

# New smoke alarms save residents from Main St. fire

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A pot left on the stove with no one home set off a smoke alarm and had Whitchurch-Stouffville firefighters breaking down a door to gain entry into a Main Street apartment earlier this week.

When they entered the second floor apartment Wednesday evening, it was fully charged with black smoke. There were no injuries as all other tenants were able to evacuate their units, according

to deputy fire chief Rocco Volpe.

The tenants were back in the apartments as of Friday morning. The building, at 6418 Main St., also houses three businesses, including B.J. Gift and Variety, which was open at the time, witnesses said.

This incident comes just days before the start of Fire Prevention Week - Oct. 6 to 12 - which is focusing on kitchen fires.

Mr. Volpe was not able to confirm if the pot contained water, oil or other matter.

This past summer, fire preven-

tion officers were approached by this building's owner because tenants were disabling or removing their smoke alarm batteries, according to Jennifer Cooper, fire prevention/public safety officer for Whitchurch-Stouffville.

## LANDLORD REQUESTED HELP

With the assistance of firefighters and the owner, new smoke alarms were installed.

"If it wasn't for the smoke alarm triggering the neighbouring resident to evacuate his family and

call 911, the outcome of this could have been devastating," Ms. Cooper said. "You may only have a few seconds to escape a fire in your home and early detection is absolutely vital. Working smoke alarms provide those crucial seconds that you and your family need to safely escape."

It's not the norm.

"It's difficult to measure what you prevent," she said. "It's very rare to actually see the results of a prevention and educational program. You know you are making

a difference, you just never know who you have helped prevent having a fire in a home or business."

## False alarm on Ivy Crescent

What looked like a house on fire to a neighbour, was actually an unauthorized "rubbish" burn in an Ivy Crescent yard Thursday morning, according to Mr. Volpe.

A neighbour called 911 upon seeing smoke. By the time multiple fire trucks arrived on scene, the fire was out.

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