

“Safe-T-element® Eliminates Stovetop Cooking Fires, Delivers Energy Savings and Saves Hastings County Housing Money”



The Hastings County Housing Programs Branch is focused on providing safe, modest and affordable housing for low income households in Hastings County. The County directly own and manage 1,408 social housing units, 186 rent supplement units and administer 855 non-profit units owned by 15 different non-profit housing and cooperative corporations.

Cooking Fires in Ontario and North America

Stove top cooking is the “Number One cause of household fire” in Canada and throughout North America.

Ontario averages 6,046 preventable home fires annually. The Office of the Ontario Fire Marshall has identified cooking equipment as the major source of these fires and home fire injuries. The vast majority of these fires originate on the stovetop. **In fact, 68% of all home cooking fires involve a cooking range, and more specifically, an electric range.** Cooking left unattended is the number one reason for these fires.

But some of the most shocking statistics reveal that 43.4% of all stovetop fires occur in multi-unit residences and that 63.2% of stovetop fires are in subsidized units. Not surprisingly, one of the Ontario Fire Marshall’s recommendations is to use public education and stovetop fire mitigation technologies in high-risk populations such as multi-family buildings, particularly affordable housing units.

The Problem at Hastings County

Hastings County Housing was averaging 11 stovetop cooking kitchen fires per year.

The cause of these fires was typically related to unattended cooking, that is the cook turns on the stove and leaves the room or the housing unit while cooking. Oil as an example, left unattended can quickly ignite and result in a grease fire which tends to accelerate quickly spreading beyond the vicinity of the stove (cabinets, curtains, floors etc.).

Hastings County’s Insurance deductible is \$25,000. Of the 11 kitchen fires per year, 2 caused more than \$25,000 in damage and the remainder cost between a couple of hundred to a couple of thousand dollars to repair. The net of this results in both capital costs and increased insurance premiums.

While protection of tenants and property are a priority, the cost of achieving this is often difficult on a tight budget.

The Solution: The Safe-T-element® cooking system

Hastings County Housing installed Safe-T-element® in 991 of their units in the fall of 2011.

These elements were pre-installed before delivery of their new electric stoves. The Safe-T-element® limits the element temperature to below the auto-ignition point of cooking oil and other common household materials while still allowing for enough heat to cook effectively. Furthermore, because of the way the Safe-T-element® works it reduces the amount of electricity required to cook.

The Results: Hastings reports ZERO kitchen fires since the Safe-T-elements® were installed.

Pam Murphy, Housing Program Manager, identified the following results:

- **Eliminated their cooking fire problem.**
- **Saved over \$70,000 in 2012 (repairing units damaged by fire).**
- **Enjoyed electricity savings of 141,850 kWh in 2012 or \$14,185 annually.**
- **Received rebate from the Ontario Power Authority for \$13.82 per unit installed.**
- **Hastings will have paid off the entire program in 18 months...**
- **...And then will be putting cash in the bank.**

With the help of its local utility company Veridian Connections Inc. (Veridian), the Hastings County Housing Programs Branch received an energy savings rebate as part of the Ontario Power Authority’s saveONenergy RETROFIT Program for the installation of new ranges equipped with the Safe-T-element’s fire prevention and energy saving technology. This program is offered by all local electric utility companies throughout the province of Ontario.



Pioneering Technology Protects Properties, Reduces Energy and Saves Lives.

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