



## Media Release

### TSSA Issues Inaugural Public Safety Awards

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### *Leaders in Public Safety Honoured at Awards Ceremony*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Toronto, ON, September 29, 2015)** – A Ryerson University professor who studies the safety of roller coasters and other amusement rides; a firefighter from Perth County turned film producer; a safety advocate who lost four members of his family to carbon monoxide poisoning; and, an industry association focused on protecting underground infrastructure were honoured as the winners of TSSA's inaugural safety awards.

The prestigious awards celebrating leaders in public safety were presented today at a ceremony held during TSSA's Annual General Meeting in Toronto. Launched earlier this spring, TSSA's Safety Awards program celebrates individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to public safety in Ontario in TSSA's regulated sectors: Fuels; Boilers and Pressure Vessels and Operating Engineers; Elevating and Amusement Devices and Ski Lifts; and, Upholstered and Stuffed Articles.

"This year's winners were truly noteworthy, both for their accomplishments and for their motivations," said TSSA President and CEO Michael Beard. "The four outstanding recipients - Kathryn Woodcock, Perth County Fire Departments, the Ontario Regional Common Ground Alliance (ORCGA), and John Gignac of the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation - not only enhanced public safety in Ontario in extraordinary ways, they reinforced the notion that safety is a shared responsibility," added Mr. Beard.

- Dr. Woodcock's research with Ryerson University's THRILL (Tools for Holistic Ride Inspection Learning) Laboratory focuses on human factors engineering and amusement ride designs. Her highly unique and innovative work balancing safety and fun has made a significant contribution to the safety of amusement parks across North America.
- Todd McKone, Fire Prevention Officer with the Perth County Fire Departments, rallied his small community in Eastern Ontario to produce 'The Wake Up Call', a dramatic public safety video on the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning. The collective efforts of the community demonstrated the power of partnerships in enhancing public safety.
- The ORCGA has brought utilities, municipalities and contractors together to reduce the risk of pipeline hits and damage to other underground infrastructure, which can result in gas leaks, flooding, explosions, and injuries. By promoting safe excavation practices and championing the creation of the Ontario One Call system for free locates of utility pipes and cables, the ORCGA has established a legacy in public safety in Ontario.
- John Gignac, Founder and Executive Director of the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation, took on the cause of carbon monoxide (CO) awareness after losing four members of his family in a CO poisoning incident. His tireless advocacy resulted in the passing of the Hawkins-Gignac Act mandating CO alarms in all Ontario homes. Following a personal tragedy Mr. Gignac found the strength, courage and persistence to make Ontario a safer place.

"The recipients of TSSA's 2015 Safety Awards embody the spirit of partnership that keeps Ontarians safe and are an inspiration to us all. This is the sole reason we created the awards, to shine a light on the work that makes us safer, every day," said Mr. Beard.



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#### *About TSSA*

The Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA) is Ontario's public safety regulator mandated by the Government of Ontario to enforce provincial safety regulations and enhance public safety in key sectors of the provincial economy: Amusement Devices, Boilers and Pressure Vessels, Elevating Devices, Fuels, Operating Engineers, Ski Lifts, and Upholstered and Stuffed Articles. TSSA's range of safety services include public education and consumer information, certification, licensing and registration, engineering design review, inspections, investigations, safety management consultation, and enforcement and prosecution activities. The organization's vision is to be a valued advocate and recognized authority in public safety.

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For more information on the Technical Standards and Safety Authority, please visit [www.tssa.org](http://www.tssa.org).