



TOWN OF CANTON VOLUNTEER Fire & EMS Department

Valuing Life...at a Moment's Notice



In Response....

From the Desk of Fire & EMS Chief Rich Hutchings

Town of Canton Volunteer Fire & EMS Department

Brush Fires: A Spark. Some Wind. And your Home.

True Stories: In just over a 24 hour period between April 18/19, 2008, Canton's volunteer firefighters responded to a dramatic range of brush fires, including: two separate mulch fires on the meridian in front of The Shoppes at Farmington Valley caused by carelessly discarded cigarettes; mutual aid for a rolling wildfire in Burlington burning through dozens of acres and forcing the evacuation of homes along Saw Mill Road - the apparent result of a spark from a lawn tractor igniting dry vegetation; and a camp fire gone wild and rushing up a windy hillside threatening a family home on High Valley Road in North Canton.

In Response to spring bringing us peak brush fire season in the Farmington Valley, I encourage everyone to look outside your home. Consider all the trees, bushes, surface brush, the dried leaves and even the roots channeling underground across your property. They are all potential fuel for a brush fire.

Clean It Up & Clear It Out: The Firewise Communities program at the National Fire Protection Association considers the area within 100 to 200 feet of a residence as the 'Home Ignition Zone.' They recommend that you clear at least 30 feet of brush, debris and live vegetation from around the perimeter of the residence to safeguard against brush fires threatening your house.

Brush fires move fast. They change direction with the wind. But you can head them off.

As part of Canton Volunteer Fire & EMS Department's ongoing partnership with the community, each month this column will suggest ways to empower you in your own safety, and ultimately assist volunteer fire and EMS personnel should we ever have to respond to an emergency in your life.

Until then..... be safe.

