

Simpler CPR techniques

"Push fast and push hard" and do it to the beat of the seventies Bee Gee's hit, *Staying Alive*.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation kicked off CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) Month on Tuesday with new guidelines to simplify emergency care, including calling 911 and beginning chest compressions immediately if you find someone collapsed and unresponsive, and don't delay by checking for breathing or a pulse.

The fear of doing it wrong, or making things worse, stops many people from starting CPR, but it saves lives, leading the Canadian Association of EMS Physicians to issue a statement that every Canadian should learn CPR, and that even untrained people should begin quick and firm chest compressions on a victim.

In Halton, Greg Sage, the Chief of Emergency

Medical Services, said saving lives is a matter of messaging and education. "Part of that is making education easier and more enticing for people to attend," Sage said on Monday, adding untrained people can save lives by acting quickly in an emergency.

In 2010, just under 40 per cent of cardiac arrest cases in Halton received bystander CPR. Those are "very good numbers," Sage said, adding that from May to September last year, there were seven cases in Halton where a person in cardiac arrest received CPR and defibrillation from a bystander.

"Out of those seven cases, six survived," Sage said, stressing that if a person is in cardiac arrest, you can't do any harm by starting chest compressions, and, if comfortable, doing mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

Four of five cardiac arrests happen in the home or in public places, and the odds of survival are almost four times greater if CPR is performed right away. If an external defibrillator is also used immediately, survival rates jump by as much as 75 per cent, but without CPR or defibrillation, fewer than five people who suffer a cardiac arrest outside a hospital, survive.

Sage's favourite CPR survivor story involves a Halton Hills golfer who suffered a heart attack on a remote green at Hornby Glen Golf Course several years ago. A medical resident saw the man collapse and began CPR, while an employee ran to get an external defibrillator.

"EMS arrived and this man was resuscitated, and he was released from hospital about three weeks later, and from what I understand, is doing well," Sage said.



JAG BURNS: This 1982 Jaguar was "fully engulfed" when Acton fire fighters arrived at a residence on 32 Side Road, between the Fifth and Sixth Lines just before 1 p.m. on Tuesday. The owner saw flames coming up from under the hood after he started the car, which had been sitting for the past year. Damage is pegged at \$3,000. — Frances Niblock photo

Change clocks & batteries

It's that time again. Fall has arrived, and it's your reminder to change the clocks and change the smoke alarm batteries as well.

Fire Chief Brent Marshall said, "We change the clocks back one hour on Sunday November 6, and this couldn't be a better reminder to change your smoke alarm batteries." Smoke alarms without batteries or with dead batteries, will not sound and give you the warning and precious seconds you need, to escape a fire.

Once the batteries have been changed, test the alarm to ensure it will sound. One easy way to test the alarm is to hold a lit incense stick 10 - 12" below the device and let the smoke drift upwards into it until it sounds. Once the alarm sounds, fan the smoke away and consider giving the

detector a quick vacuum to remove any dust and contaminants that may have accumulated over the past few months.

Keep in mind as well, that smoke alarms do not last forever. The fire service suggests that smoke alarms between seven and 10 years old, be considered for replacement. Manufacturers' specifications may also indicate the expiry date or life span, however, in general terms the life of a smoke alarm is 10 years and replacement is due.

Unfortunately, the Fire Department continues to find residential occupancies without working smoke alarms. With the minimal costs of smoke alarms today, it is difficult to understand why there are not working smoke alarms in every home. Since March 1, 2006, the Ontario Fire Code requires a working smoke alarm on every level of the home, including the basement and outside all sleeping areas.

Mayor Rick Bonnette said, "It is well known that properly installed and maintained smoke

alarms prevent injury and saves lives. Let's have everybody do their part and ensure they have working smoke alarms in their home." "Halton Hills has not experienced a fire fatality since 2004, let's continue being successful in keeping these tragedies from occurring in our community," Bonnette Said.

In keeping with this year's Fire Prevention Week theme "Protect Your Family From Fire", everybody should have a well rehearsed home escape plan. The development and rehearsal of a home escape plan can ensure a quick, safe evacuation of family members.

More information on the purchase or placement of smoke alarms is available at the Information Centre in the Georgetown Market Place, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. You may also call 905-877-1133 and ask for the Public Education Division for any additional information.

Did you know?

Remembrance Day in Canada commemorates members of the armed forces. Remembrance Day is observed each year on November 11 because that marks the official end of World War I in 1918. On that day, the Germans officially signed the armistice, an

agreement that officially put an end to the fighting in WWI. That's one reason why Remembrance Day is often referred to as Armistice Day.

Though the day has a significant connection to World War I, it also honours the men and women who fought for Canada in World

War II, the Korean War and those who continue to serve in the military. Over the years, more than 1.5-million Canadians have fought for their country and to defend the rights and freedoms of non-Canadians as well. Among the Remembrance Day traditions is the wearing of poppies, which are worn as the symbol of remembrance, and a reminder of the blood-red flower that grows on the former battlefields of France and Belgium.

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