

Pack fire safety into holiday weekend plans

Victoria Day weekend has become synonymous with the beginning of summer, as people head to the cottage, cabin or seasonal home to celebrate with family and friends.

Caledon Fire and Emergency Services is urging everyone to make sure their seasonal home has working smoke alarms and that all family and guests know how to escape if a fire happens.

‘It’s your responsibility to keep your family and friends safe this holiday weekend,’ Fire Chief Terry Irwin said. ‘It’s the law for all Ontario homes, cottages, cabins and seasonal homes to have working smoke alarms on every storey and outside all sleeping areas.’ Caledon Fire and Emergency Services also reminds you to check carbon monoxide alarms where there are fuel-burning appliances in seasonal dwellings.

‘We want everyone to enjoy this long weekend, and that includes staying safe,’ Irwin added.

The fire department has other tips for holiday weekend fire safety.

• Test smoke alarms to ensure they work. Pack a new smoke alarm and extra batteries for the cottage.

• Clean heating appliances and barbecues before using them. It’s also important to keep an eye on the barbecue and ensure all combustibles, as well as children and pets, are kept well away.

• Keep barbecue lighters and matches out of sight and reach of children.

• Check with the local fire department, municipality or Ministry of Natural Resources for any restrictions on burning before starting campfires or burning brush.

• Excessive alcohol consumption is a contributing factor in many fires and can lead to serious injuries. Those who drink should do so responsibly.

• Those who have a fuel-burning appliance should install carbon monoxide alarms and ensure that they are working.

• Develop and practice a home fire escape plan to ensure everyone knows what to do if the smoke alarm sounds.

• Know the telephone number for the local fire department and the cottage’s emergency sign number, in case of emergency.

• Remember to bring a flashlight with extra batteries.

• If you must smoke, do so outside. Keep a large can with water nearby so cigarette butts can be safely discarded.

• Burn candles in sturdy candleholders that will not tip and are covered with a glass shade. When you go out, blow out!