

Background

The Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 (FPPA) requires all municipalities in Ontario establish a program which must include public education with respect to fire safety. These programs and education increase awareness which aim to reduce the loss of life and property within the municipality.

The Public Safety Officers, Fire Prevention Officers and Firefighters of the City of Greater Sudbury Fire Services (GSFS) bring life-saving messages to the community through many public fire safety education programs and activities.

These programs and activities target risks identified through a community risk assessment which considers previous fire losses, building stock, and the demographic profile of the municipality. GSFS partners with a variety of community groups and organizations who provide leadership and set good examples when working towards public fire safety education in the community.

The Public Education section is comprised of two Public Safety Officers (PSOs) dedicated to providing fire and life safety information to our community. The PSOs have achieved the certification of (National Fire Protection Association) NFPA 1035 Level I Public Fire and Life Safety Educator and Public Information Officer.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created some unique challenges pertaining to the delivery of our traditional presentations. The PSOs have developed and are working towards alternative options for the distribution of information while modifying our current programs to make them more web friendly and available online. The PSOs are following Public Health Ontario guidelines for physical distancing and group gatherings, as such have been delivering their information and safety messaging through alternative means such as video conferencing and online videos.

Public Education Programs and Activities



Inflatable House School Program

Fire safety education programs delivered at schools are one of the most effective ways to create future fire safe generations. The inflatable house provides students the opportunity to identify common hazards found in their home and tips on how to eliminate these hazards. The inflatable house emphasizes home escape planning and what to do in the event of a fire.

Due to COVID-19, PSOs are waiting on direction from Public Health and local School Boards when planning attendance at schools to conduct fire and life safety presentations. Alternative solutions are being considered

and developed in order to provide school aged children with fire and life safety information should these normative visits become postponed.

Fire Station Tours (Schools, Daycares, Community Groups)

Fire Services provides station tours to school children, families and a number of diverse community groups, providing an invaluable opportunity to educate the citizens of Greater

Sudbury. During these tours, participants are taught the importance of working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors, home escape planning, and the roles and responsibilities of a Firefighter.

In order to protect the public and our first responders, all station tours have been postponed in order to keep fire stations safe while limiting the amount of potential exposures that can enter the fire halls.

What's Cooking - for Teens!

During their teen years, young people learn many life skills that will prepare them for the years ahead. However, a critical skill that many teens do not acquire is how to cook safely to prevent devastating fires and injuries. While most teens have some cooking responsibilities at home, within a few years they will be moving out to homes of their own. This is the perfect time for them to learn the basics of safe cooking.

Cooking is the number one cause of home fires in Ontario, so it is critical that young people be aware of the hazards and how to prevent them. "What's Cooking – for Teens!" focuses on the leading causes of kitchen fires and includes important information about smoke alarms and home escape planning.



This program has been designed with a PowerPoint presentation, video content and an electronic test that can be used during the pandemic. It can be distributed to an online audience with minimal modification to the program.

The Arson Prevention Program for Children (TAPP-C)

Fire-play and fire-setting by children and teens is an extremely dangerous behaviour that can result in substantial personal and economic loss to families and communities. TAPP-C is a program for children and teens who have been involved with fire-play and fire-setting behaviors such as playing with matches or lighters, burning paper or garbage, performing lighter "tricks", intentionally setting fire to buildings, or making bombs. It is an evidence-based collaborative program that involves the fire service and mental health professionals working together to ensure that all children involved with fire have the best chance possible for a safe and healthy future. As part of the TAPP-C program, fire department personnel work with juvenile fire-setters to improve home fire safety, teach fire safety knowledge and skills, and provide positive role models.

Child Welfare Professionals/Children's Aid Society

Most of the home fires that result in the injury and death of children are preventable, and many of the fires occur in homes where child welfare professionals are involved. The Public Education section recognizes the importance of working with child welfare professionals to help educate these families about fire prevention and safety. The PSOs train welfare professionals to raise their awareness about the risk factors associated with home fires, and so they are able to identify safety and prevention strategies that can be used by families.

Partnerships

The PSOs have developed a strong and lasting partnership with local business First General, to raise public awareness of fire prevention and safety. During 2020, three new television commercials were developed and aired on local television channels, covering issues including; Working from Home during Covid-19, Fire Bans, and Backyard Campfires. First General continues to be an excellent partner and resource for GSFS and was the recipient of the Jim Copeland Fire Safety Award in 2019 for outstanding contributions made by individuals, businesses, associations or the media in the field of fire prevention and public education.

Additional partnerships formed in 2020 include Duracell, Enbridge, FARFO, Corsi Real Estate, Rona, Lowes, and First Alert.

Social Media

GSFS uses social media to raise public awareness of fire prevention and safety, and to post information about community events or incidents. This includes a variety of social media platforms, including the fire department website <https://www.greatersudbury.ca/live/emergency-services/fire-services/> and Twitter @CGSFireServices. Over the last few months, Twitter has been the driving force behind our fire and life safety messaging to the community. The fire safety topics that have been distributed through Twitter are BBQ Safety, Open Air Burning Bylaw, Carbon Monoxide, Cooking Safety, Electrical Safety, Farm Safety, Wildfire-Fire Smart, Heating Safety, Home Escape Plans, Smoke Alarms, Smoking and Water Safety.

The PSOs work closely with Corporate Communications and have produced three public service announcements addressing the following fire safety issues: Common Causes of Fire, Fire Department Response and Safe Heating.

Fire Prevention Week



“Serve Up Fire Safety In The Kitchen” is the theme for Fire Prevention Week in 2020. During Fire Prevention Week, members of the GSFS typically promote fire and life safety through display booths located at high traffic areas. These events allow fire department personnel to speak to a wide range of people living in our community about fire safety. With the current COVID-19 situation, specific planning is underway at this time to ensure GSFS will be able to participate in our traditional activities for Fire Prevention Week (attending schools for fire drills, staffing booths at high traffic areas) or have alternative, safe distancing measures, in place. The PSOs are planning for both our traditional activities as well as new activities that will engage with public while ensuring safety due to pandemic restrictions.

Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week

Each year the first week of November is Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week. This is an opportunity to raise awareness of the dangers of carbon monoxide, how to protect you and your loved ones by preventing the build-up of carbon monoxide, and the importance of installing and maintaining carbon monoxide alarms.

Program Development

Smoke Alarm/Carbon Monoxide Program

Plans to redevelop our in-service smoke and carbon monoxide alarm program have been deferred until 2021 due to OFMEM Covid-19 directions. Fire Prevention had intended to initiate a single-family dwelling voluntary smoke and carbon monoxide education program.

Senior/Older Adult Programs

In Ontario, adults 65 years and older are at higher risk of dying in a fire than any other age group. Often these fires happen where people feel the safest – in their homes, and many are preventable. The PSOs are developing a program specific to seniors' safety while living in their home. The program will consist of a PSO conducting a safety inspection of the home, educating the senior on safety and answering any questions they may have. This program goes hand in hand with our "Remembering When – A fire and fall prevention program for older adults". Safety Information and resources will be provided to the homeowner for their information and review. The scheduled launch date of this program is fall of 2020 with CARP, formerly the Canadian Association of Retired Persons being the first to receive access to this program.

Post-Secondary Students Accommodation

Development of a program focused on post-secondary student accommodations is underway. The program is designed to allow the PSOs to work closely with students, faculty, management and various campus associations to raise awareness of fire safety at Laurentian University, Cambrian College and College Boreal.

Approximately 22,500 post-secondary students attend post-secondary schools in the City of Greater Sudbury every September, many of whom are living away from home for the first time. The program will allow PSOs to address the associated fire safety risks in a number of ways, including presentations to students on fire and life safety for both on and off campus living. Topics will include safe cooking practices, maintaining life safety devices in the home, home escape planning and having a fire safe attitude.

Fire Smart-Wild Fires

Public Education section is looking into adopting the Fire Smart–Wild Fires program developed by Fire Smart Canada. The program is designed to provide homeowners the information required to protect themselves and their property from wild fire. The program provides information on reducing the fire load around a property, proper yard maintenance, distancing to combustible materials and fire retardant building materials. More information on the Fire Smart Program can be located on the following website <https://firesmartcanada.ca/>

Summary

The Public Education section has been working diligently to review and update our current fire and life safety programs in order to make the delivery of the programs available through many different platforms and where possible, in person delivery. The updating of the current programs will provide additional options for distribution in the future and allow GSFS to reach a wider range of audience. The development of new programs will allow PSOs to address additional fire safety concerns/hazards and help to protect our vulnerable citizens while reducing the hazards and risk of a fire occurring in the residence. Social media has been an essential part of the Public Education section and continues to grow where, as an example, Twitter has allowed

GSFS to inform the community of the risks and hazards associated with fire and provide information and tips on how to protect yourself and family in the event a fire occurs.

Statistics (January 01, 2020 – August 31, 2020)

Row Labels	Sum of Hours
Drive Time	69
Elementary School Event	28
Highschool Event	8
Media work	119
Meetings	102
Phone & Email	235
Prep Time	948
Public Event	5
Residential Presentation	1
Seniors Presentation	2
Special Presentation	19
Workplace Presentation	19
Grand Total	1555

