Fire Safety Planning Guideline for Residential Care Facilities

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   Fire Safety Tips for Older Adults: English Version
Definitions

**Approved:** means approved by the Chief Fire Official.

**Check:** means visual observation to ensure the device or system is in place and is not obviously damaged or obstructed.

**Chief Fire Official:** means the Municipal Fire Chief or a member or members of the fire department designated by the Municipal Fire Chief or a person appointed by the Fire Marshal under Subsection 1.1.9.

**Inspect:** means physical examination to determine that the device or system will apparently perform in accordance with its intended function.

**Owner:** means any person, firm or corporation having control over any portion of the building or property under consideration and includes the persons in the building or property.

**Supervisory Staff:** means those occupants of a building who have some delegated responsibility for the fire safety of other occupants under the fire safety plan and may include the fire department where the fire department agrees to accept these responsibilities.

**Test:** means the operation of a device or system to ensure that it will perform in accordance with its intended operation or function.

**Alarm Signal:** means an audible signal transmitted throughout a zone or zones or throughout a building to advise occupants that a fire emergency exists.

**Alert Signal:** means an audible signal to advise designated persons of a fire emergency.

**Single Stage Fire Alarm System:** means a fire alarm system designed so that upon activation of any alarm initiating device, i.e. manual pull station, smoke or heat detector etc., will cause a general evacuation alarm signal to sound on all audible signal appliances throughout the building.

**Two Stage Fire Alarm System:** means a fire alarm system designed so that the activation of any alarm initiating device, i.e., manual pull station, smoke or heat detector, etc., will cause an alert signal to sound to alert supervisory staff on duty about the fire emergency. Activation of a key switch in a manual pull station, at the fire alarm control panel or at the central alarm and control facility will cause an alarm signal to sound throughout a zone, zones or throughout the building.

A modified Two Stage Fire Alarm System may operate in a different manner than above. For example, upon activation of any alarm initiating device, an alarm signal will sound throughout the zone or zones in which the initiating device is situated. Simultaneously, an alert signal will sound in other predetermined areas or throughout the remainder of the building.
Introduction

This guideline has been prepared by the Office of the Ontario Fire Marshal and the Ontario Residential Care Association with the assistance of the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs, Ontario Municipal Fire Prevention Officers Association and the Fire Marshal's Public Fire Safety Council. It is intended to assist owners, managers, staff and residents to develop and implement effective Fire Safety Plans for residential care facilities.

Fire safety is an important responsibility for everyone. However, the consequences of inadequate fire safety planning are especially serious for anyone involved in a group setting for older adults receiving residential care who may be vulnerable due to age or infirmity.

All residential care facility owners, senior managers and administrators should have a copy of the Fire Code which is a regulation made under the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997. The current 2007 Fire Code (O.Reg. 213/07) came into force on November 21, 2007.

The Fire Code is a set of minimum requirements respecting fire safety within and around existing buildings and facilities. The owner is responsible for complying with the Fire Code, except where otherwise specified. The municipal fire department enforces the Fire Code.

The publication 2007 Fire Code Compendium, which includes the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, the 2007 Fire Code, Appendices and the Fire Code Supplement FCS-1, is available for purchase from Service Ontario online at www.publications.serviceontario.ca or by phone at 1-800-668-9938.

In a court of law, the definition of "owner" could be interpreted to mean the owner whose name is on title, executive officer of a corporation owning the building, an administrator, a night supervisor or even a maintenance supervisor. Penalties for non-compliance by an individual can be as high as $50,000 per count and/or imprisonment for up to one year in jail. Penalties for corporations may be a fine of up to $100,000.

Owners, senior managers, administrators and supervisors of residential care facilities should be intimately familiar with their responsibilities under the Fire Code since contravention of any provision can result in a penalty as listed above.

As required by Section 2.8 of the Fire Code, the "owner" of a residential care facility is responsible for the preparation of a Fire Safety Plan. In most cases, the Fire Safety Plan can be prepared by an experienced building or maintenance supervisor. Buildings with elaborate emergency systems may require the assistance of a fire protection consultant. After the plan has been prepared, it must be submitted to the Chief Fire Official for approval.

Once approved, the owner is responsible for implementing the Fire Safety Plan and training all staff in their respective duties. It is also the owner's responsibility to ensure that all residents are informed of what to do in case of fire or when the fire alarm sounds. During a fire emergency the owner or supervisory staff must provide incoming fire fighters with a copy of the approved Fire Safety Plan. This may be done by hand, or with the approval of the Chief Fire Official, you may provide a security lock box at the main entrance to the building. This box will contain the Fire Safety Plan, master keys and schematic diagrams for the building.

Your Fire Safety Plan is a unique document that must be prepared specifically for your building. All of the procedures in the plan must provide staff and occupants with the guidance necessary to ensure the safe evacuation of the residents from the building.
PART 1

Fire Safety Planning
Residential care facilities across Ontario are required to prepare and implement a Fire Safety Plan. This plan must be approved by the Chief Fire Official at the local fire department. To assist the Chief Fire Official to make an assessment of your plan, you need to prepare an audit of all systems and equipment within your facility. The human resources that are available to respond to emergencies is also important to include as part of the planning information. These resources may include nursing staff, food service staff, maintenance staff, housekeeping staff and security staff if applicable.

When preparing your Fire Safety Plan and assigning staff responsibilities, it is important to note that the presence of any private duty nurses does not qualify as on-site staff.

The plan for your building is a unique document. The preparation and implementation of an approved Fire Safety Plan will ensure the optimum use of all life safety features installed in your building. The complete plan must reflect all of the occupancies in your building and the resources available to your residents. An approved Fire Safety Plan must identify the basic essentials to ensure an orderly and safe emergency evacuation of all residents and staff under emergency conditions.

Fire Safety Responsibilities
There are many residential care "owner" responsibilities. Most importantly, an "owner" must ensure that the following items are addressed in the Fire Safety Plan and are implemented.

- Establishing and posting the fire emergency procedures on each floor.
- Appointing, organizing and training supervisory staff to carry out fire safety duties and emergency procedures.
- Scheduling and co-ordinating regular fire drills.
- Ensuring that fire hazards throughout the building are identified and eliminated or controlled.
- Providing alternate measures for fire safety during the temporary shutdown of fire protection equipment or systems.
- Completing the necessary checks, tests, inspections and maintenance of fire protection equipment as required by the Fire Code.
- Keeping permanent records of all tests and corrective measures of the above for a period of two years after they are made. The records shall be available upon request by the Chief Fire Official.
- Keeping adequate records of all training and fire safety education delivered to residents and staff.

Auditing Your Building  An audit of the fire safety systems, equipment and resources in your facility must include information on the following features:

- fire alarm systems
- exit locations
- fire department access
- portable fire extinguishers
- standpipe and hose systems
- automatic sprinkler systems
- automatic fire pumps
- emergency power & lighting
- voice communication systems
- smoke control measures
- automatic extinguishing systems
- fire fighters elevators
- water supplies such as private and public hydrants
- gas shut off valves

The building audit must also include:

- description of building construction (combustible, non combustible, etc.)
- building size by area
- number of storeys
- suites available
- bed capacity
- location of corridor smoke barrier doors (zone separations)
- number of supervisory staff
- staffing number for each shift by position
- the names and telephone numbers of the building owner, manager and alternate contact personnel including off duty phone numbers in the event of an emergency and fire protection equipment service companies.

Compiling this information will ensure that all of the elements required to carry out the emergency procedures are accounted for in the plan. Remember to identify the building owner, manager and other alternate contact personnel and the methods to contact them in an emergency (See Appendix 'A', Sample Building Audit Forms and Appendix 'B', Sample Building Human Resources Audit Form).

The Fire Safety Plan
Your Fire Safety Plan must include the following information:

1. Emergency procedures to be used in case of fire including: sounding the alarm, notifying the fire department, provisions for access for fire fighting, evacuating residents, and confining, controlling and extinguishing the fire.
2. Instructions on fire prevention methods and "What to do in case of fire" which must be given and explained to residents (see examples: "Instructions To Residents" A, B, C, D and E).
3. The appointment and organization of designated supervisory staff by position, with related duties and responsibilities during an emergency. This includes the actions to be taken by supervisory staff in initiating any smoke control or other emergency fire systems prior to the arrival of the fire department where applicable.
4. The method of training supervisory staff for fire emergencies.
5. The method and frequency of conducting fire drills.
6. The control of fire hazards throughout the building.
7. Detailed maintenance procedures for fire protection systems and building facilities.
8. The identification of alternate fire safety measures in the event of a temporary shutdown of fire protection equipment or systems so that occupant safety can be assured.
9. Floor Plans that feature the type, location and operation of fire protection systems, access for fire fighting and all exit facilities.
10. Detailed instructions for supervisory staff on the use of any emergency equipment such as the voice communication system, the fire alarm system, smoke control system or emergency power system.
11. Procedures for the use of elevators and the evacuation of residents requiring special assistance.
12. Established procedures for assisting the fire department in accessing the building and locating the fire. For large facilities it is recommended that floor plans showing exit locations be posted on each floor.
Submission Procedures

Once the Fire Safety Plan has been prepared, the facility owner must submit at least two copies of the plan to the Chief Fire Official for review and approval. The approval process may require an on-site inspection of the facility by the Chief Fire Official and/or a pre-fire planning visit by the fire fighters from the nearest fire station. After the Fire Safety Plan is approved by the Chief Fire Official, a signed and stamped copy will be returned to the facility owner. The second copy will be retained by the fire department for their records. It is important to remember that the owner is required to notify the Chief Fire Official at any time when changes are necessary to an approved Fire Safety Plan. Some examples of revisions that must be included in an updated plan are:

- change in facility ownership
- the addition of new fire safety equipment
- facility renovations, and
- staffing level changes.

PART 2

Emergency Procedures

*In accordance with the Fire Code, at least one copy of the Fire Emergency Procedures must be prominently displayed and maintained on each floor.*

A. Sample Instructions for Visitors & Residents in Residential Care Facilities in the Event of Fire in Your Area

**To visitors and residents capable of responding:**

(1) Assist anyone in immediate danger to evacuate to a safe area.
(2) Leave the fire area immediately.
(3) Close all doors behind you to confine the smoke and fire.
(4) Activate fire alarm and/or alert staff.
(5) Use exit stairwells to leave building. **Remain Calm.**

**Note:**
Do NOT use the elevator(s)
Do NOT re-enter the building until instructed to do so by staff or the fire department.

B. Sample Instructions for Visitors and Residents in Residential Care Facilities with a Single Stage Fire Alarm System
To visitors and residents capable of responding:

If you are in your suite and hear a fire alarm:

(1) Before opening your door, touch the door knob to feel for heat. If it is hot, do not open the door. If it is not hot, brace yourself against the door and open slightly. Close the door immediately if you feel air pressure or a hot smoke draft. Remain in your suite and protect yourself from smoke.

(2) If there is no smoke or fire in the corridor, leave your suite, close your suite door behind you and exit the building by the nearest stairwell. Make sure all corridor and stairwell doors are closed behind you.

(3) Assist others in the area to evacuate safely.

If you are not in your suite:

(1) Leave the building via the nearest exit.

(2) If you encounter smoke in the stairway, use an alternate exit or seek refuge in a suite or other smoke free area.

Stay calm.

Note:
Do NOT use the elevator(s).

Do NOT re-enter the building until instructed by staff or the fire department.

C. Sample Instructions for Visitors and Residents in Residential Care Facilities with a Two Stage Fire Alarm System / Alert Signal (First Stage)

If you hear an intermittent alert signal:

(1) Stand by and prepare to evacuate the building.

(2) Listen to the voice communication system loudspeaker or staff for additional instruction.

Remain Calm.

Note:
Do NOT use the elevator(s)

D. Sample Instructions for Visitors and Residents in Residential Care Facilities with a Two Stage Fire Alarm System / Alarm Signal (Second Stage)
If you hear a continuous alarm signal while you are in your suite:

(1) Before opening your door, touch the door knob to feel for heat. If it is hot, do not open the door. If it is not hot, brace yourself against door and open slightly. Close the door immediately if you feel air pressure or a hot smoke draft. Remain in your suite and protect yourself from smoke.
(2) If there is no smoke or fire in the corridor, leave your suite, close your suite door behind you and exit the building by the nearest stairwell. Make sure all corridor and stairwell doors are closed behind you.
(3) Assist others in the area to evacuate to safety.

If you are not in your suite:

(1) Leave the building via the nearest exit.
(2) If you encounter smoke in the stairway, use an alternate exit or seek refuge in a suite or other smoke free area.

Remain calm.

Note:
Do NOT use the elevator(s).
Do NOT re-enter the building until instructed to do so by staff or the fire department.

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E. Sample Instructions for Visitors and Residents in Residential Care Facilities: If You Hear the Fire Alarm and Cannot Leave Your Room or Suite

In the event that the previous instructions (i.e. A, B, C and D) cannot be followed, it may be necessary to take the following action to help ensure safety.

If you are unable to evacuate the area:

(1) Close the door.
(2) Seal all cracks around the door and vents (where smoke can enter) with wet towels or sheets.
(3) Telephone for assistance (i.e. switchboard, administrator, fire department).
(4) If smoke enters your suite keep low, close to the floor and move to the most protected area of the room. If possible, open a window unless smoke enters from the outside.
(5) Show your rescuers where you are by hanging a sheet from the window or balcony.
(6) If possible, listen to the voice communication system loudspeaker or staff for additional instructions.
(7) Wait to be rescued.

Remain Calm.

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See Appendix "E" for Sample Emergency Instruction Signs.
PART 3

Appointment and Organization of Supervisory Staff

The ability of an Organization to react effectively to a fire emergency depends upon a number of factors. For example, the type of building construction (combustible or non-combustible), the size of the building, the number of residents, the number of personnel available who could respond to the emergency, the type of fire safety equipment available, the hazards that are unique to the facility and the mobility or ability of residents to evacuate on their own.

The organization of supervisory staff must be well planned in order to reduce the risks to residents and to the supervisory staff themselves. This is especially true where the facility provides care for residents who must rely on others to assist them to evacuate. In this type of environment, the efforts of supervisory staff must be well coordinated and practiced in order to be most effective.

Persons preparing the Fire Safety Plan must be familiar with the strategy behind a coordinated evacuation. For example, during the early stages of a fire emergency, supervisory staff must conduct certain essential activities including, notifying the fire department, providing access for fire fighters and coordinating the evacuation of endangered occupants. Where residents in a facility have special needs, supervisory staff must be trained in various "lifts and carries techniques" that could be utilized to evacuate residents who would require this type of assistance. In addition, supervisory staff must be familiar with the use of portable fire extinguishers and other equipment that could be utilized in an emergency.

When the fire alarm activates, supervisory staff with defined duties must carry them out immediately. Supervisory staff who are trained to assist in the evacuation of residents should respond to the area of fire alarm origin. When they arrive, circumstances will dictate their appropriate response. Coordinated efforts are necessary to evacuate endangered residents from the immediate fire area. Where necessary, efforts should be made to confine and control the fire. This may involve simply closing the door to the fire area and ensuring that it remain closed until fire fighters respond and extinguish the fire. The further evacuation of residents requiring special assistance should be coordinated to expand from the area of fire outwards.

It is essential that every organization have supervisory staff who are trained to respond to a fire emergency in a prompt, positive, and intelligent manner. It is important that every residential care facility have a nucleus of key supervisory staff. This supervisory staff must be prepared through effective training to ensure resident safety is optimized in the event of an emergency.

There is a need for complete co-operation and understanding between management and staff of the fire safety responsibilities during this emergency. This is absolutely vital. It is the owner's responsibility to ensure all personnel are trained and familiar with the information in the Fire Safety Plan.

A document on establishing staffing levels in care facilities is available from the Office of the Fire Marshal by calling (416) 325-3100.

Responsibilities of Supervisory Staff in Fire Safety

An effective Fire Safety Plan will depend upon the knowledge, experience and commitment of management personnel. Every supervisor must have a clearly defined role and the authority to respond appropriately. All new staff MUST receive training in the Fire Safety Plan before responsibilities can be delegated. Training for all staff members must be organized and should be conducted at least annually. (See Appendix "D" for Sample Staff Training Log).
Owner/Manager Responsibilities In Fire Safety:

(i) Ensure a Fire Safety Plan is *developed*, approved and fully implemented. Maintain control of this Fire Safety Plan once approved.
(ii) Ensure a sufficient number of assistants are designated and trained to act in a supervisory capacity in the event that the appointed supervisor is absent from the building.
(iii) Ensure that all staff receive appropriate training in the use of existing fire protection equipment and actions to take when responding to a fire emergency.
(iv) Ensure that fire drills involving all staff are held at least annually for low rise buildings and every three months for highrise buildings. A sufficient number of fire drills must be held to ensure all shift workers participate.
(v) Adequate records of all staff training and fire drills should be kept for future reference.

Nursing Manager/Night Supervisor Responsibilities in Fire Safety:

(i) Identify and establish a plan for residents who would require assistance to evacuate due to physical or mental disabilities.
(ii) Ensure all hallways and stairwells are kept clear of storage and debris such as housekeeping equipment, medication carts and maintenance supplies.
(iii) Ensure stairwell doors and doors in fire separations are kept closed. Never allow doors to residents' suites to be wedged open. Do not allow anyone to interfere with the self-closing device on any door.

Food Service Supervisor Responsibilities in Fire Safety:

(i) Ensure that all commercial cooking equipment and appliances are maintained in good working order.
(ii) Ensure that all grease filters in hoods and duct systems serving commercial cooking appliances are cleaned regularly.
(iii) Ensure that the fixed automatic extinguishing systems are maintained and tested in accordance with Part 6 of the Fire Code.

Maintenance Supervisor Responsibilities in Fire Safety:

(i) Ensure that all fire protection equipment and building features such as fire separations, emergency lighting, fire alarm systems, sprinkler systems, standpipe systems, fire extinguishers, fixed extinguishing systems and voice communication systems are checked, tested, inspected and maintained in accordance with Parts 2, 6 and 7 of the Fire Code and all applicable standards referenced therein.
(ii) Maintain permanent records of all fire equipment inspections, test and maintenance as set out in Sub-Section 1.1.2. of the Fire Code.

**Note:**
Although the responsibilities mentioned above have been assigned to specific positions, the plan needs to be flexible enough so that these responsibilities may be assigned to other staff members based on the size and complexities of your facility.
All Supervisory Staff must ensure that:

- stairway doors are kept in the closed and latched position at all times.
- self-closing devices attached to doors are not disengaged or rendered inoperable.
- stairways, landings, hallways, passageways and exits are kept clear of any storage or other obstructions.
- combustible waste and debris are not permitted to accumulate anywhere in the building.
- access roadways, fire routes, hydrants and pumper connections are accessible and clear of all obstructions (i.e., snow, parked vehicles and shrubs).
- they have a working knowledge of the fire alarm system, including the procedure to silence the evacuation signals and the method necessary for resetting it.

Sample Staff Fire Procedures

Upon Discovery of Fire:

(i) Assist anyone in immediate danger to evacuate the area
(ii) Close doors to the room or space to confine smoke and fire
(iii) Activate the fire alarm system
(iv) Notify the switchboard or fire department of the fire condition
(v) Supervise/assist with the evacuation of all endangered residents.

Sample Kitchen Staff Procedures in an Emergency

Upon Discovery of Fire:

(i) Assist anyone in immediate danger to evacuate the area
(ii) Activate the automatic extinguishing system, if required
(iii) Close doors to the kitchen to confine the smoke and fire
(iv) Activate the fire alarm system
(v) Notify the switchboard or fire department of the fire condition.

Sample Supervisory Staff Fire Procedures, Two Stage Fire Alarm System

If you hear an intermittent fire alarm signal: (first stage)

(i) Call the fire department. Never depend on the outside security agency to contact the fire department.
(ii) Check your floor to make sure the fire is not in your area.
(iii) Prepare for the evacuation, assembly and relocation of residents.
(iv) Ensure that all of the residents who require special assistance are prepared for evacuation.
(v) If assigned, assist with the evacuation of endangered residents.
(vi) Meet arriving fire fighters and provide them with any necessary information (i.e., residents needing assistance to evacuate and, if known, the location of the fire).
If you hear an alarm signal: (second stage)

(i) Call the fire department. Never depend on the outside security agency to contact the fire department.
(ii) Evacuate all residents who are in danger.
(iii) Co-ordinate the evacuation, assembly and relocation of all residents.
(iv) Meet arriving fire fighters and provide them with any necessary information (i.e., the location of residents needing assistance to evacuate and if known, the location of fire).

Sample Staff Responsibilities

Sample Owner/Manager Responsibilities:

(i) Ensure that the fire department has been called.
(ii) Co-ordinate the evacuation, assembly and relocation of all residents.
(iii) Ensure that arriving fire fighters have access to the building and are provided with master keys.
(iv) Co-ordinate the assembly and transportation of all residents and their personal and medical records.

Sample Switchboard Responsibilities:

> (i) Contact the fire department. *Never* depend on the outside security to contact fire officials.
(ii) Co-ordinate access to the building for incoming fire fighters.
(iii) Direct the incoming fire fighters to the annunciator panel and central control system.
(iv) Activate the emergency service 'Fan Out List'. Assist with the evacuation, assembly and relocation of residents, including arranging for alternate accommodation and transportation.

Sample Nursing Manager/Night Supervisor Responsibilities:

(i) Evacuate all residents who are in danger.
(ii) Supervise and direct the evacuation, assembly and relocation of all residents.
(iii) Inform arriving fire fighters of any residents or staff who require assistance or rescue.

Sample Maintenance Supervisor Responsibilities:

(i) Meet arriving fire fighters.
(ii) Provide fire fighters with master keys for all areas and rooms in the building.
(iii) In large facilities, provide floor plans which show the locations of exits and all fire protection equipment.
(iv) Upon request, direct fire fighters to the location of the fire alarm and voice communication systems, sprinkler system control valves, natural gas shut-off valves and hydro disconnects.
(v) At the direction of the fire department, initiate any smoke control system, emergency power systems and fire fighting elevators.
(vi) At the direction of the fire department, transmit all special instructions to residents and staff via the voice communication system.
(vii) Assist with the relocation of all residents to alternate accommodation.
Sample Food Service Supervisor and Dietary Staff Responsibilities:

(i) Shut off all electrical and gas equipment, cooking equipment, coffee pots, etc.
(ii) Ensure that all kitchen doors are closed when evacuating the kitchen.
(iii) Assist in the evacuation, assembly and relocation of residents.

Relocation Arrangement for Residents

In an emergency, the extent of the emergency, the state of health of the residents and the weather conditions may result in the need to relocate residents, some almost immediately. The relocation arrangements for residents must become a set of established, preplanned options especially when it becomes necessary to evacuate a building due to fire or other emergency. The relocation arrangements for the residents of the facility need to address the length of time that alternate accommodation may be required. This may vary from as little as a few hours to as long as several months. In addition to alternate accommodation, it is important to identify in the plan the means of transportation that will be used and the agency that will be providing it. Always ensure that there is sufficient transportation available. When considering the arrangements for the transportation of residents, it is important to recognize that in most situations it will be required on extremely short notice. Most municipal transit authorities will assist with emergency transportation.

PART 4

Control of Fire Hazards

Everyone must be aware of the potential fire hazards that can exist throughout the facility. Therefore, it is recommended that a designated staff member perform a weekly walk-through of the entire facility. The walk-through should include at least the common areas, stairwells, storage, electrical and furnace rooms of the building.

Check the following to ensure that potential fire hazards are being controlled.

- Smoking in residential care facilities should be closely monitored. Smoking by the residents needs to be restricted to designated areas.
- Smoking materials, such as cigarette butts and the contents of ashtrays, should be disposed of with caution and never in combustible containers.
- Never dispose of flammable liquids or aerosol cans in garbage chutes.
- Avoid unsafe cooking practices such as deep fat frying and/or unattended stoves. Exercise caution around the cooking appliance when using tea towels or pot holders. Be aware of loosely fitting clothing such as bulky sweaters, or house coats with baggy sleeves.
- Always keep storage, laundry, furnace and electrical rooms clear of combustible materials.
- Do not store any materials or equipment in exit stairwells.
- All appliances used by residents must be closely monitored and meet CSA Standards.
- Do not wedge open any fire doors or disengage the self-closing device installed on the door.
Special Note:

Ensure that visitors to the facility are familiar with the fire safety rules. It is recommended that a guest register be used to record visitors received by the residents. The guest register will help to keep track of visitors at all times. The register will also be a valuable source of information during an emergency.

Stairwell & Floor Identification

To avoid confusion when referring to a particular exit stairway during an emergency, every stairway must be designated with a specific letter or colour code. Throughout the building, every stairway at each floor level, including the basement, must be clearly identified.

Floor number identification markings must be mounted permanently on the stairway side of the separation at the latch side of doors to exit stair shafts. (Ontario Building Code, Clause 3.4.6.17.(1)(a) Ontario Fire Code sentence 9.6.3.6.(2).

The number or letter must be not less than 60 mm (2 3/8 in) high, raised approximately 0.7 mm (.028 in) above the wall surface.

The number or letter must be located 1,500 mm (4 ft 11 in) from the finished floor and within 300 mm (11 3/4 in) from the door.

The colour of the number or letter must contrast with the surface on which it is applied.

Signage

Warning signs indicating the direction of travel should be provided in the stairwell to prevent persons from inappropriately trying to evacuate to the roof. Signs cautioning persons to use an alternate exit or find refuge in the nearest suite if they encounter smoke within the stairwell should also be considered.

PART 5

Maintenance of Building Facilities and Fire Protection Equipment:

The building owner/manager must;

(i) Ensure that all fire protection features and equipment, such as fire separations, smoke control equipment, emergency lighting, fire alarm systems, automatic sprinkler systems, standpipe systems, fire extinguishers, fixed extinguishing systems, voice communication systems, fire fighters' elevators and emergency generators are checked, tested, inspected and maintained in accordance with the frequencies specified in Part's 2, 6 and 7 of the Fire Code and all applicable standards referenced in the Fire Code.

(ii) Maintain permanent records of all fire equipment tests and maintenance as set out in Sub-Section 1.1.2. of the Fire Code.

The Fire Safety Plan must contain a detailed schedule or list of required checks, inspections and tests of all fire safety systems and features provided in the building.

Alternate Measures for Temporary Shutdown of Fire Protection Equipment or Systems

The fire department must be notified by supervisory staff when there is a temporary shutdown of any fire protection equipment or systems in the building.

The fire department must be notified when the fire protection equipment or systems that were shut down temporarily are restored and returned to service.

To ensure fire safety within the building continues to be maintained, it is necessary to establish a regular fire safety patrol of the building until such time that the fire equipment or system is repaired and returned to service. Persons conducting the patrol must be provided with a means of communication should an emergency arise.

Each tour of the building by the fire safety patrol must be recorded by time and date. As well, any deficiencies noted and any measures taken to correct the deficiencies must also be recorded.
A supervisor should *always* have a designated substitute to ensure that an incident is handled adequately if he/she is absent. It will be necessary to appoint someone who is familiar with all of the procedures in the building's Fire Safety Plan.

**Fire Drills**

The importance of being prepared has been stressed throughout this *Guideline*. In addition to the emergency actions to be taken by residents and staff in the event of a fire or emergency, practicing *fire drills* must become an integral part of a facility's preparedness.

The purpose of a fire drill is to ensure that the staff and residents are familiar with the building's overall evacuation procedures. Therefore, the owners and managers of residential care facilities must be aware of the benefits of holding monthly fire drills which involve all staff. To maximize the benefits of these fire drills, they should be scheduled and rotated throughout the year in such a way that the personnel on all three shifts employed in the facility participate.

Although it may be of some inconvenience to residents, it is important to have a fire/evacuation drill that involves all of the facility's residents and staff. These scheduled fire/evacuation drills should be held at least annually and designed so that they provide additional experience for the staff. The annual fire drills can also be used to provide additional training for staff by allowing them to become more familiar with use of the building's fire safety systems.

Ideally, monthly fire drills should be practiced by the staff on each floor of the facility. Supervisory personnel should practice using the Emergency Voice Communication System and other equipment where applicable during these fire drills to gain experience and confidence.

It is very important that all personnel with specific responsibilities attend a debriefing meeting following every practice fire drill. This meeting will be held to review the procedures and reactions of all participants. During the debriefing, problem areas can be identified and, if necessary, solutions to overcome any deficiencies in the facility's Fire Safety Plan can be discussed and corrected. The fire department must be made aware of, and approve any changes to the Fire Safety Plan.

*(All residents and staff should be notified in advance of the time and date of any practice drill).*

The date and time of all fire drills, as well as the names of participating staff, should be recorded in the facility's permanent log book (see Appendix "C").

**Instructions on the Use of Fire Safety Systems Provided in the Building**

The Fire Safety Plan must contain detailed instructions on the use of:
- fire fighters' elevators
- the voice communication system
- the fire alarm system
- smoke control equipment (if applicable)
- emergency power system (including the manual operation of the transfer switches if applicable)
PART 6
Fire Safety Committee
Although it is not a requirement of the Fire Code, operators of residential care facilities should consider establishing a Fire Safety Committee. The committee should include representation from management, supervisory staff, residents, volunteers and if possible, representatives from the families of the residents.

The committee can assist management and supervisory staff to promote the importance of fire safety planning. They can emphasize the need for regular fire drills (no matter how inconvenient they may appear to some people) and be key players in providing assistance to ensure the facility has a viable and effective Fire Safety Plan. The committee can also help to facilitate the delivery of fire safety education programs to residents, visitors and staff.

The principle of getting people involved helps to promote the importance of fire safety as it generates the necessary input from concerned employees, residents, relatives and volunteers.

Fire Safety Plan Distribution
Once approved, a copy of the Fire Safety Plan must be provided to those who will be responsible for taking the appropriate actions to ensure the safety of all residents and staff in the building.

- A copy of the plan must be made available to the following:
  - Fire Department Care
  - Facility Owner and Manager
  - Supervisor of Administration
  - Staff Supervisor of Nursing
  - Staff Supervisor of Dietary
  - Staff Supervisor of Maintenance Staff

It may also be appropriate to have key sections of the plan posted in staff work areas, lunch rooms and any information bulletin boards provided for the residents of the building. As well, every resident must be provided with a Fire Safety Package that will include the specific actions to be taken when they discover a fire, hear the fire alarm or when they cannot evacuate in the event of a fire emergency (See Appendix G).

Conclusion: Fire Safety Planning is a critical and necessary activity for management and supervisory staff.

This Guideline is designed to assist management and supervisory staff to develop and fully implement an effective Fire Safety Plan. The procedures contained in the Fire Safety Plan must be designed specifically for your building. In a fire emergency, if followed properly, the procedures should reduce the risk to life safety for all residents and staff in the building.

Therefore, an effective plan which enhances the life safety of residents requires the following:

- commitment
- knowledge of the building
- knowledge of the fire safety protection equipment
- a clear understanding of the procedures and how to implement them properly
- a willingness of management
- co-operation of supervisory staff to enhance the life safety of residents.
- co-operation and education of building residents.

It is important to remember that the residents of your building depend on the knowledge, skills and training of your staff in maintaining a fire safe environment.
## Appendix "A" Sample Building Audit Forms

### Sample Building Evaluation Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Name:</th>
<th>Address:</th>
<th>Owner:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrator:</th>
<th>Phone#:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Maximum number of residents: | |

### Relocation Facility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Name:</th>
<th>Phone#:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Emergency Transportation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company Name:</th>
<th>Address:</th>
<th>Phone#:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Name:</th>
<th>Phone#:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Vehicles:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This evaluation is designed to gather and record specific construction information about the building.*

### Height / Area:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Area:</th>
<th>Building Height:</th>
<th>Number of Floors:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Type of Construction:

Combustible     | Non Combustible | Combination

### Basement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Basement Levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Floor Construction:

Non Combustible | Combustible

### Roof Construction:

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Non Combustible  Combustible  
Flat  Gable  Peaked  Other  

**Interior Finishes:**

Walls  Ceilings  Floors  

**Fire Separation:**

Corridors  Stairways  Dwelling Units  
Zone Separations:  yes  no  
Date of Construction:  Date of Major Renovations:  

The following pages of this Appendix can be used to provide a description of the fire safety equipment installed in the building including:

- Fire Alarm And Detection Systems  
- Sprinkler Systems  
- Standpipe Systems  
- Portable Fire Extinguishers  
- Automatic Extinguishing Systems  
- Exits From Floor Areas  
- Emergency Lighting  
- Building Emergency Generator  
- Elevators for fire fighters’ use  
- Smoke control equipment  

To obtain information on the location of other building equipment, use the Sample Schematic Drawings in Appendix "F".

**Fire Alarm and Detection System**

Manufacturer:  
Model:  
Type:  
Primary Power:  
Secondary Power:  
Location of Main Panel:  
Location of Annunciator Panel:  
Location of Manual Pull Stations:  
Location of Bells:  
(horns, speakers and strobe lights if applicable)  
Location of Heat Detectors:  
Location of Smoke Detectors:
Sample Audit of Building Resources

Central Station Connection (Fire Alarm System Monitoring)

Name Of Company: 
Address: 
Telephone: 

Standpipe and Hose System

Provide details on:
- the size of hose cabinet equipment
- the location of hose cabinet equipment
- fire department connection
- location of water control valves

Sprinkler System.

Provide details on:
- sprinkler system type: Wet  Dry
- size of main and risers
- location of main and isolation control valves
- fire department connection
- system coverage: Full  Partial
  give detailed location if partial:

Portable Fire Extinguishers

Type

Multi-Purpose Dry Chemical

Standard Dry Chemical

Carbon Dioxide
Automatic Extinguishing System

Location:
Name of Company:
Model:
Type:
Coverage:
Location of Manual Pull Handle:
Type of Fuel For Cooking:
Automatic Fuel Shut-Off:  Yes  No
Hood And Duct System:

Emergency Lighting: (Battery Type)

Manufacturer:
Model:
Type:
Coverage:

Building Emergency Generator:  Yes  No
Location:
Equipment Fuelled by:
The make & model of the Emergency Generator:
Does emergency power supply provide power to all elevator cars simultaneously?  Yes  No
Does emergency power supply provide power to fire fighters’ elevator?  Yes  No
Does emergency power supply provide power to pressurization fans?  Yes  No

Exits from all Floor Areas:

Elevators for Fire Fighters use:

Installed:  yes  no
Type of O.B.C.:  yes  no
Type of O.F.C. retrofit:  yes  no
Properly labelled:  yes  no
O.B.C. red  and/or  O.F.C. yellow

Keys are provided at

Smoke Control System

Stairwell Pressurized:  yes  no

Elevator Shaft Pressurized:  yes  no
Smoke Shafts:  yes  no
Other Information:
Appendix "B" Building Human Resources

Audit Form

Sample Audit of Human Resources
Building Staff consist of the following

Day Shift
Administrator
Secretary
Nursing Staff
Building Maintenance
Dietary Supervisor
Dietary Staff
Activity Director
Housekeeping Staff

Emergency Fire Co-ordination will be carried out by the Building’s Administrator. When the Administrator is not present in the building, the Emergency Fire Co-ordinator will be one of the following:

Day Shift:
Evening Shift:
Night Shift:
Week-End and Holiday Shifts
# Appendix "C" Sample Fire Drill Log

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fire Drill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conducted By:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Staff Attending</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outside Agency Attending</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Fire Drill Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comments/Recommendations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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Signature
No. 1: Recommended sign to be used throughout exit stairs

No. 2: Recommended sign inside exit stairs below exit level.

No. 3: Recommended wording for signs in corridors and/or exit stairs

**PLEASE NOTE: SIGNS ARE NOT TO SCALE**
Appendix "F" Sample Schematic Drawings
When it comes to fire, adults over age 65 are at greater risk than any other group. As most fire deaths occur in the home, it is important that older people know how to protect themselves. If you have a relative or friend in this vulnerable group, please take a few minutes to complete this fire safety check of their home. It could be a lifesaver.

- **Part A** is the physical fire safety check of the older adult’s home. It should be conducted once each month by a relative or friend.
- **Part B** consists of 14 questions to ask the older adult. These questions should be asked once, with periodic reminders.

**What to do if you are concerned**

If possible, take measures to correct the situation. Advise the older person that he/she is at risk of fire and injury. Remember, it is extremely difficult to change established habits. If the older person will not change the risky behavior - such as smoking in bed - appropriate safeguards must be put in place or alternative plans made. Contact your fire department or the Community Care Access Centre in your area for advice or assistance.

**Part A**

**Conduct the following fire safety checks:**

1. Check that there are working smoke alarms on every level of the home and outside sleeping areas.

2. **Make sure the older person can hear the alarm when it activates.**
   
   *If they can’t contact the local fire department for advice.*

3. **Check that the smoke alarms have been tested.**
   
   *If not, test the smoke alarm by pressing the alarm test button, which is Is usually located in the centre of the alarm. If it difficult to reach, use a broom handle or ruler to test it.*

4. Check that the batteries have been changed within the past year
Batteries should be replaced each year. It is a good idea to mark the date on the batteries so that anyone will know when it was replaced. A chirping sound indicates a low battery, but this sound can be difficult for an older person to hear or recognize.

5. Check for scorch marks on pots and pans.
If you find scorch marks, discuss with the older person. He/she may be leaving cooking unattended.

3. “Is there a phone near the bed in case you need help?”
Make sure the emergency number is posted on the phone.

4. “What would you do if the room filled with smoke?”
Demonstrate how to crawl low under smoke to safety.

5. (For apartment dwellers) “Do you know the sound of the fire alarm and what to do when the alarm sounds?”
Find out the correct procedures from building management.

6. “Do you ever leave cooking unattended?”
Tell the older person to turn off the stove before leaving the kitchen, use a timer, or take an item such as a potholder with them as a reminder.

7. “Do you know what to do if a pot on the stove catches fire?”
Keep a proper fitting lid nearby and slide it over the burning pot.

8. “Are there combustibles, such as tea towels or curtains near the stove?”
Keep anything that can easily catch fire away from the stove.

9. “Do you wear tight-fitting or rolled up sleeves when you use the stove?”
Dangling sleeves can easily brush against a hot burner and catch fire.

10. “Are you careful not to reach over hot burners?”
Use the front burners as much as possible.

11. “Do you keep portable heaters at least 1 meter (3 feet) from any combustible materials, such as drapes, clothing or furniture?”
Remind your friend or relative that portable heaters should never be used to dry clothing, tea towels, gloves, etc.

12. “Do you consider yourself to be a careful smoker?”
Smokers should use large, deep ashtrays and never smoke when drowsy or in bed.

13. “Where do you empty your ashtrays?”
Ashtrays should be emptied into the toilet or a non-combustible can.

14. “Are you careful when you drink and smoke?”
*Drinking alcohol while smoking is a deadly combination and accounts for many fire deaths.*

6. Check that clothing, bedding, furniture and floors are free of cigarette burns.
If you find cigarette burns, discuss the situation with your older friend or relative.
Part B
Ask your older friend or relative the following questions:

1. “Do you know how to leave quickly if there is a fire?”
   Check that the older person knows two ways out in case the main route is blocked by smoke or flames. Check that all doors and windows in the escape route can be easily opened.

2. “Do you have a neighbour who can help in an emergency?”
   Can your friend or relative walk to a neighbour’s house to call the fire department? In apartments, is there a neighbour who can help when the alarm sounds?

Older and Wiser—Fire Safety Tips for Older Adults
1 Be prepared for fire

Know exactly what to do and where to go if there is a fire. Plan Your Escape! Make a home escape plan or refer to your building’s fire safety plan.

2 Smoke alarms protect everyone

Have a smoke alarm installed on every level of your home -- especially near sleeping areas. Every month, test the alarms by using a broom handle or cane to gently push the alarm test button. Make sure everyone can hear the smoke alarms from all areas of your home.

3 If you smoke...
Use large, deep ashtrays and always make sure your cigarette butts are out. Never smoke when you are lying down, if you are drowsy, or in bed.

4 Don't reach for danger!

Wear tight-fitting or rolled-up sleeves when cooking and don't reach over a hot burner. If a pot catches fire, cover it with a lid and turn off the burner. Never leave your cooking unattended.

5 If your clothing catches fire...

Lower yourself to the ground, cover your face with your hands and roll over and over to put out the flames. If you can't do this, grab a towel or blanket and smother the flames.

6 Crawl low under Smoke.

Most fire victims die from smoke, not flames. Smoke always rises, so
you must get down on the floor where the air is cleaner. Crawl on our hands and knees to safety.

7 Give space heaters space.

Keep them at least 1 metre (3 feet) away from everything -- including you. A slight brush against a heater could set your clothing on fire.

8 Need assistance?

If you would like help to test your smoke alarms or to prepare a fire safety plan, talk to your friends, family or home support worker. There is help available within your community. If you have any questions about fire safety, your fire department will be pleased to assist you.