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13th ANNUAL BURN AWARENESS WEEK **Parksville Volunteer Fire Department**

Parksville, BC - The Province of British Columbia has proclaimed by Order in Council that the week of February 1 to 7, 2009, be designated as "Burn Awareness Week." Burn Awareness Week provides an opportunity for fire and life safety educators to share a common burn awareness and prevention message in our communities.

Chief Doug Banks, Parksville Volunteer Fire Department advises, "Burns are a significant cause of death in our province and each year many suffer from these terrible injuries. We hope that by increasing awareness, this will contribute to reducing burn injuries and deaths."

Burn Awareness Week is a coast-to-coast campaign in Canada and the USA dedicated to informing the general public of the seriousness of the burn problem. The BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn Fund's 13th Annual Burn Awareness Week is the first week of February and begins a year-round campaign intended to promote awareness of burn care facilities, provide information and materials on a variety of subjects relating to burn awareness, as well as raising awareness of the burn problem.

The fire safety program, available online at www.burnfund.org, is designed to teach kids to be responsible for their own safety, and help make their families aware of potentially harmful situations.

Poster Contest

To reach the young children in our province, the BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn Fund has made available an excellent Burn Awareness Week Education Kit intended for elementary school aged children. The kit is available at www.burnfund.org and highlights a province wide poster contest. Students are invited to enter the contest; every entrant wins a participation prize and fifty students can win money for their elementary school or BC Ministry of Education sanctioned distance education facility. There are seven regional prizes to be awarded, including a \$1,000 grand prize and six \$500 regional prizes. Regions are the Lower Mainland (three winners), Vancouver Island, Kootenays, Northern British Columbia and the Okanagan (one winner for each area). Forty-three students win runner-up prizes of \$50 each for their school or distance education facility. Complete prize details, rules and regulations are listed on-line at www.burnfund.org/BAW.

The Burn Hazard

The majority of parents are not aware of the scald and burn hazards in their homes. A survey by Safe Kids Canada found the 70% of Canadian parents did not know that the most common cause of burn injuries to children is scalds from hot liquids, such as spilled hot drinks and hot tap water, rather than fire.

“Most adults realize that children need to be kept safe from fire or hot objects like the stove, but they do not realize that hot liquids are just as dangerous,” says Fire Chief Doug Banks. “Hot liquids burn just like fire.”

Each year an estimated 9,000 children in Canada visit hospital emergency room for burns, and almost half of these have suffered scalds from hot liquids. Close to 1,000 Canadian children are hospitalized each year for severe scalds and burns and approximately 50% of these children are hospitalized for scalds alone. Scalds from hot tap water are often the most severe. Children’s skin is thinner and more sensitive. A child’s skin burns four times more quickly and more deeply than an adult’s skin at the same temperature. Most home hot water heaters in Canada are set at 60° Celsius. At this temperature, a child’s skin can burn in just one second.

About the Burn Fund

A registered charity established in 1978 by the BC Professional Fire Fighters Association, the Burn Fund provides life saving, life supporting, and life enriching services to the people in British Columbia. More than 3,600 professional fire fighters from fifty communities in British Columbia and the Yukon are building the Burn Fund's vision. They dedicate their time and skills to support burn survivors and increase the public's knowledge about fire and burn safety issues through the work the Burn Fund does with its Burn Awareness, Research and Prevention Programs.

For more information:

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