

**CORPORATION OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF HOWICK**

**SCHEDULE 'A'
BY-LAW NO. 38-2007**

**SMOKE ALARM PROGRAM
AND
HOME ESCAPE PROGRAM**

The Township of Howick Smoke Alarm and Home Escape Planning Program

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The Township of Howick

Smoke Alarm and Home Escape Planning Program

1. INTRODUCTION

The intention of the Township of Howick Smoke Alarm and Home Escape Planning Program is to meet the minimum requirements of Subsection 2(1) (a) of the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 (FPPA). To be in compliance with subsection 2(1) (a) the municipality must provide a smoke alarm and home escape planning program.

Most fire deaths in the residential occupancies occur at night and involve the misuse of smoking materials or cooking equipment or appliances. The installation of smoke alarms in dwellings has proven to be effective in alerting occupants in the early stages of a fire. The Province of Ontario statistics show that a working smoke alarm can greatly increase the chances of surviving a fire.

2. PURPOSE

2.1. The purpose of this Smoke Alarm and Home Escape Planning Program is to:

- 2.1.1. Ensure smoke alarms are installed and operating properly in all dwellings, and to ensure compliance under Section 2.13 of the Ontario Fire Code.
- 2.1.2. Maintain fire deaths and property losses at a minimum.
- 2.1.3. Educate residents about the importance of installing and maintaining smoke alarms.
- 2.1.4. Promote residents to develop and practice an effective home escape plan.
- 2.1.5. Assist the Township of Howick to meet its legislative requirements of the FPPA.
- 2.1.6. Create an opportunity for positive community public relations with the fire department.

3. COMMUNITY PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1. Implementing a smoke alarm program must involve careful planning, development of fire department operating guidelines and comprehensive training for fire department staff who will be responsible for delivering the program. The Office of the Fire Marshal technical guideline "OFM-TG-04-98 Maintenance of Smoke Alarms" was referenced while establishing this program.

4. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

4.1. Smoke Alarm activities following emergency responses:

- 4.1.1. Following an emergency response to a dwelling unit, firefighters and/or officer will check the dwelling unit to determine compliance with section 2.13 of the OFC. The program data collection form shall be used to record findings (Appendix 1).
- 4.1.2. If during the inspection it is determined that smoke alarm(s) are missing, improperly located or not working, immediate action must be taken to inform the home-owner and/or occupant of the mandatory requirements of the OFC and the consequences for non-compliance. An information package will be provided to the homeowner and or occupant containing the pamphlet "Smoke Alarms: It's the Law" (Appendix 2) and the "Smoke Alarm Fact Sheet" (Appendix 3).
- 4.1.3. After explaining the mandatory requirements and consulting with the home-owner and/or occupant it may be determined by the Officer in Charge that it will be necessary to supply one or more smoke alarms as loaners to the home-owner and/or occupant. The Officer in Charge shall ensure that the smoke alarm(s) are installed properly before clearing the scene. In some circumstances the homeowner and/or occupant may not be able to install the smoke alarm themselves. An offer to install the smoke alarm(s) should be extended.
- 4.1.4. The Fire Station in the Township of Howick must have smoke alarms and/or batteries readily available at all times.
- 4.1.5. Alarms are to be installed free of charge by properly trained firefighters or officers only with the permission of the homeowner and/or occupant. The Township of Howick 'Smoke Alarm Waiver Form' (Appendix 4) must be signed by the home-owner and/or occupant as well as the Officer in charge and a copy shall be provided to the home-owner and/or occupant and a copy shall be retained by the fire department.
- 4.1.6. If the loaner component of the smoke alarm program is utilized arrangements must be made with the homeowner and/or occupant for re-inspection after they have purchased and installed the required smoke alarm(s).
- 4.1.7. Once it has been determined that the dwelling unit is in compliance with the OFC, all appropriate forms will be included in the file and the file will be considered closed.
- 4.1.8. The first day of each month the Fire Chief will update the data summary form (Appendix 6). This will provide a monthly summary for Council's consideration.

- 4.1.9. If the home-owner and/or occupant is uncooperative, the 'Smoke Alarm Violation Notice' (Appendix 5) will be issued in this case. The homeowner and/or occupant and the Officer in charge should discuss the amount of time for follow-up. Normally, one day will be sufficient for follow-up but unique circumstances may arise to deviate from the norm, it shall be the responsibility of the Officer in charge to determine the appropriate length of time.
- 4.1.10. If this is the second time that a dwelling unit has been found in non-compliance or if the home-owner and/or occupant will not co-operate with the department. the Wingham and Area Fire Department may find it necessary to ticket or apply the appropriate charges against the home-owner and/or occupant at the discretion of the Fire Chief and/or designate.
- 4.1.11. Failure to comply with the fire code smoke alarm requirements could result in a ticket for \$235.00 or a fine of up to \$50,000.00 for individuals or \$100,000.00 for corporations.
- 4.1.12. All homeowners and/or occupants shall be encouraged to develop and practice a home escape plan. Early warning by smoke alarms is only effective if the occupants of the dwelling know what to do when the alarm sounds. All occupants shall be given the home escape planning pamphlet (Appendix 7).

NOTE:

Due to unique circumstances with certain emergency responses (i.e. medical emergencies) it may not be an option to inspect the dwelling for smoke alarm compliance. A visual observation should be conducted and if smoke alarm(s) appear missing, not installed properly, and/or not operating properly a follow-up inspection should be initiated. The Officer in Charge of Fire Prevention should be notified and an inspection should be scheduled.

5. OPTIONAL DOOR TO DOOR AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

- 5.1. The purpose of this activity is to provide essential fire safety information and to provide home inspections if requested by the homeowner and/or occupant housed within the Township of Howick.
- 5.2. As resources become available an optional door-to-door campaign may be conducted. Firefighters and Officers will provide valuable information regarding smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, home-escape planning, and wood-fired appliances. Crew members will offer to check the dwelling unit's smoke alarm(s) to determine if they are installed properly, functioning properly and are properly maintained. The municipality will be divided into sections and a different section should be targeted during the campaign. If it is determined that the dwelling is not in compliance with Section 2.13 of the OFC immediate action shall be taken. Firefighters and Officers shall reference the 'Smoke Alarm Activities' section of

this program and the department's 'Standard Operating Guidelines' for guidance in conducting the door-to-door campaign when immediate action is required.

6. PUBLIC FIRE SAFETY INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION

6.1. Local and Regional Media

6.1.1. Using local or regional media is an effective way to promote fire safety information, the importance of having properly installed and working smoke alarms, and the consequences for non-compliance. The media can also effectively promote fire department events and the activities associated with the Smoke Alarm and Home Escape Planning program. Local media often welcome the opportunity to cooperatively develop media events or contests that will enhance their own programming as well as educate the public in fire safety. Public Service Announcements (PSA's) are available from the Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) and can be provided free of charge to the local media. The PSA's can be downloaded from the OFM's website www.gov.on.ca/OFM.

6.1.2. As an example, PSA's containing smoke alarm information can be provided for use during:

- Fire Prevention Week
- Seasonal time changes
- Winter holiday season
- Spring and summer cottage times
- Fall and winter (home heating seasons)

6.1.3. Statistics from the Smoke Alarm program should be provided to the local media to reinforce smoke alarm awareness. For example, it could be noted that during the recent door-to-door campaign it was determined that a high percentage of dwellings were without working smoke alarms.

6.2. Brochures/Fact Sheets

6.2.1. In addition to the local media, brochures and fact sheets shall be distributed and made available to the residents of the Municipality of Howick. This can be achieved in various ways, such as:

6.2.2. Information included in tax bills

6.2.3. Distribution at the municipal office, fire stations, libraries, community halls, etc.

6.2.4. Distribution at privately owned stores, businesses, doctor's offices, insurance companies.

6.2.5. Distribution at institutional sites such as churches, seniors' homes, lodges, etc.

6.2.6. Distribution at fairs and festivals, etc.

6.2.7. Distribution with local services such as Meals on Wheels, Victim Services, Chamber of Commerce.

6.3. Schools and Community Organizations

6.3.1. Initiating and supporting programs at schools and through various community organizations will effectively enhance awareness of the importance of smoke alarms and home escape planning. Children are great safety advocates and often have considerable influence over their parents and families. Activities may include:

6.3.2. Introducing and supporting school programs that promote fire safety

6.3.3. Supporting Scout and Guide fire safety educational activities

6.3.4. Supporting babysitter training activities

6.3.5. Coordinating fire safety awareness contests in schools (The Great Escape program)

6.3.6. Delivering presentations to seniors' clubs, church groups and other community meetings and conferences

6.3.7. Developing partnerships with local service clubs or home support agencies

7. Reference Material

Ontario Fire Code

Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997

CAN/ULC-S553-02 Standard for the Installation of Smoke Alarms

CAN/ULC-S552-02 Standard for the Maintenance and Testing of Smoke Alarms

Fire Marshal's Public Fire Safety Council

Office of the Fire Marshal

NFPA