

## **Fire Prevention Canada Launches *Operation En Garde***

### **Information program aims to reduce loss of life**

Fire Prevention Canada (FIPRECAN), the national voice of fire safety and education, today launched *Operation En Garde*, a new proactive information program, to help reduce the number of deaths in Canada. On average, fire kills eight Canadians every week. Residential property fires account for 40% of all fires and a staggering 73% of all fire deaths. In 2007, 22 fire fighters lost their lives battling fires. Two FIPRECAN spokespersons will now be available to respond to media inquiries following fatal residential fires across Canada to address fire prevention issues.

Mr. Frank Albert is the official spokesperson for French media and Mr. E. David Hodgins is the official spokesperson for English media.

“We want to seize upon teachable moments to make Canadians aware of the simple things they can do to prevent disaster from occurring in their homes. Understandably residents will be more receptive to implementing preventative measures following fatal fire incidents in their neighbourhoods. The aim, of course, is to prevent the loss of life,” noted David Hodgins.

“Our longstanding relationships with fire departments nationwide and our resources provide the necessary tools to be able to offer extensive practical information on fire prevention education. We are counting on the media to disseminate these life-saving messages,” said Frank Albert.

#### **Official Spokespersons**

**David Hodgins** has an extensive background in emergency management and fire services. He was appointed Managing Director of the newly created Alberta Emergency Management Agency in May 2007. Prior to joining the Alberta Government, Mr. Hodgins served as an Assistant Deputy Minister and B.C.’s Fire Commissioner.

Mr. Hodgins is a graduate of the University of Alberta Public Administration Program and Certified as an Emergency Manager (CEM) in 1994. His formal education is complemented by 31 years of experience in emergency management and fire services in Manitoba, Ontario, B.C. and Alberta.

Mr. Hodgins supports Public Safety Canada as a Service Coach assisting the Canadian Emergency Management College. He is also a regular contributing author, writing on the subject of leadership for Firefighting in Canada.

**Frank Albert** has been involved in crisis and emergency management, and fire services for over 30 years. For the last 15 years, he has been teaching Fire Safety Management, strategy and tactic courses and incident command to fire officers at many of Quebec’s Colleges. He has reviewed and implemented laws, by-laws, regulations, codes and standards surrounding fire prevention management.

Mr. Albert is the former Director of the City of Cowansville Fire Department. Due to his program on auxiliaries, the City of Cowansville was awarded the Merit Ovation Prize from the Union of Municipalities of Quebec for innovation in *Public Security Auxiliaries*. Prior to this, he served as a Division Chief for the island-wide Montreal Fire Department as well as the Director of the City of Cote Saint Luc Fire Department. Mr. Albert was also the recipient of the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) designation.

For information on FIPRECAN or for media wishing to arrange an interview with a FIPRECAN spokesperson, please contact Shirley Gallant (613) 749-3844 - [info@fiprecan.ca](mailto:info@fiprecan.ca), or visit FIPRECAN's newly revamped web site: [www.fiprecan.ca](http://www.fiprecan.ca).

#### **Fire Prevention Canada (FIPRECAN) profile**

Fire Prevention Canada's mission is to increase the awareness of fire prevention and safety through direct education of the public. The organization's goal is to reduce the number of mostly preventable residential fires across this country, many of which are fatal. The Council of Canadian Fire Marshals and Fire Commissioners is a member of Fire Prevention Canada and helps manage its affairs. FIPRECAN also creates a yearly Fire Prevention Week Kit and organizes events surrounding Fire Prevention Week, which takes place this year from October 4<sup>th</sup> to October 10<sup>th</sup>.

Fire Prevention Canada is a registered charity and is proud of the patronage of Her Excellency, the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada.

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