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Fire Prevention Week

AAA Insurance reminds homeowners of best practices for fireplace inspections

By AAA of Western and Central New York Fire Prevention Week runs from Oct. 9-15, and AAA Insurance has tips to keep homeowners safe.

AAA Insurance recommends that homeowners create a home fire escape plan and use caution when cooking and using appliances. Also, set a reminder for smoke alarm replacement and testing. According to the National Fire Protection Association, properly installed smoke alarms cut the risk of home fire deaths in half. Nearly two-thirds of home fire deaths occurred in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.

"Smoke detectors save lives," said Stacey McConnell, director of insurance at AAA Western and Central New York. "Fire Prevention Week is a good time for homeowners and renters to make sure they are equipped with a smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector. It's also a good time to review insurance needs."

With many Western and Central New Yorkers struggling over whether to turn on the furnace amid cold nights and mornings, homeowners may consider fireplaces or electric heaters in the meantime. But first, there are safety precautions to consider.

Homeowners need to maintain



and service both the fireplace and chimney. Regular chimney inspections can help prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, which can occur if the fireplace and chimney are poorly ventilated. An experienced chimney professional can also tell if a chimney's walls have a buildup of creosote, a flammable by-product of burning wood. Creosote is a fire hazard that can ignite and lead to

chimney fires. It's also toxic; exposure to creosote can irritate the eyes and skin and cause respiratory issues.

In addition, a chimney sweep can determine if the temperature of a chimney flue is too high, which can lead to a chimney fire. Once the fireplace and chimney have been inspected and serviced (if needed), it's important to practice good

safety habits to prevent a dangerous fire.

AAA and the New York State Homeland and Security Services (NYSHSS) recommend the following maintenance practices for your fireplace and chimney:

- √ Burn only well-seasoned hardwoods.
√ Install a chimney cap.
√ Install a carbon monoxide detector.

√ Have a chimney sweep ensure that the chimney has an appropriate liner.

√ Be sure a wood or coal stove is installed at least 36 inches away from the wall and keep combustible materials far from the stove and chimney connector. NYSHSS also recommends placing an approved stove board under the unit to protect the floor from heat.

Find more information on AAA Insurance at www.AAA.com/Insurance.

As upstate New York's largest member services organization, AAA Western and Central New York provides more than 887,000 members with travel, insurance, financial and automotive-related services. Since its founding in 1900, AAA has been a leading advocate for the safety and security of all travelers. Visit AAA at www.AAA.com.

Judge temporarily blocks portions of Concealed Carry Improvement Act

Last week Thursday, Judge Glenn T. Suddaby of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of New York granted a temporary restraining order in the case Antonyuk v. Hochul, temporarily blocking or modifying some provisions of New York's Concealed Carry Improvement Act - the state gun control law passed in July.

In response, New York Attorney General Letitia James said, "Today's decision comes in the wake of mass shootings and rampant gun violence hurting communities here in New York and across the country. While the decision preserves portions of the law, we believe the entire law must be preserved as enacted. We will appeal this decision."

"Common-sense gun control regulations help save lives. I will not back down from the fight to protect

New Yorkers from repeated and baseless attacks on our state's gun safety measures. I will continue to defend our responsible gun laws and fight for the safety of everyday New Yorkers."

The AG's team said, "All provisions of the CCIA are still in effect until next week, because the trial judge stayed his order to permit the state to consider and pursue appellate options."

Syracuse.com reported, "Suddaby blocked provisions of the law that outlined new requirements for background checks for gun permits, including the disclosure of all of an applicant's social media accounts. He also blocked the bans on guns in some public and private properties."

Gov. Kathy Hochul said, "In the wake of the Supreme Court's reck-

less decision that reversed decades of established law amid a national gun violence crisis, the State Legislature and I acted decisively to keep New Yorkers safe. The Concealed Carry Improvement Act was carefully crafted to put in place common-sense restrictions around concealed carry permits.

"While this decision leaves aspects of the law in place, it is deeply disappointing that the judge wants to limit my ability to keep New Yorkers safe and to prevent more senseless gun violence. We are working with the attorney general's office to review the decision carefully and discuss next steps in an appeal. I will continue to do everything in my power to combat the gun violence epidemic and protect New Yorkers."

New York State Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt called the

Concealed Carry Improvement Act a radical gun control law.

He said, "Today's decision is a victory for the Constitutional rights of all New Yorkers."

"Albany's political ruling class has repeatedly parroted a false narrative that law-abiding firearm owners are the root of increasing crime in our communities. Nothing could be further from the truth."

"It is one-party rule that's made New York less safe with their bail 'reform' and other criminal-coddling policies."

"Instead of appealing today's decision, and continuing their unconstitutional political assault on New Yorkers' freedoms, the governor and her legislative allies should close the revolving door of violent, repeat offenders they opened with their pro-criminal agenda."

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