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SEPTEMBER 28, 2015 | 160-15

Laurier promotes working smoke alarms during Fire Prevention Week

WATERLOO – Wilfrid Laurier University is partnering with the Office of the Fire Marshall and Emergency Management (OFMEM) and Waterloo Fire Rescue during national Fire Prevention Week (Oct. 4-10) to remind community members to “Hear the beep where you Sleep.”

“In a fire, seconds count,” said **John Percy**, public education officer for Waterloo Fire Rescue. “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.

“These smoke alarm messages are especially important for upper-year students, many of whom are living in homes off-campus for the first time,” said **Philip Teskey**, fire safety officer in Laurier’s Safety, Health, Environment and Risk Management (SHERM) department.

Among the safety tips that SHERM and Waterloo Fire Rescue 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.
- If the smoke alarm sounds, get outside and stay outside. Go to your outside meeting place.
- Call the fire department from outside the home.

LIVE FIRE DEMONSTRATION

This year Laurier’s Safety, Health, Environment and Risk Management department together with Waterloo Fire Rescue will be facilitating two **LIVE** room burn demonstrations to show the effectiveness of working smoke alarms and the reasons for having escape plans. The demonstrations will take place on October 8 at 11:20 a.m. and 12:50 p.m. on Alumni Field. All media are welcome to attend.

Laurier will also be holding a Campus and Community Partners Fire Prevention Fair in the Concourse on its Waterloo Campus **Oct. 8**, running from **11 a.m. to 2 p.m.** to promote Fire Prevention Week.

Fire Prevention Week is supported by fire departments across the country and is the longest-running public health and safety observance on record.

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>.