

It's a fact: Smoke alarms save lives

March has arrived and the Halton Hills Fire Prevention and Protection Services is celebrating a second anniversary—the anniversary being an amendment to the Ontario Fire Code which came into effect March 1, 2006 requiring smoke alarms on every level of the home including the basement level.

This is in addition to the existing requirement of having smoke alarms outside all sleeping areas.

It's a fact that in approximately 50 per cent of fatal, preventable home fires there was no smoke alarm. These additional devices will enhance the safety of all occupants, while at the same time reduce property damage through early detection. The additional working smoke alarms will give occupants the extra precious seconds needed to escape a fire.

While Halton Hills has not experienced a fire death since July of 2004, residents need to remain vigilant in the maintenance and testing of their smoke alarms.

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If the snow stays around, March Break may provide additional time on the toboggan hill for those not heading south for a vacation. Here is a super opportunity for parents to promote Risk Watch and the valuable lessons of protective headgear. Head injuries can occur in a collision with trees, fences, rocks and more with the speeds that can be reached on some hills.

The cold weather also promotes the wearing of additional warm clothing which can also include scarves and hooded coats. These can quickly become strangulation hazards if careful attention isn't given to ensure they don't become entangled. The ski and toboggan hills can provide for a day of fun, but can quickly turn tragic as a result of accidents.

In Canada, unintentional injury is the leading cause of disability and death among school-aged children. Risk Watch provides valuable information regarding the knowledge and critical think-

Dave Ford



ing skills children need to make positive choices about their personal injury prevention behaviours.

Every time a child is injured or killed by something that could easily have been prevented, everyone suffers emotionally and mentally—the child, his or her family, classmates and friends and the entire community. The time has come for Risk Watch.

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With the time change (spring ahead an hour) set for March 9, the fire department reminds everyone that is also a good time to change the batteries in their smoke alarms.

Smoke alarms are your first defence against fire and it only makes good sense to care for these life-saving devices.

Knowing what to do in the event a smoke alarm wakes you from sleep is most important. Practicing a home fire escape plan is the first place to start to ensuring family members safely get out of the home.

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Should you have any questions about fire and life safety please call: David Ford, Captain—Public Education 905-873-2601 ext. 2115 or Armando Cabral, Captain—Public Education 905-873-2601 ext. 2101.

—Dave Ford is a public education captain with Halton Hills Fire Prevention and Protection Services

Town CUPE employees get 3 per cent pay increase

Details of the settlement between the Town of Halton Hills and CUPE Local 73 were released last week.

The new contract includes a 3 per cent salary increase each year over the term of the contract, June 1, 2007 to May 31, 2010. Other items that have been increased include shift premiums,

safety equipment, benefits, and mechanics' tools.

The union has 46 members who are employed in Public Works as equipment operators, skilled workers and parks maintenance workers and in the Recreation and Parks department as facility operators in the arenas.

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