

# Fire Prevention Specially Patriotic Work To-day

## To Impress Upon All the Enormous Waste of Life and Property From Fire

**Purpose of Fire Prevention Week Outlined. To Seek the Co-operation of all to Serious Efforts for the Elimination of the Waste Caused by Unnecessary and Avoidable Fires.**

A letter received some days ago by The Advance from the Dominion Fire Commissioner, W. L. Clairmont, Ottawa, outlines the purposes of Fire Prevention Week, Oct. 4th to 10th. Those purposes are to rouse the people to study the seriousness of the fire problem and to seek ways and means to minimize the loss and damage. It has been proven time and time again that most of this loss is avoidable. Most fires may be prevented. Where fires do occur, the loss and damage resulting may be minimized. This has been amply demonstrated in the case of Timmins, where an unusually complete and effective fire-prevention and fire-fighting equipment, with a capable and earnest personnel in charge, has given this town a unique place in the lists of new Northern centres.

Thanking you for your many past courtesies and anticipating your continued co-operation in this very important matter, I remain,  
Sincerely yours,  
W. L. Clairmont,  
Dominion Fire Commissioner.

### Fire, the Servant of Mankind, Finds Master in Chemistry

**Makes Clothing Flame-Proof by New Treatment.**

(From C. I. L. Oval)  
It was a chemical brew that was supposed to have changed the generous kindly personality of Dr. Jekyll into that of Mr. Hyde whose iniquitous mind knew only hatred and an unbridled lust to destroy. Today, the chemical industry is providing "brews" to keep one of the greatest "Dr. Jekylls" the world has ever known — fire — from changing into a "Mr. Hyde" that everyone knows, fears and hates.

Fire is well deserved of the Jekyll-Hyde title, for there is probably no agency in the world more powerful for good and ill. On the Dr. Jekyll side of the ledger, fire has been for many centuries and still is one of the most useful instruments of mankind. Among all the discoveries and inventions of man only a few such as speech, writing and agriculture have borne such momentous fruit as has the discovery of how to make and use fire. The ancient philosophers were not far wrong when they dated the beginnings of civilization from the time that fire first became the servant of man — or in the picturesque language of Greek mythology, from the time that Prometheus lighted a torch at the chariot of the Sun and brought the gift of fire to earth. One of the first affects of the use of fire was to widen greatly the range of foods man could consume, for many articles of diet, indigestible in the raw state, became tasty and edible when cooked. It also caused a great increase in the area of the earth's surface that could be comfortably inhabited because it mitigated the rigours of northerly climates and enabled them in time to replace the more torrid zones as the main centres of civilization. Throughout the ages the uses of fire have increased in number and complexity until today it is not too much to say that our whole modern system of manufacturing, transportation, lighting and heating is based on the utilization of fire.

On the other hand fire in the guise of Mr. Hyde presents a truly terrible aspect and the mere word "Fire!" is one of the most dreaded expressions in every language. Some of the greatest disasters in history have been caused when fire ceased for a time to be a good servant and became a dreaded fiend, destroying man and his works with him. Who has not heard of the burning of Rome in the time of Nero, the Great Fire of London in 1666, the fires of Chicago in 1871, San Francisco in 1906 and Tokyo in 1923? But leaving aside these

major disasters the day-to-day damage caused by fires every year is incalculable. It is estimated that on the average a home catches fire somewhere in the United States or Canada about every minute and a half and thousands of fatalities from burns are listed annually along with countless injuries. It is unquestionable that fire's potentialities for evil are in direct proportion to its potentialities for good and the more numerous the uses to which it is put the greater the fire hazards man must be prepared to meet.

In recent years chemistry has played an increasingly important part in man's fight against fire and in many specialized types of fire fighting certain chemicals have been found to be more effective than water. In the field of fire prevention also fire retardant chemicals for the treatment of lumber for various types of construction are already in wide use. Millions of feet of lumber treated with wood preservative chemicals that are at the same time the retardant have been used in war construction projects where the dangers of fire would formerly have demanded the use of steel.

One of the latest fields in which chemistry has aided the cause of fire prevention is in the chemical treatment of textiles to render them incapable of supporting combustion. Clothes curtains, upholstery and paper hangings have always comprised to potent source of fire hazards and for some years now fire retardants have been used for the treatment of workers' overalls and other textiles. Cloth which is properly treated with these chemicals will char at the point of contact with a flame but will not catch fire. Until recently, however, certain weaknesses were inherent in most of these chemicals. Some failed to prevent the charred cloth from supporting an "after-glow". Other chemicals caused a stiffening in the fabrics or had a tendency to crystallize on the surface of the treated material in the form of powder or dust. These weaknesses definitely limited the uses to which the old style fire retardants could be put.

A new and improved fire retardant known as "CM" has now made a timely debut on this continent. This new product is entirely free from the limitations inherent in the older chemicals. Clothing of all kinds, from little girls, frilly party frocks, sheerest negligees, velvet evening gowns, to arc welders' overalls and soldiers' uniforms may be treated by dipping or spraying with chemical so that, though they may char upon contact with fire, they will not burst into flame. Moreover, this chemical newcomer does not affect the "feel" or appearance of fabrics and it would take an expert — or a flame — to distinguish between treated and untreated goods. Fabrics immersed in a solution of one pound of the new fire retardant to one gallon of water and then dried remain incapable of supporting combustion until washed, when the treatment is repeated. Dry cleaning does not remove the fire retardant quality.

The Armed forces of the United Nations, of course, have first call on this new product but there are many indications that, as soon as the military demands have been met, the chemical will gain in wide popularity. The dangers of "flash" burn in pile fabrics can be removed by flame proofing and experimenters have also shown that such things as paper blackout curtains and combustible materials used in places of public assembly, such as curtains and paper hangings, can be effectively and economically flame-proofed with the chemical. There is no doubt that whatever industrial fire hazards warrant it, workers' overalls and uniforms will be treated with this new fire retardant as

soon as it is available in sufficient quantities.  
The most immediate use of "CM" fire retardant, however, will be in the treatment of soldiers' sailors' and airmen's uniforms, and of textiles for war machines, such as tank linings. Modern warfare has greatly increased the dangers of fire to our fighting men. Soldiers are exposed to flame throwing apparatus and often fight in and around burning buildings. War pictures of damaged tanks often show them burning. Aircraft may burst into flame in the air or in emergency landings and only too often our sailors are called upon to fight fires aboard ship. The mechanics who keep the machines of war in fighting trim and the soldiers, sailors and airmen who man them may some day soon derive comfort and assurance from the knowledge that their clothing and the textile equipment of their machines will not be a prey to vagrant flames.

This has chemistry put into the hands of man another potent weapon to keep fire, his most valued but least trusted servant, in check.

### Here are Eighteen Deaths from Fire All Avoidable

**Every Care Necessary at All Times to Prevent Such Tragedies.**

(Extracts from report submitted at 1942 meeting of National Fire Waste Council)

A couple on their honeymoon stopping in a tourist cabin received fatal burns when gas supposedly escaping from a stove in the cabin was ignited when the man attempted to light a cigarette.

Man 38 stopped beside a highway and started a fire in a ditch in order to get warm. Before he realized it he was asleep and the next thing he knew his trousers legs were afire.

Eighty-three-year old retired dentist died as a result of burns when his bathrobe was ignited as he stood by a fireplace.

Girl of 14 died of burns suffered when her kimono caught fire from a grate while she was hanging a picture of herself over the mantel. The picture was a Christmas present to her parents.

Boy 15 received severe burns when his gasoline-soaked clothes caught fire. Gasoline was sprayed on his clothes when he filled the tank of his father's car and the youth got too near to a stove.

Fifteen-months old baby falls in fireplace and burns to death. Her parents find charred body when they return from milking.

Woman 61 fatally burned when her clothing was ignited as tar she was melting on the gas stove in the kitchen of her home caught fire.

Eight-year old boy died from burns suffered when he dropped a match in the gasoline tank of an automobile.

Twenty-one-year old man died of burns suffered in explosion of a gasoline tank he was cutting with an acetylene torch. Accident occurred a few hours before he was to have been married.

Seventy-nine year old man burned to death when his clothing became ignited as he sat in a chair smoking a pipe.

Boy was burned on July 4 when a Roman candle he was holding ignited a bunch of fire-crackers in his pocket.

A can of gasoline exploded when a woman 36 started a kitchen fire. Her own clothing smouldering she ran to the bedroom of her three boys and all were trapped together. Her husband and her 9-year old daughter escaped from the flaming home but the husband later died of shock and grief.

Two-pound baby being fed oxygen in an incubator in a hospital was burned to death when the oxygen ignited. The superintendent of the hospital testified that a spark of undetermined origin fired the oxygen.

A newspaper reporter reporter wishes news would quit breaking so near home. First his automobile caught fire, then his wife was severely burned when her pajamas caught fire, as she prepared breakfast. While the man was visiting her at the hospital, a policeman rushed in and announced his home was afire.

### Cigarettes Often the Cause of Serious Fires

(From the Dominion Fire Commissioner)

A group of men standing smoking cigarettes in a newstand. Very soon one is called away on some other business. His cigarette which is about two-thirds smoked is thrown down on the wooden floor and the smoker walks away without a thought of the dangerous consequences which may follow. Fortunately, an onlooker who appreciates the potential danger of such actions puts his foot on the burning stub and snuffs out the venomous little ball of heat which if left alone could destroy a whole building or a whole block of buildings. And here and there throughout Canada, 13,993 such little balls of heat did destroy property worth \$1,371,079, in 1941. Most fires from this cause originate in the homes but frequently they happen in factories, stores, warehouses and other mercantile buildings where the loss occasioned may be very serious.

Fires caused by smokers' carelessness constituted the alarming proportion of 30% of all fires from known causes in 1941 and the amount of loss entailed was more than 11% of the total loss from known causes. The remedy for this growing evil is very simple. First of all, make sure that your cigarette,

### Over 1100 Fires in Canada in 1941 Due to Misuse of Gasoline

**Scores of Lives Lost and Many Injured in Such Fires.**

Fires from gasoline and other petroleum products in Canada numbered 1,145 in 1941 causing property damage of over \$1,000,000 and resulting in the loss of at least 40 lives and injuries to several score of people. Hundreds of millions of gallons of gasoline are consumed annually in this country but it is the misuse of a few gallons which has been responsible for the mounting toll of dead and injured and heavy property damage.

If people would only realize that a gallon of gasoline properly vaporized has the explosive force of 82 pounds of dynamite they would exercise more care in its use. Gasoline should never be used in the home for dry cleaning purposes. Wouldn't it be cheaper to send clothes out to be cleaned than to risk being burned to death in an explosion of the fumes should they become in contact with flame? Even the very act of cleaning clothes in gasoline develops static electricity which is liable to set off the fumes without warning. This has often happened too when floors are cleaned with gasoline.

It may not be generally known but it is nevertheless a fact that in most provinces in Canada a fire insurance policy may be rendered null and void if more than one quart of gasoline is kept

cigar or match is out before disposing of it. It is a good habit, especially in the woods, to break a match in two before throwing it away. Many motorists are careless in such matters. When in the open country in dry weather, dispose your cigarette butts, etc. in the receptacle provided in your car. Several serious fires have been caused by the careless throwing away of cigarette butts in the dry grass along the highways and roadways.

Never make a practice of smoking in bed. The daily press frequently carry accounts of fatal results which often accompany this practice. Do your smoking before going to bed.

Canada's fire losses could be materially reduced by the application of the foregoing simple rules. It is worth a try.

in a building without special permit. And even that limit must be kept in a tightly closed metal can — never in a glass bottle.  
The handling of gasoline in the presence of naked lights is also a very dangerous practice. Attempts to transfer this highly volatile liquid from one vessel to another in the presence of lanterns has resulted in numerous deaths and injuries. Where found necessary to do this, it should be done in daylight or by electric light.

Many garage operators still insist on using gasoline for cleaning and washing engine parts in spite of the fact that there are just as efficient and safer solvents on the market. Numerous instances are on record where this practice has resulted in fire and personal injuries.

Where necessary to keep small quantities of gasoline, it should be kept only in approved safety cans and all such containers should be prominently labelled with the word "GASOLINE."

Smoking in the presence of gasoline

fumes is a hazardous pastime, and strange as it may seem in this enlightened age some people still try to see how much gasoline there is in a tank by the use of matches or lighted lanterns.

It is to be hoped that the present restrictions on gasoline will result in the lessening of its use for home cleaning and other hazardous purposes and we may look forward to a decrease in fatalities and property loss from this very unnecessary cause.

### UNREASONABLE

Proprietor: "You come into my restaurant, you order a glass of water, you drink it, and you calmly walk out!"

Scot: "What were ye expectin' me to do, mon? Stagger out?" — Montreal Herald.

Carey Williams:— Man is an animal that knows most everything except how to keep his mouth shut at the proper time.

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## Township of Tisdale

### Fire Prevention Week October 4th to 10th

The municipal council of the Township of Tisdale appreciate the co-operation they have received from all of the citizens in connection with Fire Prevention and fire damage.

Now more than ever before it is encumberant on every citizen to see that fire damage is prevented where possible.

This added responsibility is brought about by the complications of the war and I urge every citizen to accept this additional responsibility by doing all in their power to be doubly careful where fires are concerned.

Signed - VICTOR H. EVANS, Reeve