Protecting what matters to you

Property Brothers Drew & Jonathan Scott speak about keeping your home and family safe.

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Securing your home

The holiday season is a busy time of year for many, especially for those looking to make a profit. Thieves who target residential homes are looking for valuable items that can be easily sold. However, no matter the time of year, break-ins are a reality.

While the prevalence of police-reported crimes continues to decrease in Canada, in 2011 break-ins were one of the most common forms of property crime in Canada. Police reported over 181,200 break-ins, with more than 6 in 10 (63 percent) of break-ins occurring in residential areas. Installing a security system in your home is your best option to ensuring your safety and security.

Who should you turn to?

When one chooses to outfit their home with a security system, a number of questions often arise. What steps should I take to find an alarm system? How can I reduce the risk of false alarms? Will my alarm system be compatible with new technologies? Keeping your home safe and secure begins with knowing who to turn to.

Security professionals play an important role in your home protection plan. The Canadian Security Association (CANASA) represents more than 1300 security organizations across Canada, including Canadian Accredited Security Contractor (CASC) Companies, monitoring companies, and consultants.

Choosing the system that’s right for you

Your security system should be tailored to meet both your specific security needs and your budget. Ensure that the security company visits your home to perform a site inspection and security audit before you commit to any purchases. The company should provide you with an evaluation of your premises, and explain how you can improve your home’s security beyond the addition of an electronic alarm system.

When choosing an alarm company, be sure to consult a minimum of three alarm companies. When comparing companies, be sure to compare the number and types of products to be installed. If there is a discrepancy, make sure you understand the difference between the security systems offered. Lastly, find out how long the security company has been in business, and ask to see evidence of the company’s expertise and employee training.

The spectre of false alarms

Once you have installed an alarm system, many homeowners often deal with false alarms, something that is entirely preventable. Ensuring that your alarm system is easily accessible from the exit point and the arming delay is set for a reasonable period allow you with enough time to exit your household before the system arms.

Alongside this, requesting annual maintenance inspections to ensure your security system is performing properly and keeping your alarm monitoring station’s “call list” updated will make it easier for you and your monitoring station to ensure your safety.

Keeping you and your family safe this holiday season and year round begins with taking the right precautionary steps. This report aims to provide you with the tips, tricks, and tools to ensure that you sleep soundly in your home.

To learn more about CANASA and find a security professional near you, visit canasa.org.

JF Champagne, executive director
Canadian Security Association (CANASA)
Drew and Jonathan Scott, do you think real estate is a breeding ground for crime?

Jonathan: A home is a sort of castle. You hand over very personal information to strangers. Sometimes this has caused them to act.

Kristen Gane: A home should be a place where you feel safe and secure, but that's not always the case.

Jonathan: You can take simple steps to prevent your home from being a target.

Kristen Gane: Whether you're thinking of buying or selling, make sure you have quality locks on the front, can people see in easily? It must be well-lit, properly lit. It has to be the best representative of the house from the outside. It has to be the best representative of the house from the inside.

Kristen Gane: What makes you passionate about home safety?

Drew & Jonathan Scott, Co-hosts of Property Brothers Buying and Selling

Drew: Caring for our young children is what we love about this show. We believe in creating a warm, safe and secure environment for everyone in the home. We want to inspire people to make their homes a place where they can feel comfortable and secure.

Kristen Gane: Drew and Jonathan Scott have been promoting safe homes and security through various media channels over the past few years. They have been running seminars on safety and security for all age groups and have written several books on the subject.

Kristen Gane: What are the top safety concerns that homeowners should be proactive about?

To SECuriNG your VIew

Kristen Gane: There are many, but we would suggest these:

- Solid foundation—Look for firming, cracks in foundation and set- ting. These should be addressed early on to prevent further problems.

- Moisture—Mildew, moisture—this can cause warping walls, con-

- Cigarettes—Talk to children about the dangers of smoking and the health risks associated with it.

- Drowning

- When babies or toddlers are in the bath, always stay very close by.

- Drowners were usually caused by hot liquids or tap water. Small children can wash their head down the drain or throw themselves into a hot bath. Keep your hot water taps at no more than 40°C to prevent scald or hot water burns.

- Fires

- Don’t leave anything unattended near fire or in front of a fireplace. Keep your house well-ventilated. Check your fireplace or wood stove regularly. Keep your chimney clean and smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

- Carbon monoxide detectors

- These devices are designed to protect against carbon monoxide, a colorless, odorless, and potentially deadly gas.

- Install carbon monoxide detectors on every level of the home and in each sleeping area. These devices should be installed 5 to 10 feet away from cooking appliances, and in the bedroom.

- Dangers

- Fireplacess

- Keep a fire extinguisher handy and know how to use it.

- Dents

- Dents on the front can be easily fixed.

- Dents on the sides can be a lot more difficult to repair.

- Keep children and pets away from hot surfaces.

- Dents

- Dents can be a very real problem for homeowners.

- Dents

- Dents can be caused by a variety of factors, including

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**Question:** False alarms lower the likelihood of a police response to your emergency, how can you limit false alarms so you never cry wolf?

**Answer:** Picking an alarm company with an enhanced call verification system and taking proactive steps will help you to reduce false alarms.

1. **Understand your alarm system:** Knowing how to properly operate and maintain your security system is your best tool. Ask your alarm installer to train you and other users when your system is being installed. Often, it is other users who are unfamiliar with the system that trigger false alarms. By ensuring that all users know both the passcode for your system and your monitoring station’s phone number in case the alarm is accidentally set off, you can minimize the risk of a substandard environment.

2. **Monitor your monitoring station’s “call list”** Monitoring stations can be proactive in determining if emergency response teams should be dispatched to your home in the case of an alarm, if they have the correct contact information. Ask your monitoring station to inform you of any changes to your monitoring station’s “call list.”

3. **Undergo Enhanced Call Verification (ECV):** Enhanced Call Verification (ECV) for security systems can help to reduce false dispatches. A monitoring station instructed to use ECV will try to get in touch with two or more contacts to confirm an alarm’s validity before issuing a first responder dispatch. According to the False Alarm Reduction Association (FARA), communities that require ECV have seen emergency response to false alarms reduced by 30 to 50 percent.

4. **Schedule an annual inspection of your alarm:** Request annual maintenance inspections for your security system to ensure proper performance. Also, ask your alarm installer to replace your system’s battery every three to five years. This proactive maintenance will help you to lower your risk of triggering false alarms.
The Home Depot Canada offers new smoke and carbon monoxide alarms that are smarter and last longer.

Canada’s leading smoke alarm company and the country’s leading big box hardware retailer have teamed up to simplify home safety.

Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms silently go about their business day in and day out. But they don’t last forever — all alarms wear out, just like most other household devices.

When it comes time to replace them, the rule is: replace smoke alarms every 10 years and CO alarms every 7 years. But what if you have purchased a combination alarm that offers protection from both smoke and carbon monoxide in the same model? What is the replacement rule then?

Intelligent alarms

Alarm market leader Kidde Canada has recently introduced two advanced combination smoke and CO alarms – a Canadian first! Available exclusively at The Home Depot, these new “intelligent” combination alarms react more quickly to real fires while at the same time better differentiating between false alarms and the real thing. One unit is battery powered, the other is hardwired with a battery backup in case of a power outage.

These new advanced combination alarms take direct aim at a major consumer complaint of all alarms — they go off too easily if you burn the toast or have a shower that throws off too much steam. They also solve the replacement issue that used to exist with combination smoke and carbon monoxide alarms: the CO sensors in these new alarms are the first in Canada to be certified to last 10 years… the same as smoke alarms.

“Innovations that make alarms smarter, less intrusive, and last over 40 percent longer is why Kidde remains the brand Canadians choose most,” says Carol Heller, a home safety specialist with the company. “When it comes to protecting your family, the best technology is the best investment you can make.”

Learn more about these new combination alarms and other safety devices at www.homedepot.ca.

SOURCE: The Home Depot Canada

canada’s largest smoke alarm donation

Len Garis, Fire Chief, Surrey BC and Shirley Bond, BC’s Minister of Justice and Attorney General, helped to acknowledge Canada’s largest-ever smoke alarm donation in support of a provincial fire safety campaign that aims to put a working smoke alarm in every BC residence. Kidde Canada, the country’s leading manufacturer of alarms, donated 5,000 smoke alarms to help kick-off the campaign, bringing the total donation to 85,000 smoke alarms for BC residents including First Nations and Food Bank recipients.

Photo: safeathome.ca

INCREASING HOME SAFETY

A KIDDE CANADA EDUCATIONAL FEATURE

Think you know about fire and carbon monoxide safety? Take this short home safety quiz to test your knowledge!

Smoke and CO alarms last forever whether hardwired, plug in or battery powered
T

CO alarm must be installed on the ceiling, like smoke alarms
T

There are two types of smoke alarms, each with different sensing technology
T

There is dangerous radioactive material in smoke alarms
T

It is illegal to throw out a smoke or CO alarm into the regular garbage
T

Having working smoke alarms increases your chance of escaping a fire by 50 percent
T

On average, you have under three minutes to escape a fire before it reaches ‘flashover’
T

Answers on page 6

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CHOOSING CANADA’S #1 HOME SAFETY BRAND

WORRY-FREE SAFETY!

Best selection and features, including:

- HEAR THE DANGER: Canada’s only “talking” combination carbon monoxide/smoke alarm
- SIMPLE SILENCE: Canada’s only smoke alarms with dedicated “mute control” for false alarms
- SEE THE DANGER: Canada’s only digital “continuous display” carbon monoxide alarm

A CANADIAN FIRST: Canada’s only combination carbon monoxide/smoke alarm certified to last a full 10 YEARS! True peace of mind.

REMEMBER TO REPLACE...

Smoke alarms after 10 years
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Available at hardware stores everywhere. Visit saveathome.ca for your special mail-in rebate!
Simple steps that will keep your family safe at home

For most Canadians, home is the #1 cause of carbon monoxide and smoke alarms. But don’t let that happen to you. Read on to learn how to protect your family from carbon monoxide and fire.

Carbon monoxide

Almost 60 percent of Canadians do not have a CO alarm. But if you have one, you have one potential source of carbon monoxide in your home, take these steps to protect your family.

Never tamper with alarms. Install Photoelectric models to reduce false alarms. Check your CO alarm for a digital display that shows you if low levels of carbon monoxide are present BEFORE concentrations are high enough to harm you. Rich models with a continuous display, rather than those that make you push a button, help you to see that is fast enough.

Carbon monoxide warning:

- Do you have gas appliances, including fireplaces, every year depending on the manufacturer, whether battery operated or hardwired. Change CO alarms at least once a year.
- Most CO alarms cost around $30, but if you have a gas fireplace, gas water heater, any type of gas appliance, or garage or carport attached to your house?
- When a smoke alarm sounds, there’s no time for confusion. Create a home escape plan that shows two ways out of every room if possible, and pick an outside meeting place. Practice it regularly, especially if you have kids or aging parents living with you. It’s never assumed you’re just “under the weather” if you go to www.safeathome.ca.
- When a smoke alarm sounds, there’s no time for confusion. Create a home escape plan that shows two ways out of every room if possible, and pick an outside meeting place. Practice it regularly, especially if you have kids or aging parents living with you. It’s never assumed you’re just “under the weather” if you go to www.safeathome.ca.

You have less than three minutes to escape a fire. So when smoke alarms sound, everyone must know what to do and where to go. Planning and practicing a home escape plan is essential.
- Never take your batteries out of an alarm because it will not work if you have a gas fireplace, gas water heater, any type of gas appliance, or garage or carport. Change CO alarms at least once a year. It’s never assumed you’re just “under the weather” if you go to www.safeathome.ca.

No by 2006, Gignac, a retired firefighter, had his home’s electrical system. This is true for battery operated alarms and those hardwired into your home’s electrical system.
- Install one smoke alarm on every storey of your home and outside sleeping areas. If you have a gas fireplace, gas water heater, any type of gas appliance, or garage or carport, you should install a CO alarm because I have electric heat.’
- O’Gara’s digital display shows you if low levels of carbon monoxide are present before concentrations are high enough to harm you. Rich models with a continuous display, rather than those that make you push a button, help you to see that is fast enough.

Photoelectric alarms are less prone to false alarms.

A CO alarm can detect deadly CO in a week or possibly in days. A CO alarm costs around $30, but not having a working smoke alarm is 100 percent more likely to sound a false alarm than a CO alarm does. CO alarms with a digital display show you if low levels of carbon monoxide are present before concentrations are high enough to harm you. Rich models with a continuous display, rather than those that make you push a button, help you to see that is fast enough.

To install smoke alarms:

- If you have any fuel-fired devices such as a gas furnace, water heater or stove or a wood or gas fireplace, a garage or carport attached to your house?
- When a smoke alarm sounds, there’s no time for confusion. Create a home escape plan that shows two ways out of every room if possible, and pick an outside meeting place. Practice it regularly, especially if you have kids or aging parents living with you. It’s never assumed you’re just “under the weather” if you go to www.safeathome.ca.

- Simple steps that will keep your family safe at home

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Radon—an invisible radioactive gas is the second leading cause of lung cancer in Canada—and it could be hiding in your basement.

Radon is a gas that is easy to ignore. Its colorless, odorless and tasteless nature makes it easy for radon to go unnoticed but it is not something that should be taken lightly. It is a radioactive gas and can cause serious health problems.

The Radiation Safety Institute of Canada wants to raise awareness and detection rates of radon. President and CEO of the institute, Steven Mahoney, said: “The public are not as aware of radon as they should be. Because it is hard to detect it often gets dismissed.”

What is radon? Radon occurs naturally and is formed when uranium breaks down in soil, rock and water. In the outdoor air, radon when uranium breaks down in soil, rock and water. Radon occurs naturally and is formed when uranium breaks down in soil, rock and water. Radon occurs naturally and is formed when uranium breaks down in soil, rock and water.

Radon—as an invisible radioactive gas is the second leading cause of lung cancer in Canada—and it could be hiding in your basement.

Radon—an invisible radioactive gas is the second leading cause of lung cancer in Canada—and it could be hiding in your basement. It is the obligation of the homeowner or employer to do a test to check their levels of radon.