

Scores of charges laid over Sunday shopping

The Globe and Mail and CP

At least 120 charges were laid against stores in the Metro Toronto area yesterday, the last forbidden day of Sunday shopping before the Supreme Court of Canada rules on the issue on Thursday.

Some stores continued to open their doors for Christmas shoppers in defiance of the Retail Business Holiday Act, which bars most Ontario stores from opening on Sundays.

No charges were laid in Peel Region, where store owners have been charged only when someone complained, a Peel Regional Police spokesman said.

Halton police said stores open yesterday were investigated, but charges will be laid only if the Supreme Court upholds the Sunday closing law.

At least 85 charges were laid by Metro Toronto police, mainly at smaller stores.

Maverick furrier Paul Magder, an appellant in the Supreme Court case, was charged for what he hopes was the last time. He estimates he has been visited by police, with similar results, more than 250 times.

About 20 businesses were charged in Oshawa, and 16 more in Ajax and Pickering.

In London, about 20 businesses were charged, including the City Lights book store. Owner Marc Emery is a director of the Freedom Party, which advocates that Sunday sales should be left up to shoppers and shopkeepers.

Robert Metz, the Ontario president of the party, said his group handed out literature at stores in London which were open. Similar campaigns are being waged in the Toronto area, he said.

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