



Media Release

For Immediate Release

City of Port Colborne Fire Chief recipient of Fire Chief of the Year Award

Port Colborne, ON (April 26, 2018) – Port Colborne Fire & Emergency Services Chief Thomas B. Cartwright is the recipient of the Ontario Municipal Fire Prevention Officers Association (OMFPOA) Fire Chief of the Year Award. This award recognizes the significant contributions made by a Fire Chief to the prevention of fire and public education in the community.

Since the fatal fire on December 14, 2016, Chief Cartwright has been a strong voice in the Province, advocating that fire services have to change to a pro-active approach to fire safety with the spotlight on prevention. Chief Cartwright has prescribed that all members of Port Colborne Fire & Emergency Services increase prevention activities, with multiple initiatives created including a joint promotion on public education in Niagara Region.

“Chief Cartwright has a distinguished career in the fire service, but most recently, after the fatal fire in December 2016, he has led incredible work on fire prevention in the city to ensure our residents are safe,” said Scott Luey, Chief Administrative Officer. “We are fortunate in Port Colborne to have Chief Cartwright’s leadership advocating for fire prevention, alongside fire department personnel, including Deputy Chief, Mike Bendia, Fire Prevention Officer, Scott Lawson, Executive Assistant Catherine Moyer, and Corporate Communications Officer, Michelle Cuthbert”.

Some of the fire prevention and public education initiatives Chief Cartwright and Port Colborne Fire & Emergency Services have spearheaded, include:

- May 2016, started an in-service inspection program after putting suppression staff through on-line training with Fire Wise Consulting. 46 multi-residential buildings were inspected between May and December 2016.
- June 2016, started utilizing volunteer fire fighters for door-to-door smoke alarm campaign in rural areas of Port Colborne.
- January 2017, donation program to subsidize smoke alarms for lower income families.
- February 2017, school poster competition promoting fire safety. Posters submitted by schools voted on by citizens on Facebook; overwhelming response. Some schools added fire safety to the curriculum.
- March 2017, utilizing full time fire fighters for door-to-door smoke alarm campaign in urban areas of Port Colborne. Fire fighters are assigned to ensure 25 homes are checked per week.
- Leveraging social media as a means of communicating the department’s involvement in the community as well as a fire safety message.
- Participated in Swing into Summer Safety, Safe at Home, and 12 Days of Christmas campaigns from FMPSC.
- Encouraged community partners to host fundraisers to assist in funding several of the fire prevention initiatives, including the Italian Hall and Tim Horton’s Smile Cookie campaign.

Chief Cartwright will accept the award at the OMFPOA Chapter 8 62nd Annual Training and Educational Symposium on Wednesday, June 13, 2018 at Caesars Windsor, Windsor Ontario.

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About City of Port Colborne

Located on the south coast of the scenic Niagara Region, Niagara's Port of Call has found the perfect balance – successful industrial and commercial sectors, comfortable and scenic residential areas, white sand beaches, unique culinary choices, the world class Sugarloaf Marina, fishing, golfing, trails, shopping districts along the historic Welland Canal and an energized festival and entertainment scene that includes live theatre – truly a community that adds to the overall Niagara Experience.

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