safe Community Partnership. As well, people can visit www.safecommunities.ca to learn more about the initiative.

"We look forward to tapping into the enthusiasm of our citizens," concluded Mr. Demers.

Once the city is designated as a safe community, the committee said it would inform businesses and individuals moving to the city, that it is indeed a safe place to live.