

TEACH YOUR FAMILY FIRE SAFETY



In light of annual Fire Prevention Week this past week, Halton Hills Fire Protection and Prevention Services' fire safety specialist Dave Ford (right) and fire safety technician Duke Bouskill (left) along with their co-op student Nathaniel Trotter (center) showed off the dangers and damages that kitchen fire hazards can cause. The Fire Protection and Prevention Team have had their display in the Georgetown Marketplace and other locations around town to drive home the importance safe kitchens and cooking as well as offer other fire prevention tips.

Photo by Eamonn Maher

Watch what you heat

Thankfully, most of us will never have to endure the horror of a house fire or its long-ranging after-effects.

For many people, a fire is their worst nightmare — property destroyed, personal mementoes reduced to charred rubble, not to mention the obvious danger fire poses to an individual's health.

This week (Oct. 8-14) marks Fire Prevention Week in Ontario and this year's theme is Prevent Cooking Fires— Watch What You Heat. Fire services across the province want to increase awareness about cooking-related fire hazards and reduce the number of injuries and fatalities from kitchen fires.

Careless cooking is the No. 1 cause of preventable fires in Ontario as there are approximately 1,500

cooking-related fires each year in the province— and that doesn't include fires not reported.

Provincial statistics indicate that these types of blazes are the leading cause of fire-related injuries in Ontario and the second leading cause of fire-related fatalities.

There is no great mystery behind these statistics—the trouble starts because someone wasn't paying attention. It is very easy to place a pan with cooking oil on the stove, turn on the burner, then get distracted. Minutes is sometimes all it takes to turn a kitchen into an inferno.

"Pay full attention when you're cooking and stay in the kitchen," suggests Bernard Moyle, Fire Marshal of Ontario. "Most cooking fires occur when

people get distracted or are careless and often because they are intoxicated."

The Ontario Fire Marshal's office offers these tips to prevent kitchen fires:

- Keep a large lid near the stove when cooking — if a pot catches fire, slide the lid over the pot and turn off the stove.
- Stay in the kitchen while you cook — particularly if you are using oil or high temperatures.
- Wear tight-fitting or rolled up sleeves when using the stove.
- Keep combustible items such as cooking utensils and paper towels, a safe distance from your stove — they can easily ignite if they are too close to a burner.

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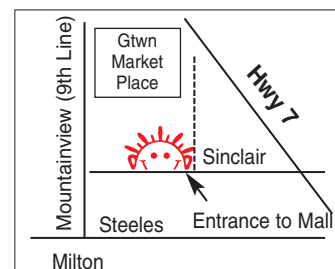
Yvonne Oliveira
M.Cl.Sc.SLPIC, Aud.
Reg. CASLPO
Audiologist

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