

Tenants charged after disabling smoke alarms

Four Halton Hills tenants, who live in apartments in Maria and Church Sts. in Acton, have been charged with intentionally disabling their smoke alarms and making them inoperable.

The fine for the charge is \$235.

Halton Hills Fire Department reminds everyone that smoke alarms must be installed and maintained on each level of their home, including the basement and outside each sleeping area. This not only applies to residential single-family homes, but also to owners and tenants of multi-unit dwellings.

Landlords must provide and maintain working smoke alarms in rental units and it's against the law for tenants to remove the batteries or tamper with the smoke alarms in any way.

Disabling an alarm not only puts the residents of the apartment at risk, but also others in the building by removing the early warning required to safely exit a building in the event of a fire.

"With Fire Prevention Week beginning Oct. 9 and this year's theme being Protect Your Family from Fire, this is a good time to remind residents that smoke alarms are our first line of defense against fires," said Fire Chief Brent Marshall.

"Working smoke alarms and an es-

cape plan will help keep your family safe from fire."

Steam from the shower or cooking using the oven, stove or toaster can cause smoke alarms to activate. If these types of nuisance alarms occur, Marshall said don't remove the battery or disable the smoke alarm.

He suggests options to try to reduce nuisance alarms:

- Relocate the alarm. Sometimes moving the alarm just a few inches can make the difference.
- Install a smoke alarm with a pause button that will allow you to temporarily silence the alarm.
- Replace alarms located near kitchens with photo-electric types.

"Whether a homeowner, landlord or tenant, it is important to have working smoke alarms in all our homes," said Mayor Rick Bonnette. "Time is precious when a fire starts and working smoke alarms will give everyone the precious time required to safely escape a fire in your home."

Halton Hills Fire Department Prevention staff would be happy to discuss the requirements of smoke alarms with landlords, tenants and homeowners. Anyone with questions is asked to call 905-877-1133.

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