



SMOKE ALARM INSTALLATION PROGRAM

S.A.F.E. FAMILY PROGRAM (SMOKE ALARMS FOR EVERY FAMILY)

A smoke alarm installation program implemented throughout Manitoba can make a difference by reducing injuries and/or deaths in a fire. Smoke alarms are the life-saving success story of the past 30 years. According to NFPA statistics, each year, three out of five home fire deaths result from fires in homes with either no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.

The Manitoba Office of the Fire Commissioner, Red River Mutual, Manitoba Firefighters Burn Fund and the Manitoba Association of Fire Chiefs are partnering to implement a province-wide smoke alarm installation program. The program will be identified as S.A.F.E. Family (Smoke Alarms For Every Family).

The approach to an installation program is simple. Fire department personnel and recruited volunteers across Manitoba will team up to install smoke alarms. By installing smoke alarms in homes, residents and communities will be safer.

Some smoke alarm facts:

- The risk of dying in a reported home fire is reduced by 50% in homes with working smoke alarms.
- Smoke alarms fail, most of the time, because of missing, disconnected or dead batteries.

The Office of the Fire Commissioner is developing a “planning and installation kit” for fire departments. It will be available for June 2015. The kit will contain all the components required to implement a successful installation program. Some of the highlighted steps include how to:

1. Organize a Planning Committee. A successful smoke alarm installation program requires more than just installing smoke alarms. The key to an efficient program is planning ahead and forming a committee of community leaders.
2. Establish goals and outcomes by targeting your population. Fire departments can target their whole community or they can identify their most vulnerable population, then, try to reach out block by block.
3. Identify high-risk residents in your community. The most at-risk groups include: young children, older adults, and people with disabilities, low-income communities, and new Canadians.
4. Solicit financial support and donations. This step will be covered by the partners but it is important to reach out to your own communities for any assistance they can provide.
5. Get the word out about your program. An effective smoke alarm installation program depends on a successful publicity plan. Spreading the word about your campaign will let people know you are going to be in your neighbourhood, and get people talking about smoke alarms and fire safety.
6. Recruit volunteers. The more volunteers you have, the more homes your team members will be able to visit. Volunteers that are recruited must be trustworthy and accountable.

7. Provide volunteers and fire service personnel with the necessary training, tools and materials.
8. Evaluate your program. Have completed survey forms and follow-up one year after the smoke alarms have been installed.

The installation program kit will be made available to all fire departments in Manitoba. Fire departments will have to fill in an application form outlining how they plan on implementing the program in their community and identify the number of families they plan on targeting. The program will be available extensively during 2015. Fire departments will be required to report all pertinent data on the survey installation forms. The Office of the Fire Commissioner, Red River Mutual and the Firefighters Burn Fund will evaluate the success of the program by analyzing data from the completed survey forms and by implementing a six month follow-up survey.

Red River Mutual and Manitoba Firefighters Burn Fund are designing the S.A.F.E. Family kit. They are organizing and managing the coordination of the kit contents. Some of the items included in the kit are:

- 10 year lithium battery operated smoke alarms
- General fire safety information
- Template for a home escape plan
- Liability release forms
- Installation survey forms

The Manitoba Association of Fire Chiefs is assisting with the implementation of the program throughout the province. The program will be announced at the Manitoba Association of Fire Chiefs conference in June.

The overall goal of Manitoba's S.A.F.E. Family program is to save lives by protecting every home with working smoke alarms and a practised fire escape plan. Ongoing evaluation is an essential component that will help to ensure the program is meeting its intended outcomes and continues to be effective, specific, relevant and measurable. In order to evaluate the program, appropriate data will be gathered and analyzed by the Office of the Fire Commissioner and Red River Mutual. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation will highlight areas of the program that need revision and indicate where additional efforts need to be focused. It will also help to ascertain the costs associated with the program and assist the funding partners to plan for the future. The evaluation data will help to streamline the program, modify outcomes, change activities or target a different client group. Working together, we will make Manitoba a safer place to live.