



NEWS RELEASE:

Flying Lanterns Pose a Potential Fire Hazard

North Bay, June 8, 2009 – The Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) has recently released a warning on the existence of a consumer product that poses a serious fire safety hazard. The Flying Lantern (also known as a sky lantern) is currently being sold by Canadian online distributors of fireworks products and at retail stores.

The product resembles a small paper hot-air balloon, fuelled by an open flame. When released, the hot air produced by the fuel source can lift the lantern to extreme heights and allows it to drift for long distances until the fuel is depleted. These lanterns are often released in large numbers to generate an impressive visual effect.

The OFM has cautioned that, due to their uncontrolled and unpredictable flight path, they can land on trees, building rooftops, or other combustible properties while still ignited and potentially cause a fire. There have also been reports of lantern releases near airports causing lengthy flight delays. Concerns regarding the lanterns have resulted in this product being banned in certain parts of Asia.

The OFM has written to Health Canada's Consumer Product Safety Bureau to request that it take the necessary actions to prevent this product from being sold in Canada. Canada Safety Council advises members of the community to refrain from purchasing the Flying Lantern. Retailers who sell this product should also be encouraged to remove it from their store shelves.

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For more information, please contact:

For enquiries regarding the Flying Lantern and potential fire hazards, please contact the OFM by telephone at (416) 325-3100

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