

# Little Gizmos

**By: Inspector Weeks 613.290.3697**

Last week I, yet again, inspected a house that didn't have smoke detectors. As I have mentioned in the past, smoke detectors are a crucial part of any home. All too often we read or hear about a house fire, that after the fire department does their investigation, reveal that there were no working smoke detectors. Let me tell you a little bit about these marvelous little gizmos. There are two different types of smoke detectors, photoelectric and ionization. Photoelectric detectors contain a light and a light sensor; when smoke enters the detector, the sensor senses that the light beam has been disrupted and sets off an alarm. An ionization detector contains an ionization chamber where particles are charged using a small amount of radioactive material. When smoke enters the chamber, the detector senses the change in the current and sets off the alarm. Both types of detectors will detect all types of fires, however the photoelectric detectors appear to sense smouldering fires better while the ionization detectors seem to sense flaming fires better. Since one cannot predict which type of fire will occur, fire departments are recommending that smoke detectors with both types of sensors (either in one unit or in two separate units) be installed. A dual (photoelectric and ionization) type detector can be purchased for approximately \$40 to \$60. Regardless of the type of detector you choose to install, make sure that it has been approved by the Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada (UL Canada). Three out of four fire deaths are caused by smoke. Smoke detectors are therefore critical to saving lives and should be installed away from heat registers and cooking areas, on the ceiling of every floor of the home or apartment, especially outside of bedrooms. The majority of fatal home fires happen at night when people are asleep. Contrary to popular belief, the smell of smoke may not wake a sleeping person. The poisonous gases and smoke produced by a fire can numb the senses and put you into a deeper sleep. Please, Go and Check yours NOW !!!!

I welcome your questions please forward them to , Inspector Weeks ,c/o Peter Weeks Home Inspections [PWHI@sympatico.ca](mailto:PWHI@sympatico.ca) or by phone at 613.290.3697.

**Peter Weeks** has been a Chelsea resident for 19 years. As a general contractor since 1988, he has been doing **Residential Home Inspections** for about four years. He is an Associate Member of OAHI (Ontario Association of Home Inspectors), CAHPI (Canadian Association of Home & Property Inspectors) and a member of the BBB in Good Standing.

Peter Weeks is a fully insured and qualified Home Inspector registered with the Royal LePage Relocation Services Program.

A home inspection can be one of the most important investments you'll ever make. Choose Peter Weeks to provide you and your family **PEACE OF MIND** during the buying process.