

Residents urged to mark Fire Prevention Week by testing smoke alarms

Caledon Fire and Emergency Services reminds all residents that working smoke alarms can make a life-saving difference in a fire. That's the message behind this year's Fire Prevention Week campaign, "Working smoke alarms save lives: Test yours every month!" This is Fire Prevention Week, traditionally observed the week in which Oct. 9 falls, to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, which killed more than 250 people and left about 100,000 homeless.

During Fire Prevention Week, the fire department will be emphasizing the importance of having working smoke alarms in the home and testing them monthly.

"In a fire, seconds count," Chief David Forfar said. "Roughly half of home fire deaths result from fires reported at night between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. when most people are asleep. Home smoke alarms can alert people to the presence of toxic smoke and give everyone an opportunity to get out alive."

This year's Fire Prevention Week campaign includes the following smoke alarm messages:

- 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.

- Create and practice a home escape plan to help you survive a fire in your home.

Members of the fire department are out in the community during Fire Prevention Week to promote the message, or people can stop by one of the fire stations to learn more.

"I am challenging everyone in this community to demonstrate how you test your smoke alarms," Forfar said. "Post your pictures to Facebook or Twitter with the hashtag #FPW2014."

The department would like to remind residents to check for working smoke alarms and have a family escape plan. To download a Home Escape Planning Grid, go to www.caledon.ca/fire or for more information contact them at 905-584-2272, ext. 4303.



Caledon Fire and Emergency Services chose SouthFields Village Public School as the place to kick off Fire Prevention Week Monday. Fire Chief Dave Forfar urged the student to ask their parents for smoke alarms in their bedrooms. The celebrations included students trying on firefighting gear. Brooklyn Stephenson was posing with her outfit, while Firefighter Jesse Newcombe was assisting Tyrell Campbell. Photos by Bill Rea

