MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Working Carbon Monoxide Alarms Now Required in Homes

Muskoka – April 10, 2015 – The **Muskoka Association of Fire Chiefs** would like to remind residents that as of April 15, 2015, you must have carbon monoxide (CO) alarms installed in your home if you have a fuel-burning appliance, a fireplace or an attached garage.

“If your home has a fuel-burning appliance, a fireplace or an attached garage, you must have a working CO alarm adjacent to each sleeping area of the home,” said **Huntsville/Lake of Bays Fire Chief Stephen Hernen**. ” Fuel-burning appliances can include furnaces, hot water heaters, gas or wood fireplaces, portable fuel-burning heaters and generators, barbeques, stoves and vehicles.

Homeowners and owners of residential buildings that contain **no more than six suites** must be in compliance with the law as of **April 15, 2015**. Owners of residential buildings with more than six suites have until October 15, 2015 to comply.

The Muskoka Fire Prevention Officers will be enforcing the new law. Failure to install or maintain a CO alarm could result in a fine of $360 for landlords and building owners. Tenants can also receive a similar fine for not notifying a landlord or owner that a carbon monoxide alarm is not functioning or for tampering with an alarm.

“In Ontario, more than 80% of injuries and deaths from CO occur in the home,” said **Bracebridge Fire Chief Murray Medley**. “We want to make sure everyone is safe from CO. Install CO alarms, and do everything you can to prevent CO in your home in the first place.”

What is CO?

- CO is known as the silent killer because it is an invisible, tasteless and odourless gas that can be deadly.
- CO is produced when fuels such as propane, gasoline, natural gas, heating oil or wood do not burn completely in fuel-burning appliances and devices such as furnaces, gas or wood fireplaces, hot water heaters, stoves, barbeques, portable fuel-burning heaters and generators and vehicles.

Prevent CO in your home:

- Ensure all fuel-burning appliances in your home are inspected annually. Visit COSafety.ca to find a registered contractor near you.
- Check that all outside appliance vents are not blocked.
- Never use a portable fuel-burning appliance inside (i.e. barbeques, portable heaters and generators).

Know the symptoms of CO:

- Exposure to CO can cause flu-like symptoms such as headaches, nausea, dizziness, as well as confusion, drowsiness, loss of consciousness and death.
- **If your CO alarm sounds, and you or other occupants suffer from symptoms of CO poisoning, get everyone out of the home immediately. Then call** 9-1-1 or your local emergency services number from outside the building.
- **If your CO alarm sounds, and no one is suffering from symptoms of CO poisoning, c**heck to see if the battery needs replacing, or the alarm has reached its "end-of-life" before calling 9-1-1.

Know the sound of your CO alarm:

- Your CO alarm sounds different than your smoke alarm. Test both alarms monthly and make sure everyone in your home knows the difference between the two alarm sounds.
- Don't be confused by the sound of your CO alarm's low-battery warning. Follow your CO alarm manufacturer's instructions so you know the difference between the low-battery warning, the "end-of-life" warning, and the alarm alerting you to the presence of CO in your home.

For more CO safety tips, visit ontario.ca/firemarshal and COsafety.ca.

-30-

For more information, contact:

Mike Vadlja, Fire Prevention Officer, Huntsville/Lake of Bays Fire Department
fire.inspector@huntsville.ca or 705-789-5201 Ext. 3604

Mike Peake, Fire Prevention Officer, Bracebridge Fire Department
fpo@bracebridgefire.com or 705-645-8258 Ext. 203

Robert King, Fire Prevention Officer, Gravenhurst Fire Department
rking@gravenhurst.ca or 705-687-3414 Ext. 223

Lindsay Matthews, Fire Prevention Officer, Georgian Bay Fire Department
lmatthews@gbtownship.ca or 800-567-0197 Ext. 249

Douglas Holland, Fire Prevention Officer, Muskoka Lakes Fire Department
dholland@muskokalakes.ca or 705-765-3156 Ext. 282