



As we head into May, many of you are getting ready to head to the cottage. Me included. It's an exciting time of year and one I've looked forward to as far back as I can remember. As a kid, it was about seeing my "*summer friends*" at my grandparents' place in Young's Point and not giving a single thought to cottage repairs or yardwork. Those were the days.

As an adult, unfortunately, those carefree feelings no longer hold entirely true. The first couple of trips to the cottage now mean it's when I get to see all the things that went sideways during the winter months: broken branches (last year's ice storm aside), other fire hazards, electrical surprises, and what kind of shape the yard and driveway are in.

Thankfully, I'm handy on the repair front, due in large part to my grandmother (*Nanny*) who took on repairs like a pro, primarily because my grandfather "*didn't know which end of a screwdriver to hold onto*", as she was fond of saying. Her ability to keep a dock board tightened was outmatched only by her ability to spot problems before they started.

It is with that sentiment (and Nanny's voice in my head) that I relay a quick reminder as you begin the 2026 cottage season: **please take a moment to test your security system, including all your environmental devices (smoke, CO, flood, leak, temperature, etc.) when you arrive.** It's one of the simplest ways to make sure everything is working the way it should. We can monitor your system 24/7, but only someone on site can confirm that the equipment is working and communicating properly.

A five-minute test now can save you a lot of frustration later.

If only everything else at the cottage were that easy to maintain. Including those pesky dock boards.

~David P. Clark, President

P.S. Thank you again for the kind messages following Huronia's receipt of the Becklar Award last month. I read every email that was sent. It meant a great deal to our entire team, and to me personally, that so many of you took the time to reach out.

HURONIA VICTORIA DAY HOURS OF OPERATION

Please take note that Huronia will be **CLOSED** on Monday, May 18th, 2026, and will re-open on Tuesday, May 19th. The monitoring station will remain open without interruption, and 24/7 emergency support is available if required.

COTTAGE SEASON FAST APPROACHES. HERE'S SOME TIPS FOR OPENING WITH SAFETY IN MIND!

We've already started daydreaming about that first drive to the cottage. Windows cracked, coffee in hand, hoping the dock survived another winter. Cottages spend months battling wind, ice, critters, and whatever else Mother Nature throws at them. That means opening season is prime time to identify fire hazards, electrical issues, and security vulnerabilities. A little attention now can save a lot of headaches later.

Start outside: Winter always leaves a few ... surprises.

Take a slow lap around the property. The kind of lap where you squint at things and mutter, *"Huh, that wasn't like that last fall."*

- Ensure your address number is visible from the road. Remove debris that could obstruct the view of first responders.
- Check for downed (or low) power lines or branches leaning too closely to the lines that may need to be trimmed back.
- Look at the roof, chimney, siding, windows, and doors for shifting or damage.
- Clear out the eavestroughs/gutters. Wet leaves now lead to dry tinder, and a potential fire hazard by June.
- Check outdoor electrical outlets and other electrical appliances for animal nests and to ensure wiring hasn't been compromised.
- Give decks, docks, and stairs a wiggle test. If something feels soft, it probably is and should be fixed or reinforced.
- If you've got exterior lights or motion sensors tied to your security system, this is the time to make sure they still work.

Inside the cottage. Or what we like to call the "let's see what the mice did" tour.

- Once you open the door and get that classic cottage smell (equal parts pine, dust, and nostalgia), do a quick safety sweep.
- Check wiring for corrosion or signs that mice hosted a winter party. Look for droppings, chewed materials and damaged insulation.
- Turn the water on slowly and watch for leaks. Even tiny ones.
- Clean out filters above your stove.
- Have your propane systems inspected.
- Inspect appliances before plugging them in, especially anything that has sat cold for months. This is also a great time to pull out the fridge and dust or vacuum the coils. (Leave the fridge unplugged so there is no power running through the coils when you are cleaning them.)
- Ensure you have an emergency preparedness kit in case of events, such as power outages or floods.

Fire safety: If there's one thing you don't want to skip, it's this list.

The [**Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs**](#) are reminding cottagers that fire response times in cottage country can be long, depending on the location of your cottage, so taking steps to help ensure good fire safety practices are really important.

- Test your smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms (and be certain that there are working smoke alarms outside any room designed for sleeping), and on every floor.
- Replace batteries immediately if they are dead. Extreme cold temps can shorten their lifespan.
- Replace all smoke alarms more than 10 years old, or CO alarms more than 5 to 7 years old.
- Swap batteries in smoke and CO alarms that aren't tied to your security system.
- Make sure fire extinguishers are charged and easy to grab.
- Clean the BBQ before the first burger hits the grill.
- Check local fire danger ratings as they change quickly this time of year (we'll talk about this more below).

Security: protect your home away from home.

Seasonal properties are tempting targets early in the season, so be sure your security equipment is ready to serve you.

- Test your alarm system (using the information located on the sticker on your keypad door). We recommend testing your system each time you arrive at the cottage, not just on opening day.

- Check the locks on everything ... the cottage itself, the bunkie, shed, garage and even the boathouse.
- Check your cameras to ensure they aren't being hidden by tree limbs.
- Trim shrubs and branches around entry points so nothing is hidden.
- quick system test with our team can give you peace of mind before you settle into cottage mode. To report a false alarm or put your system on test, call **the monitoring station at one of the following numbers:** 1.888.363.9311 | 705.527.9311 | 705.444.2287 | 705.385.8395. Then press 2 to test your system. **Have your account number, service address, and password (AKA passcode) ready.**

Once the safety checks are done, you can get back to the real reason you're there. Fresh air, sunshine (hopefully!), dock-dives and BBQs with family and friends. If you'd like help testing or upgrading your cottage's fire or security systems, [we're always here and happy to support you.](#)

MUSKOKA FIRE DANGER RATING 2026

The Ministry of Natural Resources and the fire chiefs of the six area municipalities in Muskoka would like to remind everyone that the 2026 fire season for Muskoka runs yearly from April 1 to October 31. The fire danger rating (low, moderate, high or extreme) is verified daily and updated when a rating change occurs.

The Township of Muskoka Lakes has burn permits available [online](#).

For the up-to-date fire rating, please visit your municipality's website or call: 1-877-847-1577

Bracebridge – [click here](#).

Township of Georgian Bay – [click here](#).

Gravenhurst – [click here](#).

Huntsville Lake of Bays – [click here](#).

Township of Muskoka Lakes – [click here](#).

REMINDER: ADD HURONIA MONITORING & CUSTOMER SERVICE NUMBERS (& EMAILS) TO YOUR FAVOURITES

As part of our new partnership with Armstrongs (Canada) Monitoring, dispatching services are now handled by their team, but our contact numbers remain the same.

To report a false alarm or put your system on test, call the monitoring station at one of the following numbers:

1.888.363.9311 | 705.527.9311 | 705.444.2287 | 705.385.8395

Press 1 for false alarms, 2 to test your system. **Have your account number, service address, and password (AKA passcode) ready.**

For account updates (passcodes, call lists, vacation notices), email:

monitoring@huronialarms.com

Security Customer Service remains available at:

1.844.363.9311 | 705.792.9311 | 705.445.4444 | 705.645.4108 ext. 6623

Email: securityservice@huronialarms.com

Best Practices:

- Save **Huronial Alarms Monitoring** as a contact, and add these numbers:
 - Monitoring Station: 705.527.9311
 - Burglary Text Alerts: 587.609.5874
- Save **Huronial Alarms Customer Service** as a contact, and add these numbers:

- 705.792.9311, ext. 6623
- 705.445.4444, ext. 6623
- 705.645.4108, ext. 6623

- Mark the contacts as favourites so calls/texts come through even on Do Not Disturb

[Click here to read the full release and best practices.](#)



Huronian

Safe. Secure. And Sound.

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