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Laurier promotes working smoke alarms during Fire Prevention Week

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University is partnering with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) during national Fire Prevention Week (Oct. 5-11) to remind community members that working smoke alarms make a life-saving difference in a fire. The fire safety campaign will spread the word about having working smoke alarms in the home and testing them every month.

“In a fire, seconds count,” said **Philip Teskey**, fire safety officer in Laurier’s Safety, Health, Environment and Risk Management (SHERM) department. “Roughly half of home fire deaths result from fires reported at night when most people are asleep. Home smoke alarms can alert people to a fire before it spreads, giving everyone enough time to get out.”

According to the latest NFPA research, working smoke alarms cut the chance of dying in a fire in half. Almost two-thirds of home fire deaths result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.

Among the safety tips that SHERM recommends are:

- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each separate sleeping area and on every level of the home, including the basement.
- Interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home. This way, when one sounds, they all do.
- Test alarms at least monthly by pushing the test button.
- Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old or sooner if they don’t respond properly.
- Make sure everyone in the home knows the sound of the smoke alarm and understands what to do when they hear it.

Fire Prevention Week is supported by fire departments across the country and is the longest-running public health and safety observance on record. This year, Laurier will participate by holding a Campus and Community Partners Fire Prevention Fair on its Waterloo and Brantford campuses. In **Brantford**, the fair will be held **Oct. 7** from **10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** in the Research and Academic Centre West front lobby. On the **Waterloo** campus, events take place **Oct. 9** from **10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** in the Concourse. Among the participants will be various departments from Laurier, local Fire Departments, local Police Departments, the Electrical Safety Authority, Kidde Canada, The Red Cross, Pioneering Engineering Inc. (Safe “T” Elements) and The Brick.

For more information about SHERM, or Laurier’s Fire Prevention Week activities, contact Philip Teskey at 519-884-0710 ext. 3887 or pteskey@wlu.ca, or visit <http://www.wlu.ca/sherm>.