

Champion Country

Covering Rural Halton
& Wellington County



Smoke alarm checks slated for rural homes

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**

The Champion

In efforts to keep residents safe, the Milton Fire Department will make house calls throughout the urban and now some rural parts of town throughout the summer to check smoke detectors.

The program started two years ago in urban Milton, with full-time firefighters going door-to-door. At that time it wasn't feasible for the firefighters to visit homes in the rural parts of town because they needed to stay close to town in case a call came, Fire Chief Larry Brassard said.

But now part-time firefighters have been added to the program, and it's these crews

that'll be conducting the rural checks.

The rural part of the program will be limited to north Milton for now, and will begin in the next few weeks.

"We're so excited to be able to expand (the program) on a test basis. Next year we hope to expand further," said Chief Brassard. "We just want to make sure all homes are properly protected and give our community the best chance possible to be protected."

When the firefighters enter homes — it's up to homeowners whether they want firefighters to check their detectors — they'll make sure the detectors are properly installed and have working batteries. They'll put in fresh batteries or even install a new detector if needed, Chief Brassard said, adding smoke detectors are mandatory in every house.

A smoke detector that doesn't work can provide a false sense of security, he said, adding most people already think they have more time than they really do to get out of a house that's on fire.

"People think they have two to three minutes to react, but that's not true. They have less than a minute to get out," he said.

Chief Brassard quoted a study done by the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs, which found that with 70 per cent of fires, a smoke detector either wasn't installed or had dead batteries.

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Big wheel, big fun

Kayla (left) and Hanna Dellaire have some fun inside the wheel-well of one of the giant tires of a Caterpillar 777D. It was one of several heavy earthmovers on display at the recent Dufferin Aggregates open house at the Milton quarry.

Photo by **GRAHAM PAINE**

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