

Township of
Langley



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NEWS RELEASE

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KEEP BALCONIES SAFE THIS SUMMER

On any summer day, people can be found out on their balconies, decks, and patios, enjoying the opportunity to be in the great outdoors.

But great care must be taken when cooking and using smoking materials to avoid devastating fires that can destroy homes and lives.

Last month, fire engulfed a condominium complex in the City of Langley. Township of Langley fire crews were called in to help fight the blaze, which was an important reminder of the need to always be careful when using heat or flames in outside areas.

“It got everybody’s attention,” said Township of Langley Fire Chief Stephen Gamble. “Fires on balconies and decks are a challenge. Anything on balconies, not just grills, but heaters and smoking materials, pose a danger if they are mishandled or procedures are not followed correctly.”

The result, Gamble said, can be catastrophic, not just for those within the home, but for everyone near them. “If you live in a strata complex, it is not just about you,” he said. “Condominiums and townhouses are places where many people live, and fire can impact the residents around you.”

Carelessly tossing away smoking material, improper use of outdoor appliances, or a momentary lapse in concentration when cooking – whether going to the door for a parcel delivery or checking on the kids – could have horrific results, as fire can ignite in an instant.

“Even if your building has sprinklers, you still need to be fire smart,” said Gamble. “People need to be cautious, follow appliance instructions and use them as directed, and don’t leave things unattended.”

To help keep residents safe this summer, the Township of Langley Fire Department is issuing the following information on balcony fire safety. For more information, visit tol.ca/firesafety.

BALCONY FIRE SAFETY

Balcony fires can be significant, whether your building has sprinklers or not.

If you are a strata owner or resident, be sure to review your building's strata bylaws, fire safety plans, and rules and regulations.

Below are some safety tips to help you reduce your chances of a fire on your balcony:

Smoking Materials

- Never throw cigarette butts, and other smoking materials, from your balcony.
- Never discard smoking materials in vegetation such as mulch, potted plants, landscaping, peat moss, dried grasses, leaves, or other things that could ignite easily.
- Before you throw away smoking materials, make sure they are out by soaking them in water.

Barbecues / Gas Appliances

- Review your apartment / condominium / townhome or any other residence's strata bylaws, safety plans, and rules with respect to barbecues on balconies.
- Propane, natural gas, and charcoal barbecue grills should only be used outdoors and kept well away from the building.
- Keep the grill clean by removing grease or fat build-up from the grills and trays below.
- Never leave a barbecue unattended.
- Ensure any appliance is CSA approved. Follow all manufacturer's installation and use requirements.

Flammable / Combustible Materials

- Keep balconies free of flammable and combustible materials and debris, such as gasoline, paint, oil, and garbage.

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Media Inquiries:

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