



A Residential Fire Sprinkler System Would Have Saved This Family Grief and Their House. Queen's Park Needs To Act Now!

Fires kill nearly 100 Ontarians each year and injure many more, the overwhelming number at home. Despite mandatory smoke alarms and improved building construction there has not been a substantial reduction in this number in over a decade. The cost to the Ontario economy in health care expenses, property loss and personal impact is in the hundreds of millions of dollars. There is, however, a proven and cost-effective solution that can save lives and avoid the destruction pictured above – residential fire sprinklers.

The Ontario Building Code already requires fire sprinklers in places where we work, shop, dine and learn, to name a few. It is unfortunate that in the place where we should feel the safest, our home, we actually have the least protection. That is why we support Bill 2, the Home Fire Sprinkler Act and urge public hearings on this important piece of legislation. Bill 2 would require new homes, town homes, apartments and condominiums to have residential fire sprinklers installed. Over 220 jurisdictions have passed similar

legislation, including Vancouver that has required residential fire sprinklers for over 15 years. During this time there has not been a single accidental fire-related fatality where a properly installed and functioning residential fire sprinkler was present. Residential fire sprinklers use proven and reliable technology that will respond quickly to a fire, thereby offering seniors, the disabled and children additional time to escape. Sprinklers save lives, reduce property loss and can cut homeowner insurance premiums.

The cost of installing a residential fire sprinkler system in a new home is approximately 1 – 1.5% of the cost of construction. This is roughly the same as upgrading kitchen cabinets or floor coverings. Despite claims from some developers, there is no evidence that requiring the installation of residential fire sprinklers will have a negative impact on the housing industry.

For more than 25 years nearly a dozen Coroners' Inquests have recommended

changes to the Ontario Building Code to include residential fire sprinklers. As well, fire professionals have asked for these changes only to be turned down as a result of pressure from a well-financed homebuilders lobby.

Bill 2 has the support of the firefighting community, the fire safety industry, many large and small municipalities, contractors, seniors' organizations, the insurance industry and Ontarians right across the province.

It's time for Ontario to take the next step in fire safety. We can reduce the number of lives lost and save our health care and economy millions of dollars by adopting a simple piece of legislation. A strong and vigorous debate is in the public interest so that both sides of the issue can put forth their case. Public opinion research shows that home safety is a high priority for Ontarians and holding public hearings will allow Ontarians a chance to participate in this discussion.

It's time for Queen's Park to act now!



Residential Fire Sprinklers – Protecting What You Value Most

For more information please visit www.firesafeontario.org