



# Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives

## Test Yours Every Month!

Fire Prevention Week • October 5–11, 2014 • Go to [FPW.org](http://FPW.org)



This year's theme, for Fire Prevention Week, October 5 to 11, 2014, **“Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives: Test Yours Every Month!”** focuses on spreading the word that working smoke alarms save lives. If there is a fire in your home, smoke spreads fast. Working smoke alarms give you early warning so you can get outside quickly. Smoke alarms that are properly installed and maintained play a vital role in reducing fire deaths and injuries. Plan to participate in Fire Prevention Week activities. For more information on Fire Prevention Week go to [www.firepreventionweek.org](http://www.firepreventionweek.org)

### Here's what you need to know!

- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of your home.
- A smoke alarm should be on the ceiling or high on a wall. Keep smoke alarms away from the kitchen to reduce false alarms. They should be at least 10 feet from the stove.
- Test your smoke alarms at least once a month. Press the test button to be sure the alarm is working.
- Replace your smoke alarm batteries when you change your clocks each spring and fall.
- When a smoke alarm sounds, get outside and stay outside.
- Replace all smoke alarms in your home every 10 years.

Smoke alarms are a key part of a home fire escape plan. We recommend during Fire Prevention Week all households to practice their home fire escape plan. It is important to have a home fire escape plan that prepares your family to think fast and get out quickly when the smoke alarm sounds. If you do not have a home fire escape plan take a few minutes with everyone in your household to make a home fire escape plan following the instructions below:

1. Draw a floor plan of your home. You should draw a plan for each level of your home.
2. Include all possible emergency exits. Draw in all the doors, windows and stairways. This will show you and your family all possible escape routes at a glance, include any features, such as the roof of a garage or porch, that would help in your escape.
3. Show two ways out of every room, if possible. The door will be the main exit from each room. However, if the door is blocked by smoke or fire, identify an alternate escape route, which could be a window. Make sure that all windows can open easily and that everyone knows how to escape through them to safety. If windows have security bars, equip them with quick-releasing devices. Do not block doors or windows keep exits clear of clutter.
4. Does anyone need help to escape? Decide in advance who will assist the very young, older adults or people with disabilities in your household. A few minutes of planning will save valuable seconds in a real emergency.
5. Choose a meeting place outside. A safe distance from your home that everyone will remember. A tree, familiar location or a neighbour's home are good choices. In case of fire, everyone will go directly to this meeting place so they can be accounted for.
6. Practice your escape. Review the plan with everyone in your household. Walk through the escape routes for each room with the entire family. Use this walk through exercise to check your escape routes, making sure all exits are practical and easy to use. Then hold a fire drill twice a year and time how long it takes. In a real fire, you must react without hesitation as your escape routes may be quickly blocked by smoke or flames in just a few minutes.

### **Tips for Safe Winter Heating – Flue Fires can lead to house fires!**

#### **Inspect and Clean your Chimney Regularly**

The Ontario Fire Code requires homeowners to maintain the safety of their chimneys and inspect them once a year. Your chimney could have a problem you cannot see. If in doubt, consult a WETT certified chimney sweep.

#### **Check for Creosote**

Creosote can form quickly and is a major cause of chimney fires. Check chimney and flue pipes often and clean when necessary – never let creosote or soot build up. Warm weather, cold weather may result in quicker creosote buildup.

#### **Check the Chimney Cap for Blockages**

A cap and screen should be installed on top of all metal and masonry chimneys. If you have a spark screen around the chimney cap, inspect it regularly for blockage.

#### **Watch for Smoke Coming into the Room**

This could indicate a blockage in the chimney or a faulty damper control mechanism. Check it out!

#### **Regularly Check for Signs of Problems**

Your heating appliance, flue pipes and chimney can deteriorate over time. Look for corrosion or rust stains on the outer shell of a metal chimney and check for bulges or corrosion in its liner.

Loose bricks, crumbling mortar, broken liners, dark stains or white powder indicate problems with masonry chimneys. These should be fixed immediately by a qualified mason.

**Place ashes in proper metal container with lid and dispose of in a safe place.**

Visit the National Fire Protection Association website [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org) and the township website [www.carlowmayo.ca](http://www.carlowmayo.ca) for helpful fire safety tips.

**And remember...If you see fire or have an emergency, call 9-1-1 to connect you with ALL emergency services.**

**If you require this newsletter in a larger print format please contact the municipal office.**