



# Communiqué

Cooking, Smoking and Alcohol – A Dangerous Mix

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## Camborne, ON – Cooking, Smoking and Alcohol – A Dangerous Mix

With the holiday season upon us, we are entering one of the most festive times of the year. However, it can also be a deadly time of the year.

The **Hamilton Township Fire Department** is urging everyone to pay special attention when cooking during the holidays. Provincial statistics reveal that careless cooking is the number one cause of fires and the second leading cause of fatal fires.

“The hustle and bustle of the holidays can dramatically increase your risk of having a fire,” said Fire Chief Kelly Serson. “All too often, these fires are started by unattended cooking and in many cases alcohol is involved.”

Smoking is another leading cause of fires during the holiday season. “Make sure smokers extinguish cigarettes in large deep ashtrays – not in plant pots which may contain peat moss or shredded bark that can easily ignite,” continued Chief Kelly Serson. “Ashes should be emptied in a metal container – not the garbage can – and put outside.”

The Hamilton Township Fire Department also is reminding everyone about the law requiring working smoke alarms on every storey of the home and outside all sleeping areas. Take a few minutes to test your smoke alarms and make sure everyone in the home knows exactly what to do if the smoke alarms sound in an emergency. Develop and practice a home escape plan with everyone in the home.

Enjoy a fire safe holiday season by following these tips:

- Stay in the kitchen when cooking. Cooking is a major cause of home fires, so don't leave the kitchen if there's something cooking on the stove. If a pot catches fire, don't try to move it. Cover the pot with a lid to smother the flames and turn off the burner.
- Keep things that can burn such as cooking utensils and paper towels a safe distance from the stove as they can easily ignite if they are too close.
- Keep an eye on anyone drinking and smoking in your household - make sure all cigarettes are properly extinguished and the stove is off before going to bed.
- Cigarettes can smolder among upholstered items for hours before igniting. Check sofas and chairs for cigarettes that may have fallen between the cushions. Provide large, deep ashtrays for smokers.

- Drink responsibly - excessive alcohol consumption is a contributing factor in many residential fires.
- Install and maintain working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms outside all sleeping areas of the home. Smoke alarms also are required on every storey. Failure to comply with the smoke and carbon monoxide alarm requirements can result in a ticket for \$360 or a fine of up to \$50,000 for individuals and \$100,000 for corporations.
- Develop and practice a home escape plan with everyone in the home.



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