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Fire Chief urges residents to install smoke alarms and practice home fire escape plans

In the wake of recent fire fatalities in the province, the Halton Hills Fire Department wants to remind the public to make sure that they have working smoke alarms on every storey of their home and outside all sleeping areas, and have practiced a home fire escape plan with everyone in their home.

It has not yet been determined if there were working smoke alarms in the fatal fire in Brampton.

"Many fatal fires occur at night when everyone is asleep, so early warning is crucial to survival," said Halton Hills Fire Chief John deHooge. "The Ontario Fire Code requires working smoke alarms on every storey of the home and outside all sleeping areas. For added protection, our fire department is recommending that you also install a smoke alarm in every bedroom. Larger homes may require additional smoke alarms."

Just as important as having working smoke alarms is making sure everyone in your home knows exactly what to do to escape BEFORE a fire occurs. "We want to make sure these types of tragedies do not happen in Halton Hills," continued Chief deHooge.

Simple smoke and carbon monoxide alarm tips:

- · Install smoke alarms on every storey and outside all sleeping areas of your home. For added protection, install a smoke alarm in every bedroom according to manufacturer's recommendations.
- Install carbon monoxide alarms outside all sleeping areas if your home has a fuel burning appliance, fireplace or attached garage. For added protection, install a carbon monoxide alarm on every story of your home according to manufacturer's recommendations.
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms monthly by pressing the test button.
- · Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms wear out over time. Replace alarms according to manufacturer's recommendations.

Simple steps for home fire escape planning in-

- Everyone should know two ways out of each room, if possible.
- · All exits must be unobstructed and easy to
- · If someone in your home has a disability, develop an escape plan with your household that takes into account their unique needs. Determine who will be responsible for helping young children, older adults and anyone who needs assistance to escape.
- Choose a meeting place outside, such as a tree or a lamp post, where everyone can be accounted for.
- Call the fire department from outside the home, from a cell phone or neighbour's home.
- Practice your home fire escape plan.
- Once out, stay out. Never re-enter a burning building.

For people who live in apartment buildings and need assistance to escape:

- Make sure you tell the superintendent or landlord if you need assistance.
- Make sure your name is added to the persons who require assistance list in the fire safety plan, so the fire department knows which apartment you are in.
- Know the emergency procedures outlined in the building's fire safety plan.

Mayor Bonnette added, "A tragedy from fire can happen so quickly. Past incidents in Halton Hills prove that working smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms save lives. Please ensure your home is protected with the correct number and proper placement of these devices. It is equally important that all family members know how to escape when there is fire. Review your fire escape plan and practice it. This family day would be a perfect opportunity to test your plan. These small steps could save your life if a fire were to occur."

Knox Presbyterian Church

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Sunday, Feb. 26 - 10:30 a.m.

"Transfiguration" Luke 9: v28 - 36

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