



Fire Prevention Week is October 8 to 14, 2017

The Fire Prevention Week 2017 theme “Every Second Counts: Plan 2 Ways Out!” focuses on the importance of having, and practicing, a home escape plan. The program for this year represents the final year of the National Fire Protection Association’s three-year effort to educate the public about essential elements of smoke alarm safety.

The history of National Fire Prevention Week has its roots in the great Chicago Fire that occurred on October 8, 1871, and killed some 300 people, left 100,000 homeless and destroyed more than 17,000 structures. The popular story is that a cow knocked over an oil lamp in the O’Leary barn. Although the fire is still undetermined, and it has been established that the O’Leary’s were asleep at the time the fire started, the massive fire swiftly took its toll, burning more than 2000 acres in 27 hours.

In Canada, the first national Fire Prevention Day proclamation was issued by the Governor-General in 1919.

From the beginning, it was apparent that a united effort between Canada and the U.S.A. would give the work greater impetus. To this end fire prevention organizations in both countries have always supported a common date at federal, state, provincial, and municipal levels. Fire Prevention week falls in the week that includes October 9.

British Columbia, Alberta, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan and Yukon fire departments coordinate efforts to reach children in kindergarten through grade three during Fire Prevention Week in order to deliver consistent, accurate fire safety messages with information on preventing fires, knowing what to do in case of a fire, smoke alarms and developing home escape plans. Each year the message is tailored to follow the NFPA theme with activity booklets, lesson plans for teachers, fire safety messages to take home and a contest where one child from each region can win an iPad. This year, Fire Prevention Week sponsors will supply a sixth iPad for a child in a First Nations Band Operated School.

Learn more:

Office of the Fire Commissioner: www.gov.bc.ca/FireSafety

National Fire Protection Association: www.firepreventionweek.org