

Safety News from Northport Fire Department

By Jim Mahoney

Change Clocks – Change Batteries ?

Every fall, citizens across our great nation change their clocks as they revert to standard time from daylight savings time. Safety News along with numerous fire departments and fire safety and prevention groups has long advocated for everyone to change their batteries in their smoke detectors when changing their clocks (in the spring too). Statistics provided by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) once again show an increased use of smoke detectors in residential buildings. Unfortunately, in approximately 15% of these homes, the batteries are either missing or dead. In these very homes over 80% of fire fatalities occur. This is a needless loss of life for approximately 3000 Americans each year. Even with the hurricane and nor'easter batteries are available for smoke detectors. Adults should anticipate the twice a year change and purchase batteries in advance of clock change.

The second component of home fire safety is having a fire evacuation plan in place. It should be practiced by all members residing in the home. Prior practice will enable the entire family to know exactly how to quickly and safely get out of their home. Obstacles to a safe exit can be removed prior to a true emergency. The Huntington Fire Marshal's Office, along with all of the Township fire departments, promotes an annual EDITH drill (Exit Drill in the Home) every October. The fire sirens sound at 7:00 PM and signal the start of the drill. If you missed the EDITH drill, schedule and conduct one in your home as soon as possible.

All schools which children attend for a minimum of 180 days are required to have 12 fire drills from September through June. There is a very low incidence of fires in these buildings. Most fires occur in residential buildings and during the night hours when most people are sleeping. If fire does occur in your home YOU SHOULD HAVE EARLY NOTIFICATION FROM WORKING SMOKE ALARMS AND A PREPLANNED AND PRACTICED EVACUATION PLAN IN PLACE.

Poster Contest Winner

Each year, for the last 39 years, the Northport Fire Department has conducted a fire safety poster contest at our local elementary schools. The awards are presented to the winners at the conclusion of our annual open house at fire headquarters.

This year was a first for the winners. Coletta Caruso a first grader at Ocean Avenue School won both her grade level award and the best in school award. By a very narrow margin, Norwood Avenue School retained the plaque for having the best student participation percentage wise. A list of winners and honorable mentions for all grade levels is listed below.

2012 Fire Prevention Poster Contest

Ocean Avenue

Winner Best in School: Coletta Caruso

Grade 1 Winner: Coletta Caruso

Honorable Mention: Cameron Miles, Vinny O'Brien-Curcie, Shannon Byrne

Grade 2 Winner: Marryn Gruhn

Honorable Mention: Nicholas Crafa, Mairead Gayer, Kaitlyn Foster, Ethan Makaw

Grade 3 Winner: Karl Leonard

Honorable Mention: Abby Miles, Mason Vargas, Devon Gilmore, Quinn O'Brien-Curcie

Grade 4 Winner: Riley Gayer

Honorable Mention: Emily Berger, Ryan Bolger, Athena Barton, Emily Tague

Grade 5 Winner: Nicole Parziale

Honorable Mention: Lauren Mateyunas, Olivia Caulfield, Nick Butler, Sabrina Bluemel

Norwood Avenue

Winner Best in School: Lisa Kovacs

Grade 1 Winner: Chasen Mulholland

Honorable Mention: Victor Frederick, Mary Romans, Lucas Gold, Sophia Suriano

Grade 2 Winner: Dante Rodrigues

Honorable Mention: Joseph Rini, Natalie McKenna, Sarah Belmonte, Aidan Connolly

Grade 3 Winner: Lisa Kovacs

Honorable Mention: Franklin Noonan, Avery Orofino, Holly Tilton, Kelly Holden

Grade 4 Winner: Elias Giuliano

Honorable Mention: Austin Kingsley, Ryan Pupilla, Camden Burke, Scott Stehlik

Grade 5 Winner: Caroline Holden

Honorable Mention: Michael Cappadona, Michala Pedersen, Heather Kirchner, Alexis McAllister

Baby Sitter Class

The Northport Fire Department completed its 38th consecutive annual baby sitter course last month. Safety News congratulates all of the youngsters who registered and completed the course. The October 25th issue of **The Observer** carried a picture story of the program. Safety News publically thanks Chief Chris Hughes for welcoming these students to the first class and presenting them with their certificates at the third and final class. Safety News also gratefully acknowledges the three course instructors Northport Police Officer Peter Howard who is a first year instructor, Ms Stacey Gregoire a mother and armed forces veteran who was back for a second year of instruction and Ex-Captain Bill Marsden of Northport Fire Department who is a 37 year instructor. As a result of their instruction over 30 Northport youngsters are now better able to take care of themselves and the children entrusted to their care. Many thanks.

Teen and Senior Safe Driving

The AAA Club of New York has made available two online tools that can benefit and improve the safe driving of both young people and older adults. The November/December 2012 issue of the New York AAA provides the following information;

www.AAA.com/teens is AAA's guide to teen driving safety with local driving lawas, parent-teen driving agreements and a sample driving test. The AAA states nearly 6000 teens are killed annually while driving.

For the senior citizens, Rodawise RX details common side effects of prescription and over-the-counter medications. With one of five drivers using five or more prescriptions daily, senior drivers should be aware of medication interactions. Roadwise RX is available at no cost at www.AAA.com/RoadwiseRX