

CASA STATEMENT: Tragic Fire in L'Isle-Verte, Quebec

On the morning of Thursday, January 23rd Canadians awoke to hear the horrific details of a tragic multi-fatal fire in L'Isle-Verte, Quebec. On behalf of the Canadian Automatic Sprinkler Association I would like to offer my sympathy and condolences to all the families and the community of L'Isle-Verte who have experienced such a tragic loss.

As more details and information about this tragic fire are released, we now know that 10 people been confirmed killed, with another 22 persons missing and presumed dead. Many media outlets have reported that the fire took place in a type of Retirement Home or Care Facility with all the residents living at the facility requiring different levels of care. It has been reported that many of the residents are non-ambulatory and require assistance by staff to move and support daily functions. Many media outlets have reported that the facility was originally built in 1997, and this portion of the building was not protected with a Residential Sprinkler System. In 2002, an addition on the building was constructed, with approximately another 20 to 30 beds, bringing a total number of beds to approximately 55 to 60. Many media outlets have reported that this new addition in 2002 was constructed with a Residential Sprinkler System. To date there has been no official news or statements from the Sûreté du Québec provincial police or the Quebec Government on the details of the fire.

During the time period immediately following this tragic fire, CASA President, John Galt, and other staff conducted over two dozen media interviews with different media outlets across Canada from January 23rd and into the weekend. President John Galt conducted a TV interview with CBC National News, CTV National News, Global National News, including a live TV interview with CHCH conducted at Queens Park. Countless other types of radio and TV interviews were conducted across Canada, ranging from Vancouver, Winnipeg, Montreal, and Halifax. During this timeframe CASA utilized our CASAFS twitter page to provide information and updates on this tragic fire. You can view our twitter page at <https://twitter.com/CASAFS>

During this timeframe CASA staff also had multiple discussions with CASA members, and other industry supporters such as the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs, Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs, National Fire Protection Association, Canadian Codes Centre, Office of the Ontario Fire Marshal, Canadian Association of Retired Persons, and others to discuss the current landscape on the retrofit legislation for Care Facilities across Canada. During these interviews and discussions CASA staff expressed the need for all existing Care Facilities and Retirement Homes to be retrofitted with Residential Sprinkler Systems, and the need for the National Fire Code to adopt these minimum requirements. Please note that throughout all these discussions, the general issue of fire sprinklers being installed in one and two family dwellings was discussed, as can be seen from footage of John Galt's home.

CASA will continue to keep you updated on the events of this horrific and tragic fire, and we will continue to lobby and push for the retrofit of all existing Care Facilities and Retirement Homes to be equipped with Residential Sprinkler Systems. For the most current information please visit our CASA Twitter page at <https://twitter.com/CASAFS>

For more information or if you have questions regarding the current status of your Provincial Building Code or Fire Code please contact me directly at mosburn@casa-fs.org or 905-477-2270 .

Please view the links below for some of the media attention that CASA participated with:

<http://www.cbc.ca/player/News/Canada/Montreal/ID/2432243474/>

Please click on January 23, 2013 for the CTV National News with President John Galt at the following link:

<http://www.ctvnews.ca/ctv-national-news>

<http://globalnews.ca/news/1103945/call-for-end-to-patchwork-safety-rules-for-seniors-homes-across-canada/>

<http://knlive.ctvnews.ca/deadly-quebec-blaze-raising-questions-about-sprinkler-regulations-1.1653734>

Sincerely,

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