



# **TOWN OF CANTON VOLUNTEER Fire & EMS Department**

*Valuing Life...at a Moment's Notice*



## ***In Response.....***

***From the Desk of Fire & EMS Chief Rich Hutchings***

*Town of Canton Volunteer Fire & EMS Department*

*True Story:* It's 4:30 in the morning when a Canton resident decides to enjoy the quiet of the early morning in his hot tub out in back of the house. On his way outside, he places wood in the fireplace and lights it to "take the chill off." Minutes later, smoke alarms in the house begin screaming. With his wife asleep in the bedroom upstairs, he runs through the back door and finds fire curling out the front of the fireplace and licking at the mantle. As smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) poison the air in the house, he rescues his wife and they make it out of the house alive.

*In Response* to winter's coming transition into spring, with the last fires of the season being enjoyed, I encourage everyone to add the following life safety tasks onto their annual spring cleaning list to keep your families safe throughout the year:

### *Refresh Your Chimney*

Highly combustible creosote builds up in chimneys after just one burning season. Therefore, the National Fire Protection Association recommends that your chimney, fireplace and vent be inspected once per year. Spring, after the last fire of the season, is the perfect time to address any recommended cleaning or repairs.

### *Be Safe....Replace Batteries in Smoke/CO Alarms*

Carbon monoxide is odorless and colorless so you can't see it coming. Unless, you have a CO alarm. On Daylight Saving Time, March 14<sup>th</sup>, be safe and replace batteries in all smoke/CO alarms. Smoke/CO alarms should be installed near bedrooms on each floor of your home and tested monthly. If an alarm is over 10 years old, it's time for a new one.

As part of Canton Volunteer Fire & EMS Department's ongoing partnership with the community, each month this column will suggest ways to empower you in your own safety, and ultimately assist volunteer fire and EMS personnel should we ever have to respond to an emergency in your life.

Until then..... be safe.