



FOR RELEASE
February 14, 2013

Yukon to be the first Canadian jurisdiction to mandate carbon monoxide detector use

WHITEHORSE—The Government of Yukon is set to table legislation this spring related to the use of oil-fired appliances in the territory, Community Services Minister Elaine Taylor announced.

"Over the past several months, government officials have been working on legislative and regulatory changes designed to increase safety levels related to the use of oil-fired appliances," Taylor said. "These changes will address a variety of areas and will make Yukon the first jurisdiction in Canada to mandate the installation of carbon monoxide detectors in all homes with fuel-burning appliances and/or attached garages."

Government began working on its regulatory changes following community consultations and a report issued by an oil-fired appliance working group last fall. Proposed changes will be further reviewed in light of new recommendations made during the recent coroner's inquest.

"Amending the Building Standards Act, Fire Prevention Act, and Electrical Protection Act will result in a number of changes, including requiring the use of a certified oil-burner mechanic when installing or modifying heating appliances," Taylor added.

"Regulations under the new Residential Landlord and Tenant Act (RLTA) are also being proposed that would require all fuel burning heating appliances in rental properties to be regularly serviced and those proposals will be part of the upcoming consultation on the RLTA's regulations."

In addition to legislative and regulatory changes, the Government of Yukon is set to expand its carbon monoxide (CO) public awareness campaign and to improve awareness of oil-fired appliance safety in the territory.

Efforts to legislate the use of carbon monoxide detectors in all homes with fuel-burning appliances and smoke detectors in all Yukon homes were recognized by the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation for Carbon Monoxide Education.

"The Yukon government deserves high praise for its leadership. These amendments will save lives and honour the legacy of the Rusk and McNamee families," John Gignac, executive director of the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation for Carbon Monoxide Education, said. "Smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are inexpensive peace of mind for families. Putting strict controls on the installation and modification of fuel-burning devices will go a long way to preventing carbon monoxide at the source."

Gignac, who lost four family members to carbon monoxide poisoning, is also supportive of the government's planned public awareness efforts.

"Helping people understand the sources of CO and symptoms to watch for is critical if lives are to be spared," Gignac said. "I know my niece Laurie is looking down right now, pleased to see these important steps the Yukon government is taking, and hoping others will do the same."

The government remains committed to raising public awareness related to the safe use of these appliances and to the awareness of homeowners around the use of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

"The government has undertaken a number of public awareness and training initiatives related to oil-fired appliances over the past several years, and we will continue to do more," Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation, and Education Minister Scott Kent said.

"Together through a combination of legislation, education, and homeowner diligence, we can reduce the likelihood that a tragedy, such as that which happened in Porter Creek, ever happens again."

-30-

Contact:

Matthew Grant
Cabinet Communications
867-393-6470
matthew.grant@gov.yk.ca

News Release #13-029



Stay up to date with the latest Yukon government news by subscribing to our RSS feed here: <http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/rss.html>. Or follow us on Twitter @yukongov.