

# Fire Marshal's Public Fire Safety Council (FMPFSC)



Spring 2026



## Note from our Executive Director

Jamie Kovacs

As we wrap up the fourth quarter of our fiscal year, I want to thank our partners, fire departments, and supporters for their continued commitment to fire safety across Ontario.

This quarter highlights several important initiatives, including an ongoing push for heat alarms as part of a comprehensive home fire safety strategy, and our continued collaboration with Autism Canada in helping the fire service better understand and respond to emergency situations where sensory support maybe needed and appreciated.

We are also sharing public education best practices from fire departments across the province and continuing our partnership with Kidde through the Cause for Alarm program, helping place working smoke alarms in homes that need them most.

It has been a very successful year in giving back, and now we are excited to look ahead. I personally want to thank all the caring organizations that helped fund campaigns, donated items to departments and supported us on our mission.

We are preparing our Spring Fire Safety Kits to support departments with seasonal public education messaging, along with some exciting news on a new partnership with Autism Canada.

Finally, we continue to welcome sponsorship opportunities that help expand our programs and resources.

Thank you to everyone who supports the work of the Fire Marshal's Public Fire Safety Council and thanks to the ON fire service who help keep our communities across Ontario safe from fire and CO tragedies.

## Spring 2026 Newsletter:

**Medallion Group Insurance  
Giveaway**

**Innovative Push for Heat Alarms**

**Autism Canada**

**Public Education Best Practice**

**Cause For Alarm**

**Sponsorship Opportunities**

# Medallion Group Insurance Giveaway

In partnership with the Fire Marshal's Public Fire Safety Council, Medallion Group Insurance is happy to once again donate 10 FMPFSC Spring Fire public education kits to Fire Departments across the Province! Medallion has been partners with the FMPFSC now for 3 years and donated over \$30,000 to the ON fire service in free FMPFSC public education kits.

**MEDALLION GROUP INSURANCE**  
APPLY TO WIN ONE OF 10  
FMPFSC FIRE PREVENTION KITS

[Medallioninsurance.ca](http://Medallioninsurance.ca)



## HOW TO APPLY FOR A NO-COST KIT:

- Complete the online application [Form](#) by 9:00 AM on March 30, 2026
- Selected departments will be notified by April 2, 2026
- Kit will be shipped to your department or hand-delivered, depending on location.

We greatly appreciate the work you do to educate and engage the communities you serve, and we look forward to delivering these kits to the selected departments.

**If you're unable to access the Google Form, please contact Shawna Fournier at [sfournier@mcfrc.ca](mailto:sfournier@mcfrc.ca) to have your application submitted manually.**



# Innovative Push for Heat Alarms

## Leading the Charge: Advancing Heat Alarms in Ontario's Attached Garages



Ontario Fire Professionals **Ryan Schell**, **Brian McBain** and **Jimmy Fata** have formed a provincial committee and are leading the push for heat alarms in all attached residential garages, not just through future Code changes, but right now.

While advocating for inclusion in the 2030 Ontario Building Code, they are actively engaging builders to voluntarily install heat alarms in new homes today. Just as importantly, they are working to educate the fire service on how effective these alarms are in providing early warning during the early stages of a garage fire, giving families more time to escape safely.

### Where They Are Today

- Four Code Change Requests have been submitted at the National Building Code level since 2007.
- ULC Standards have been drafting proposed changes to CAN/ULC-S553 (Installation of Smoke Alarms).
- CAN/ULC-S589 (Single and Multiple Station Heat Alarms) has been developed as a binational standard.
- Discussions have begun regarding alignment with the Canadian Electrical Code.
- **NEW:** The Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) has released a Flash Notice permitting the installation of UL-listed heat alarm devices in Ontario. Manufacturers are currently working toward full Canadian listing recognition.

### Why They Are Advocating for This Change

Each of them has been personally affected by garage fires. These experiences, along with the documented evidence, have reinforced that mandatory heat alarms in attached garages may help save lives.

### Since 2013, fires originating in attached garages in Ontario have resulted in:

- **29** fatalities
- **368** injuries (**127** Firefighter Injuries)
- **\$630** million in fire losses



The Province of Manitoba enacted legislation effective October 1, 2008, mandating heat sensors in all new residential garages. This law followed a tragic garage fire in February 2007 that resulted in the deaths of two firefighters and injuries to four others. Their proactive approach demonstrates that legislative change is both achievable and impactful.



# Innovative Push for Heat Alarms

## Recent Successes

- The Electrical Safety Authority Flash Notice now permits the installation of approved heat alarms in Ontario.
- Many home builders are voluntarily installing heat alarms in new construction projects.
- In partnership with the local fire department, a Home Hardware store in Newmarket, Ontario, has begun stocking heat alarms for public purchase at an accessible cost of \$39.99.
- Media coverage, including features by CTV News, has helped raise public awareness.
- Families and builders have shared their stories publicly to reinforce the importance of early detection in garage fire scenarios.

The Agnoletto Family  
**[CLICK HERE TO WATCH](#)**



Michelle's Story

**[CLICK HERE TO WATCH](#)**



They believe that integrating heat alarms into the Ontario Building Code for all new residential attached garages and connecting them to the smoke alarms is a practical, cost-effective, and life-saving measure.

Heat alarms can provide the occupants with early warning so that they can implement their home evacuation plan and safely evacuate. The technology is available, affordable, and increasingly supported by industry stakeholders.

The next version of the Building Code is in the year 2030. Their goal is to be a part of this legislation!

## Next Steps for Fire Chiefs/Public Education Teams

Include heat alarms on your public education displays and be ready to explain why they are useful in areas like kitchens, garages, and attics.

Encourage local hardware stores to stock them so residents have access.

Reach out to local builders and advocate for installing heat alarms in new homes.

Public educators can help drive awareness by displaying them, talking about them, and promoting their availability in the community.



## Supporting Autism Awareness on the Front Lines



The **FMPFSC** is proud to announce its new partnership **with Autism Canada** to better support individuals and equip the ON fire service with tools to assist autistic or neurodivergent people during emergencies.

As part of this collaboration, the Council is launching **Sensory kits for First Responders** available on our website containing support tools to help reduce overwhelm and provide comfort during stressful incidents.



All of the items are hand packed by Career Services in Brockville ON, into a water-resistant, plastic case with a sealed lid, designed to be stored on apparatus alongside the medical bag for quick access when needed.

Items such as noise-reducing earmuffs, sunglasses, fidget tools, and simple communication aids help individuals regulate emotional and physical responses and support better interaction with first responders.

Each kit also includes guidance from Autism Canada to help first responders use the tools effectively. The **FMPFSC** will **donate \$5.00 from every kit sold to Autism Canada** to help advance awareness, education, and resources for autistic individuals and their families.

*Stay tuned as we are working on a webinar with Autism Canada to help us all understand as first responders how we can better respond*

## North City Insurance - Donating FMPSC Sensory Kits to ON fire departments

At **North City Insurance Brokers**, supporting the communities and first responders we serve is something we care about deeply. For more than 45 years, we have been proud to stand alongside the fire service community across Ontario, supporting the charity initiatives and causes that matter most to their departments and the communities they protect.

**HOME AND AUTO INSURANCE**

**SAVE UP TO 40%**

**OUR FIREFIGHTER GROUP PROGRAM INCLUDES:**

- Exclusive insurance Rates – savings up to 40%!
- Superior claims counselling and support
- Personalized service by dedicated insurance experts
- After-hours claims service

We can also insure your: Motorcycle, Condo, Cottage, Rental Property, ATV, Snowmobile, Watercraft, Collector Cars, Mobile Homes, RVs, and more!

**NORTH CITY INSURANCE BROKERS**

CALL TO GET A FREE QUOTE AND RECEIVE A BONUS \$20\* GAS CARD!

For **CURRENT** clients, you will also receive a **FREE \$20 Gas Card\*** for any qualified referral who receives a quote.

1.888.892.7176 **NORTHCITY.CA**

As part of this ongoing commitment, we are honoured to partner with the **FMPFSC** to offer fire departments the opportunity to **apply for a free First Responder Sensory Kit**, proudly sponsored by North City Insurance Brokers. These kits help firefighters better support individuals with autism during emergency situations. We are also proud that \$5 from every kit is donated by the **FMPFSC** to Autism Canada, supporting their important work for individuals and families across the country. Application is open Mar 19<sup>th</sup> and closes April 15<sup>th</sup> 2025.

**CLICK HERE**  
[to apply!](#)



# Pub-Ed Best Practice

## Local departments working together to protect a vulnerable community

Members of the **Amish community** often do not use television, the internet, or social media, which means traditional fire and carbon monoxide safety messaging doesn't always reach them. This makes direct, in-person engagement especially important.

After responding to a chimney fire at an Amish home on December 31, 2025, **Bayham Fire and Emergency Services (BFES)** took the opportunity to connect with the family about fire safety. Crews noticed only one smoke alarm in the home and provided guidance on proper placement, along with an additional alarm for the upper floor.

A follow-up visit by **BEFS Fire Chief Harry Baranik** confirmed the alarm had been installed, and opened the door to a broader conversation about carbon monoxide safety. The family shared that **they didn't have CO alarms**, believing they weren't needed without gas or propane. This created an opportunity to explain the risks associated with wood-burning appliances and the importance of CO detection.

Recognizing the value of reaching more families, Chief Baranik connected with a community elder, who invited the fire service to speak at a local school meeting. Around the same time, **Malahide Fire Services Captain and Fire Prevention Officer Dennis Johnson** had been approached by members of the same community. With the community spanning both municipalities, the two departments partnered to deliver a joint message.

On February 26, both departments attended the school meeting, where more than 100 community members were present. The session focused on smoke and carbon monoxide safety and allowed for open discussion and questions.

When asked, **about 90 percent of attendees indicated they did not have CO alarms in their homes** as they didn't think they were needed as they only used wood for fuel. Following the meeting, conversations with community leaders highlighted a strong willingness to address this gap.

As a result, both fire departments are working together to source carbon monoxide alarms and make them available to the community at cost demonstrating how collaboration, trust, and in-person outreach can lead to meaningful safety improvements

### Lessons Learned / Best Practice:

Recognize communication gaps. Communities without TV, internet, or social media may not receive traditional fire safety messaging. Understand religions and how to tailor your message to reflect and understand the "why its needed" of your conversations.

### Engage trusted leaders:

Working through community elders helps build trust and reach residents.

### Collaborate regionally:

Partnering with neighbouring departments ensured consistent messaging and support while removing barriers. Providing appropriate alarms at cost encouraged quick adoption.



Bayham Fire Chief  
Harry Baranik



Malahide Captain  
Dennis Johnson



# Cause For Alarm

## The Kidde Cause for Alarm Giveaway is back!

The **FMPFSC** is pleased to partner with **Kidde** in support of their “**Cause for Alarm**” fire safety campaign and alarm donation.

We invite all Ontario municipal and First Nations fire departments to apply for a chance to be one of 10 winning departments that will receive the new Kidde 10-year lithium-ion battery backup smoke alarms. In total, we are donating 1,828 alarms, and only departments that submit an application will be eligible to win.



**[CLICK HERE](#)**  
**[to apply!](#)**

To ensure fairness, applications were sent out Friday March 6<sup>th</sup>, all applications received will be entered into a random draw, from which the 10 winning departments will be selected.

Please fill out the Google Forms application **or email [maureen.belej@firesafetycouncil.com](mailto:maureen.belej@firesafetycouncil.com) to be emailed a copy of the entry form.**

The FMPFSC will notify all winning departments later in March, and we will post the list of winners on the FMPFSC social media and website.

The deadline to enter is **Friday March 20th, 2026**. Good luck and apply today!

Join Kidde and the FMPFSC in the mission of helping families everywhere make fire safety a priority.

**Free downloadable resources and toolkits to keep children safe at home are available at [CFA-Toolkit.pdf](#) courtesy of Kidde.**



# Sponsorship Opportunities

We've eliminated membership fees to ensure every fire department in Ontario can access and benefit from the Fire Marshal's Public Fire Safety Council and we receive no government funding to support our work.

As a legislated body, we are able to communicate with 100% of fire departments across the province and support their efforts to educate the public and prevent fire and carbon monoxide tragedies.

Sponsorships make our work possible, please help us deliver resources, share critical information, and strengthen fire safety programs across ON.

We are a CRA registered charity, donation tax receipts are available upon request.

2026

**Fire Marshals Public  
Fire Safety Council**

Sponsorship  
opportunity



**[CLICK HERE to  
view our  
sponsorship  
packages](#)**

## \$2,500 — Website Partner

Designed for organizations looking to show visible support for fire safety education across Ontario.

## \$5,000 — Education Partner

A strong opportunity to align your organization with public fire safety education initiatives reaching communities across Ontario.

## \$10,000 — Provincial Partner

Our highest level of partnership, providing province-wide visibility and direct alignment with Ontario's fire service leadership and public education efforts.

**Want to be a sponsor or have a new idea?  
Reach out to our Executive Director  
Jamie Kovacs  
direct cell: 519-200-4416  
email: [jamie.kovacs@firesafetycouncil.com](mailto:jamie.kovacs@firesafetycouncil.com)**



# Year in Review

**Blue Jays marketing partnership**- 1,000,000 colouring sheets distributed to 100% of all ON departments, game day activation and pub ed events with Toronto Fire Services

**FMPFSC donations/sponsorships** - \$10,000 to ON fire safety partners  
**OMFPOA, OAFE, OAFTO**

**Kidde Cause for Alarm donations** - 4,000 + smoke alarms donated across ON to departments

**12 Days of Holiday Safety** -\$16,000 given to fund this campaign

**OHL 50/50** donation of over \$7,000 to 3 local departments

**Enbridge Gas campaigns** - 14,200 Kidde combo alarms to 75 departments, \$5,000 in textbooks and online codes to 25 departments

**TC Energy** donation of **37 FMPFSC FPW kits** to 32 departments - \$20,000

**Medallion Insurance** donation of **22 FMPFSC** public education kits to 22 departments and more

**Thanks to the organizations that truly care and support the fire service, we are proud to partner with you**



BE THE FIRST TO BE IN THE KNOW WITH EVERYTHING FMPFSC

*For the latest updates and news between our quarterly newsletters, or to be the first to hear of new ideas or items at our distribution centre, connect with us on social media and subscribe to our email updates.*

Connect with us: [www.firesafetycouncil.com](http://www.firesafetycouncil.com)

