



PRESS RELEASE

County of Dufferin
55 Zina Street
Orangeville, ON L9W 1E5

For Immediate Release: 18 February 2019

Horse Corralled on County Road 12

Dufferin – The County of Dufferin has more than 300 kilometers of roadway within its network and with that much roadway it isn't unusual for something to need maintenance. For that reason the County has somebody tasked with patrolling those roads around the clock. From snow and ice to flooding and potholes the County's patrol crew actively looks for problems and ensures that they are addressed.

"It isn't uncommon for patrol to identify missing traffic signs, the occasional pothole or a malfunctioning traffic signal on one of our roads" says Scott Burns, the County's Director of Public Works and Engineer "occasionally they'll find power lines down or a beaver dam that is causing flooding" Burns continued. Sometimes they identify hazards that are even more unusual.

During the early morning hours of Saturday February 16th Mike Swidersky was patrolling Dufferin County Road 12, sometimes called the Laurel Road, when he came upon an unusual hazard on the road, a stray horse. "While this is certainly not something that happens all the time it is not the first time we've seen it in Dufferin County" said Burns.

As an agricultural community the chances of a horse or other farm animal straying onto the roadway are not uncommon. "Sometimes it's because a gate wasn't closed or it may be because a section of fence was damaged, either way the end result can be tragic" said Burns.

"The problem with livestock on the roadway is that they are incredibly difficult for drivers to see at night and it is difficult to predict what the animal will do" says Burns.

"Domestic animals are conditioned to vehicles so unlike wildlife they don't try to get away, they'll often just stand there or worse, move toward the vehicle" says Constable Shannon Gordanier, Media Relations Officer with Dufferin OPP. Every year in Ontario people are injured or killed from collisions with large animals on roadways. Most commonly whitetail deer are the animals involved but moose and livestock are also struck. "It stands to reason that the larger the animal the greater the likelihood of the people in the vehicle being seriously injured" says Gordanier "and a horse can easily outweigh a deer by 10 times" she added.

So what did Swidersky do when he spotted the horse? “Well he channeled his inner cowboy and got a rope from the back of the truck” says Burns. “After that it was a simple matter of roping the horse, crafting a makeshift halter and turning the animal over to the local sheriff, or in this case the OPP who will get the animal back to it’s owner” said Burns.

“Although domestic animals on a roadway is most likely unintentional, it is the owners responsibility to ensure that the areas where their livestock are housed is secure and sufficient” added Gordanier “owners can be held responsible if any incident occurs on the roadway involving their animals”.

For additional information on the County’s road network and conditions visit www.dufferincounty.ca



Photo by Mike Swidersky

-30-

For more information, please contact:

Scott Burns, Director of Public Works and Engineer
sburns@dufferincounty.ca
519.941.2816 ext. 2606

