



FOR RELEASE
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Yukon families to receive 200 carbon monoxide detectors

WHITEHORSE—The Government of Yukon has partnered with the City of Whitehorse, the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation and the Food Bank Society of Whitehorse to raise awareness with regard to carbon monoxide (CO) safety and the importance of having a detector in homes.

“The city’s fire department encourages all residents to ensure that their homes are equipped with working carbon monoxide detectors and smoke alarms,” Fire Chief Clive Sparks said. “By ensuring we’re prepared, we can keep our homes and families safe.”

As part of that effort, the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation is donating 200 carbon monoxide detectors. According to the foundation’s requirements, these detectors will be made available to lower income Yukon families, senior citizens and others who may not be in a position to purchase a unit for their homes.

The Food Bank Society of Whitehorse will distribute the detectors and will also place carbon monoxide safety information into the packages they prepare.

The Hawkins-Gignac Foundation is a charitable organization that promotes carbon monoxide education and raises funds to purchase carbon monoxide alarms for distribution to those in need. The foundation was established by John Gignac following the tragic death of his niece, her husband and two children.

“Carbon monoxide and smoke detectors save lives and we hope Yukoners will ensure their homes are equipped with both,” Yukon Fire Marshal Dennis Berry said. “I would like to thank the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation for its generous donation today.”

According to a recent national Home Safety Poll, 60 per cent of Canadians do not have a carbon monoxide detector in their home. The Yukon government encourages all Yukoners to ensure they install carbon monoxide detectors which are available at hardware stores and retail for \$20 to \$60. Detectors should be replaced every five to seven years.

Visit online for more information on carbon monoxide safety and the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation.

See backgrounder below.

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Backgrounder

About the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation

The Hawkins-Gignac Foundation was established by John Gignac following the tragic death of his niece, Laurie Hawkins, her husband Richard and their two children Cassie and Jordan from carbon monoxide poisoning in December 2008. Based in Ontario, the charitable foundation promotes carbon monoxide education and raises funds to purchase alarms to be distributed by fire departments to those families in need.

Here are some recommended ways to help protect your home from carbon monoxide:

- Have your heating systems and vents checked and cleaned by a licensed professional before winter sets in.
- Install at least one CSA-approved carbon monoxide alarm in your home, outside bedrooms. (One alarm per floor is recommended).
- Replace any carbon monoxide alarm that is five to seven years old and install new batteries at least once per year.

You need a carbon monoxide alarm if your home has a:

- Fireplace or wood stove
- Garage or carport
- Gas or oil furnace
- Gas range or water heater

According to a recent national home safety poll:

- 60 per cent of Canadians do not have a CO alarm
- 15 per cent believe CO alarms last indefinitely
- 18 per cent believe CO alarms are only needed if one has a gas furnace
- 44 per cent do not have their heating or other combustion systems checked annually
- 26 per cent do not know there is a need to replace CO alarms every five to seven years

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