

**Ministry of the Solicitor General
Office of the Fire Marshal**

25 Morton Shulman Avenue
Toronto ON M3M 0B1
Tel: 647-329-1100
Fax: 647-329-1143

**Ministère du Solliciteur général
Bureau du commissaire des incendies**

25, avenue Morton Shulman
Toronto ON M3M 0B1
Tél. : 647-329-1100
Télééc. : 647-329-1143



MEMORANDUM TO: All Ontario Fire Chiefs

FROM: Jon Pegg
Ontario Fire Marshal

DATE: October 24, 2023

SUBJECT: Test Your Smoke Alarm Day and Saved by the Beep Campaign

I would like to start with my sincere appreciation for the work that Ontario's fire service does all year long to support and spread the message that working smoke alarms save lives. This has not gone unnoticed.

Yet, as you all know, there are still too many preventable deaths due to absent or non-functional smoke alarms. It remains an ongoing challenge to ensure that the public understands that smoke alarms are required by law and save lives.

This year, my office spearheaded the Saved by the Beep campaign and initiated Ontario's first Test Your Smoke Alarm Day on September 28th, in partnership with the Fire Marshal's Public Fire Safety Council (FMPFSC), the National Fire Protection Association, the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs, the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association, the Ontario Municipal Fire Prevention Officers Association, and the Ontario Association of Fire Educators.

When we launched this campaign, we hoped to have the support of fire chiefs and all members of the fire service across Ontario to reach an audience that had not connected with previous fire safety education efforts. We are humbled to see that fire services not only used the materials and products but also embraced the vision of approaching fire safety public education in new and creative ways.

Proof that we had your support was immediately clear with the campaign messaging spreading across communities the first week that the campaign was announced. I want to acknowledge and thank you all for your efforts. The buzz that was created over the summer was loud enough to be heard across the country; in fact, the Canadian Council of Fire Marshals and Fire Commissioners supported the campaign with individual provinces and territories participating to varying degrees.

A point I stressed to everyone at Operation SAFER was to not be afraid of trying something new, different, and outside the box if it means changing public behaviour around smoke alarms. It is clear that you jumped at the opportunity to communicate differently.

When looking at the numbers, this campaign's significance cannot be understated.

Since the launch of the campaign in June, Saved by the Beep reached nearly 15 million users on social media with the assistance of all fire services. Our social media posts alone reached over 4 million users on September 28th, not to mention the additional social media posts by individual departments.

Further amplifying the message, fire services across Ontario gained support from local sponsors, hosted community and school events, purchased billboards and public signage, held media events, placed door hangers on homes across communities, and created entertaining videos.

We likely will not know the full impact of this campaign until we see the statistics, however we have already heard stories of people taking action to test their alarms and being motivated to replace non-functional or expired ones. These are the first of many positive steps forward and I am committed to continuing this path.

Many fire services have asked us if we will have a Test Your Smoke Alarm Day next year. I am pleased to say that our intent is for this to become an annual event every September 28th.

Thank you for supporting and contributing to the success of this campaign and demonstrating that when the fire service works together, our impact towards making Ontario fire safe increases.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Pegg', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jon Pegg
Ontario Fire Marshal

c: Mario Di Tommaso, O.O.M.
Deputy Solicitor General, Community Safety