



CHECKING HIS LIST: With not a lot of time to spare before the big day, Santa made a visit to the Acton Parent and Child Centre lunch with Santa on Saturday. Owen Miller, 3, makes sure Santa had received his letter. — Angela Tyler photo

Be prepared for storms

The winter storms plaguing much of Ontario and closing down cities like Buffalo have many people wondering if they'd be prepared if it happened to them. The Canadian Red Cross is offering information on how to prepare yourself and how to deal with bad winter storms to reduce problems and discomfort.

1. Have a plan - Whether it's an ice storm or blizzard, your family should have a plan on where to meet if you cannot reach home. Discuss your plans as a family and identify friends or family you could connect with in case of trouble. Make sure everyone knows the plan and telephone numbers to use.

If you must evacuate, leave a note showing your route and destination in your home. Take along a copy of any important documents (e.g. insurance policy) with you. Post emergency numbers in your home. Learn where the main switches for the water, gas and electricity are and how to turn them on/off. After a disaster, these utilities should be reconnected.

2. Get supplies ready - Severe storms may leave people shivering in the cold without proper heat or lighting. An emergency kit should include the following: flashlight and batteries, radio and batteries, first aid kit, extra car keys and cash, canned food and bottled water, a manual can opener, change of clothing and shoes, blankets or sleeping bags, toilet paper and personal supplies. Also remember medication and to replace canned food once a year.

3. Prepare your car in case you get stuck in bad weather - You might get stranded in your car for a while so make sure you have these items on hand: ice scraper and brush, shovel, sand and blankets, a candle



Simple fire safety rules will keep families safe

Dear Editor,

As the Fire Chief for Halton Hills, I would like to bring to your attention the potential dangers that lurk inside your home this December. The holiday season is full of traditions, including a higher than usual number of fire deaths. Believe me, there is nothing more upsetting to firefighters than being called to battle a tragic fire that could so easily have been prevented.

In December 1999, 18 people died in fires in Ontario,

in a deep can, water proof matches, tow chain, warning light or flares, flashlight, hat and warm clothes, food bars, booster cables, first aid kit, road maps, methyl hydrate to de-ice the fuel line and a fire extinguisher.

4. When trouble hits, think before you act - If the heat goes out think about your alternative heat sources and their risks. Using the fireplace and camp heater may work, but using a barbecue can put you at risk of carbon monoxide poisoning and fire.

"During severe winter storms, serious harm can be caused by improper use of alternative heat sources,"

including eight children. This is almost twice the monthly average. These unacceptable statistics demonstrate an urgent need for people to take responsibility this holiday season to protect themselves and their families from fire. You may be surprised to know that the big culprits are not Christmas trees or faulty wiring. In fact, the majority of fire deaths that occur this time of year are caused by careless smoking or cooking. Alcohol is often a contributing factor.

said Marie Gauthier-Richardson, Manager, Disaster Services. "Homes can be destroyed or damaged by fire resulting from overheated fireplaces while the improper use of generators can cause electrocution and they must never be run in a garage or porch - carbon monoxide poisoning will be the result."

Have safe alternate heating and lighting arrangements. Be aware of your hygiene and sanitary needs and plan ahead in case a power blackout last more than a few hours. Know the signs of hypothermia. It is a potential killer, especially of the elderly.

You can keep your family safe by following some simple fire safety rules. First, make sure you have a smoke alarm one very level of your home and outside all sleeping areas. You should test your alarms regularly and change the batteries at least once a year. Next, you need to develop a home escape plan and practice it with your entire family. If a fire does occur, everyone in your household must know how to get out quickly and safely.

Finally, take extreme care to make sure all cigarettes are completely extinguished, especially if they are in the hands of people consuming alcohol. A carelessly discarded cigarette can smoulder for hours before erupting into flames.

Halton Hills Fire Department wants to make sure the people of this community have a fire-safe holiday - but we can't do it without you. If we all take extra care this festive season, we can prevent a repeat of last year's devastating losses.

Sincerely,
Wm. E. Cunningham,
Fire Chief &
Halton Hills Fire
Department

Day Care disguised as education

Dear Editor,

After passing Bill 6, last March (legislating undue intervention in families by government) and while Bill 117 is still being debated (more undue intervention in families by government), the Ontario government displays again its interventionist, socialist bias regarding family issues.

The Education Improvement Commission struck by the Ontario government, after three years of work has found a way to introduce universal daycare, advocated by socialists and feminists, but opposed by conservative voters.

This government commission asks us to spend more than \$1 billion on 'early childhood education' and 'expansion of child-care opportunities', hoping to please the feminists without upsetting the people who voted the PCs into government.

Let's be clear: when government takes over the responsibility of parents to educate their children, this is called Socialism, not Progressive Conservatism. The proof is in the words of Karl Marx: "The education of all children from the moment that they can get along without a mother's care, shall be in state institutions at state expense."

Giuseppe Gori,
Leader, Family Coalition
Party of Ontario

#1

in AFFORDABLE CRUISING!

ALL YOU CAN SEE, DO, EAT & MORE ALL FOR ONE AMAZING PRICE

Shipboard gratuities!

SHORE EXCURSIONS!

KIDS CRUISE FREE!

\$698

includes round trip air best inside cabin

Showcase entertainment!

4 meals & 2 snacks daily!

CHOICE OF 2 THRILLING & EXOTIC ITINERARIES!

UP TO 6 BEAUTIFUL PORTS OF CALL!

SUNBIRD

Dec. 16 & 18

Southern Caribbean Collection
Sailing from Aruba or Barbados
Best Available Outside **\$798**

Sundream - Dec. 17

Latin Love Affair

Sailing from Montego Bay
Best available outside **\$798**

Prices are based on double. Subject to availability at time of booking and to change without notice. Available on new bookings only. Transportation taxes, related fees, and port taxes are additional. Sunbird gross tonnage 37,600. Registered in Bahamas. Sundream gross tonnage 23,200. Registered in Bahamas. Port charges (\$222 per week for all cruises) are additional.

TED TYLER TRAVEL SERVICE LTD.

"Best Price, Best Service Since 1972"

853-1553 379 Queen St., Acton

DOWNTOWN ACTION

HEAR YE! HEAR YE! COME ONE COME ALL!!

To the Acton Citizens' Band
Community Carol Sing
Wednesday, December 20th at 7:15 p.m. on
the steps of the old YMCA Building
Share a Christmas Greeting
and have a cup of hot apple cider compliments
of the Acton BJA