

Fire Chief Urges Residents to Install Smoke Alarms and Practice Home Fire Escape Plans

Township of East Zorra-Tavistock – 2018-01-09 In the wake of a fatal fire in Oshawa, ON on Monday, January 8, 2018, the **Township of East Zorra-Tavistock Fire Department** wants to remind the public to make sure that they have working smoke alarms on every storey of their home and outside all sleeping areas, and have practiced a home fire escape plan with everyone in their home.

It has not yet been determined if there were working smoke alarms in the fatal fire in Oshawa.

“Fire moves so fast that you may have less than 60 seconds to safely escape a fire, so early warning is crucial to survival,” says Fire Chief **Scott Alexander**. “Only working smoke alarms give you that early warning.”

Just as important as having working smoke alarms is making sure everyone in your home knows exactly what to do to escape BEFORE a fire occurs. Practice a home fire escape plan with everyone in your home.

It is up to you to make sure these types of tragedies do not happen.

Simple smoke and carbon monoxide alarm tips:

- Install smoke alarms on every storey and outside all sleeping areas of your home. For added protection, install a smoke alarm in every bedroom according to manufacturer’s recommendations. Larger homes may require additional smoke alarms.
- Install carbon monoxide alarms outside all sleeping areas if your home has a fuel-burning appliance, fireplace or attached garage. For added protection, install a carbon monoxide alarm on every storey of your home according to manufacturer’s recommendations.
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms monthly by pressing the test button. Change the batteries every year.
- Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms wear out over time. Replace alarms according to manufacturer’s recommendations.

Simple steps for home fire escape planning include:

- Everyone should know two ways out of each room, if possible.
- All exits must be unobstructed and easy to use.
- If someone in your home has a disability, develop a home fire escape plan with your household that takes into account their unique needs. Determine who will be responsible for helping young children, older adults and anyone who needs assistance to escape.
- Choose a meeting place outside, such as a tree or a lamp post, where everyone can be accounted for.
- Call the fire department from outside the home, from a cell phone or a neighbour’s home.
- Practice your home fire escape plan.
- Once out, stay out. Never re-enter a burning building.

For people who live in apartment buildings and need assistance to escape:

- Make sure you tell the superintendent or landlord if you need assistance.
- Make sure your name is added to the persons who require assistance list in the fire safety plan, so the fire department knows which apartment you are in.
- Know the emergency procedures outlined in the building’s fire safety plan.

For more information, contact:

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519-462-2697 Ext 229