

MasonryWorxTM
BRICK, BLOCK & STONE *Strength Over Time.*

***IMPROVING
FIRE SAFETY
AT HOME***



Improving Fire Safety at Home

According to Fire SAFE Ontario, 1 in 10 Canadians have experienced a home fire. While the cause of the fire may not always be in our control, how we choose to build our homes can keep us safe and minimize structural damage.

Balanced design is a four-part approach to fire safety that includes active (fire detection, suppression and education) and passive (compartmentalization) measures that a home-owner can take to protect their home and their family.

Fire detection is performed by smoke detectors. A warning from a smoke detector or alarm will provide you with extra time to take action against a fire if you are awake and can also wake you if you are sleeping so you have time to get out of the house. The Ontario Fire Code requires that all homes have working smoke alarms.

Fire suppression includes the use of sprinklers. Sprinklers are activated by fire and work to keep the flames under control until the firemen arrive. In high rise buildings, sprinklers are particularly effective in providing residents extra time to evacuate.

By **educating** ourselves and developing a plan for escaping our home we will be more

prepared should a fire occur. Annual inspections to make sure our smoke detectors are working properly are also very important.

Compartmentalization, or fire containment, limits the spread of fire and provides safe haven for occupants. Non-combustible interior and exterior masonry wall systems – built with brick, block and stone – can stop fire, and provide another level of safety should detection and suppression systems be compromised, impaired, or otherwise fail to perform.

“Recent news reports of devastating home fires remind us how important it is to ensure the fire safety of our homes and businesses,” says Paul Hargest, vice-president of MasonryWorx. “By using a balanced design approach to construction we are taking the necessary steps to minimize the damage fires can cause.”

Ontario has recognized masonry as a first defense against fire. The 2006 Ontario Building Code does not permit the use of firewall materials with a fire performance rating less than that of masonry. The Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC) also recognizes the superior fire-resistant qualities of masonry and typically offers discounted

insurance premiums to owners of masonry constructed homes.

For more information about the benefits of masonry, visit www.MasonryWorx.com.