# Sunday fire underscores importance of kitchen fire safety and working alarms

**Dec. 9, 2020 —** St. Catharines Fire Services is reminding residents to ensure they practice safe cooking practices after a weekend fire saw one resident transported to hospital.

On Sunday, fire crews were called to a fire at a Louth Street home around 4:50 p.m. By the times crews arrived smoke had filled the entirety of the house, including an attached apartment. While the fire was brought under control, the resident of the home was transported to hospital for possible smoke inhalation and a laceration.

Upon further investigation it was found that smoke and carbon monoxide alarms were not installed in the home.

Ontario law requires working smoke alarms on every storey of a home and outside all sleeping areas. The law also requires working carbon monoxide alarms outside sleeping areas in units where a fuel-burning appliance is installed or shares a common wall or floor with a service room containing such an appliance or an attached garage.

The owner of the home was only alerted to the fire after a neighbour noticed the fire and woke the owner, who had allegedly fallen asleep while cooking. The pair attempted to smother the fire, before the owner picked up the burning pot with oven mitts and took it outside.

“This resident is extremely lucky their neighbour was able to alert them, it’s situations like these that illustrate why working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are so important,” said Fire Service Chief Jeff McCormick, adding, “poor cooking safety is a common cause of fires, when in the kitchen residents should never leave cooking unattended, or risk injury by attempting to move a pot or pan after it has caught fire.”

Beyond being sure to not leave cooking unattended residents should also ensure no flammable items such as rags, plastic utensils or paper towel are placed near hot surfaces. If a pot does catch fire occupants should never try to move it, instead they should turn off the heat and cover the pot with a lid to extinguish the flames or focus on evacuation.

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