

Firefighters kept busy with false alarms in 2015

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The Halton Hills Fire Department responded to nearly 1,000 calls in 2015 and the recently released statistics reveal that about one-third of that total was spent attending to false alarms.

There were 942 calls for service last year, which included 71 fires, 253 fire-alarm activations, 101 carbon monoxide alarms, 130 motor vehicle collisions and rescues, 100 medical public assists and 63 hazardous material incidents.

Harry Olivieri, the HHFD's Deputy Chief of Fire Prevention & Public Education, said that he didn't have an exact number of false alarms attended for fire or carbon monoxide calls, but indicated that not many of the activation incidents were emergency situations.

There are a lot of calls that are all related

in that very few are actual live (incidents) or CO is found in a home, but there are some, Olivieri said.

We have found that maybe the device is defective or the homeowner may have interpreted what the unit is telling them incorrectly. It might be a low battery warning as opposed to an actual call or something as simple as the alarm is activating because of another issue that may have caused activation.

There is no fee charged for residential false alarms, Olivieri noted, and that the department utilizes public education when crews respond to such incidents to prevent a recurrence.

A false-alarm policy exists for commercial properties in which action will be taken for repeat incidents, but Olivieri stated that because of public education efforts, those are few and far between.

Thirteen new part-time firefighters were hired this past year in order to replace retired staff and to maintain the appropriate complement for the growing population of Halton Hills.



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