

Township of
Langley



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NEWS RELEASE

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LOOK, LISTEN, AND LEARN DURING FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

Every year, Fire Prevention Week is held across Canada to teach people how to stay safe and decrease the number of casualties caused by fire. This year, the Week runs October 7 to 13, and the theme is Look, Listen, Learn. Be aware. Fire can happen anywhere.

For the Township of Langley Fire Department, it is an opportunity to educate the community about three basic but essential steps that need to be taken to reduce the chances of experiencing a fire - and how to escape safely in the event of one.

“Fire safety education isn’t just for students, it’s for everyone,” said Pat Walker, Township Assistant Chief - Prevention. “Whether you are a child, an adult, or a senior, it is important to be knowledgeable and prepared, and to take precautions to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your home. It could save lives.”

During Fire Prevention Week 2018, residents are encouraged to **LOOK** for places where a fire could start, **LISTEN** for the sound of the smoke alarm, and **LEARN** two ways out of every room.

“Start by having a thorough look around your home to identify potential fire hazards, and take action to eliminate them,” Walker said.

That means removing flammable clutter such as oven mitts and wooden utensils from the stovetop and keeping anything that can burn away from furnaces, heaters, and fireplaces. Ensure all wiring, lighting, cords, and plugs are in proper working condition and that only one heat-producing appliance, such as a coffee maker or toaster, is plugged into an outlet at a time. Use extreme caution when using candles and disposing of smoking materials, and never leave them unattended.

If a fire does occur, smoke alarms are the first line of defence, but it is only possible to listen for them if they are working properly in the first place.

“It is vital that all residents have functioning smoke alarms in their homes, and the key word is ‘functioning,’” Walker said. “To ensure this, check the batteries once a month, replace the batteries every year, and replace the alarm itself when it is more than ten years old.”

Smoke alarms should be placed inside every bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the home, including the basement.

“If the smoke alarm sounds, get out and stay out,” Walker said. “Never go back inside for people or pets. If you have to escape through smoke, get low and go under the smoke to your way out.”

Planning ahead and being prepared is the best way to ensure your family knows what to do if an emergency strikes. That includes learning how to get out of every room by making and practicing a home escape plan. Start by drawing a map of your home, showing all the doors and windows. Make sure all doors and windows that lead outside open easily and find at least two ways out of every room, if possible.

Discuss the plan with everyone in your home so they know how to get out, and establish an outside meeting place, such as a tree, light pole, or mailbox that is a safe distance from the home. Close doors behind you as you leave and call the fire department from outside.

Practice the escape plan by holding a home fire drill at night and during the day, twice a year. Practice using different ways out and teach children how to escape on their own, in case adults cannot help them.

“Walk through the plan with children: practicing will help them remember and learn,” Walker said. “The experience will stay with them, so they are less frightened if a real emergency strikes.”

For more information, visit tol.ca/firesafety.

Poster Contest:

In celebration of Fire Prevention Week, the Township of Langley Fire Department is holding a poster contest for elementary school students. Classes from kindergarten to Grade 7 within the Township are asked to create a poster related to this year’s theme, Look, Listen, Learn. Be aware. Fire can happen anywhere. The winning class will receive a field trip to Science World. Entries must be received at the Murrayville Fire Hall by Thursday, November 8. For more information, call the Fire Department at 604.532.7500 and ask for Public Safety.