

**Ministry of  
Community Safety and  
Correctional Services**

Office of the  
Fire Marshal

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**Ministère de la  
Sécurité communautaire et  
des Services correctionnels**

Bureau du  
commissaire des incendies

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June 26, 2009

Mr. Don Kinsley  
Chair – Durham Deaf Accessibility Committee  
13-575 Thornton Road North  
Oshawa ON L1J 8L5

Dear Mr. Kinsley:

Thank you for your letter expressing disappointment and concern with regards to the Office of the Fire Marshal's lack of concern and action regarding the fire safety of the deaf, deafened and the hard of hearing community.

The Office of the Fire Marshal and the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services are not funded to provide financial assistance for the purchase of smoke alarms that have features suited specifically to the special needs of the deaf, deafened or hard of hearing. While I understand your concerns regarding funding assistance, that is beyond the scope of the Ministry. I would encourage you to continue to approach the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to change the criteria for their Assistive Devices Program.

The safety of all Ontario's citizens is important, including the fire safety of Ontario's deaf, deafened and hard of hearing community. Currently the Ontario Fire Code does not require the installation of additional smoke alarms that have features suited specifically to the special needs of the deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.

I would like to meet with you and representatives of the Durham Deaf Accessibility Committee and the Ontario Association of the Deaf to discuss your concerns with regards to increasing the public fire safety of the deaf, deafened and hard of hearing community.

Please contact my Office to arrange for a meeting discuss your concerns and potential resolutions. You can reach my office at 416 325-3101.

I trust you will find this information helpful.

Sincerely,

Patrick R. Burke  
Fire Marshal of Ontario

c.c. Margarita Longenecker