



September 13, 2016

Family Letter

This Fire Prevention Week, October 9th - 15th, your local fire department and your child's school have teamed up for safety! Your child has been learning about ways to prevent home fires, fire and burn hazards, working smoke alarms and home fire escape planning. The theme this year is "Don't Wait – Check the Date! Replace Smoke Alarms Every 10 Years".

Please spend some time with your child to review the *Fire Safety Starts with You!* activity booklet they have brought home from school (booklet can also be located online - <http://www.embc.gov.bc.ca/ofc/public-ed/pdf/fpw1503eng.pdf>). Once you've reviewed the booklet, fill out the entry form and your child will be eligible for the "Captain of the Day" and "Fire Chief of the Day". The ballot **must be completed and returned to your child's school by Friday, October 7, 2016** to be eligible for the "Captain of the Day" draw that takes place no later than 12:00 noon on Friday, October 14, 2016.

Most fatal fires occur in residential settings where people feel safest. Fire can spread quickly through your home, leaving only precious minutes to escape. Your ability to get out fast depends on advanced warning from smoke alarms and advanced planning – creating a home fire escape plan. Reduce your family's risk from fire by following the tips below.

Smoke Alarms

- Make sure everyone in your home can recognize the sound of the smoke alarm and knows exactly what to do when it sounds.
- Install working smoke alarms near sleeping areas and on every level of your home. For maximum protection also install smoke alarms in bedrooms.
- Smoke alarms should be tested and maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Alarms should be tested once a month by pushing the test button and listening for the alarm.
- For battery operated smoke alarms, replace batteries at least once a year or for extended life batteries (according to manufacturer's instructions). Batteries should also be replaced when the smoke alarm makes a chirping sound.
- Smoke alarms should be cleaned at least every 6 months, by gently vacuuming the exterior.
- Smoke alarms do wear out and should be replaced at least every 10 years.

Home Fire Escape Plans

- Create a home fire escape plan showing 2 ways out of every room. Practise your plan with your entire family by having a home fire drill at least twice a year.
- Choose a Family Meeting Place a safe distance away from your home. All family members should be taught to report to the family meeting place after leaving the home.
- One person should then go to a neighbour's house or the nearest phone in a safe location to contact 9-1-1 or your local emergency number.

Fire Prevention Week is actively supported by fire departments across the country. Fire Prevention Week is the longest running public health and safety observance on record. For more information, go to fpw.org.

Thank you for making fire safety your priority in your home!