

Fire Departments Urge Fire Safety In Cool Summer Temperatures

Schreiber/Terrace Bay – August 5, 2009

As cool and damp weather continues to dominate this summer's forecast, your local Fire Departments are urging residents to use caution with heating appliances to prevent fires and related injuries at home or at the cottage.

With plans for a getaway to the cottage or trailer, residents need to pay close attention to potential fire hazards related to the use of fuel-burning appliances, space heaters and fireplaces. For early warning of an emergency, particular attention must be paid to ensure smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are in good working order.

"With the low temperatures this summer, Ontarians often need to turn on the heat to stay warm at night," said Matt Borutski. "Make sure all heating appliances and chimneys have been inspected. Blocked chimneys can result in the build-up of deadly carbon monoxide gases."

Important fire safety tips for the cool summer include the following:

- Burn dry, well-seasoned wood in fireplaces and woodstoves to reduce the risk of excessive creosote build-up in chimneys.
- Allow ashes from your woodstove or fireplace to cool before emptying them into a metal container with a tight-fitting lid. Keep the container outside.
- Keep space heaters at least one metre (3 feet) away from anything that can burn, including curtains, upholstery and clothing.
- Watch for smoke coming into the room. This could indicate a blockage in the chimney or a faulty damper control mechanism. Chimneys and stovepipes should be cleaned as often as necessary to keep them free from accumulations of combustible deposits. A qualified contractor should inspect them annually.
- Ensure smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms are installed and working in cottages, cabins and recreational vehicles.

Your local Fire Departments remind everyone that the Ontario Fire Code requires smoke alarms to be installed on every storey of your home and outside all sleeping areas. This includes cottages, cabins and recreational vehicles. Failure to comply with this law can result in a ticket for \$235 or a fine of up to \$50,000.

For more information contact:

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