



**COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT
PARAMEDIC AND SENIORS SERVICES BRANCH
LONG-TERM CARE**

Boil Water Advisory Emergency Plan – CODE GREY (Policy and Procedures)

Manual	Emergency Plans – Module 3	Policy Number	EM-03.11 (v.1.11)
Applies to	All Long-Term Care Staff, Students and Volunteers		
Effective Date	November 17, 2022	Replaces	N/A

PURPOSE: The policy provides guidelines for staff to respond to and manage a boil water advisory at the Homes to ensure the safety and security of residents, staff members, volunteers and visitors in the Homes

DEFINITIONS:

Boil Water Advisory	A boil water advisory (BWA) is issued by the local public health unit when water is not safe for drinking or other uses
CODE GREY	A term that alerts staff to an infrastructure loss or failure of substantial significance (such as boil water advisory, flood, gas leaks or loss of one or more essential services)
Emergency	Means an urgent or pressing situation or condition presenting an imminent threat to the health or well-being of residents and others attending the home that requires immediate action to ensure the safety of persons in the home
Staff	Means a person who works at the Home either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) As an employee of the Region/Home. This includes unionized staff, including but not limited to CUPE 905 Long-Term Care Bargaining Unit Staff (excluding Seniors Community Program Staff), and Non-Union staff working in the Homes. This also includes any redeployed Regional staff (b) Has a contract or agreement with Region/Home. This includes but not limited to the Medical Director, Registered Dietician, Pharmacy Service Provider, Physiotherapist, etc. (c) At the Home due to a contract or agreement between the Region/Home and an employment agency or other third party. This includes agency staff (including those who may not provide direct care to residents)

<p>Note: Education and Training exemptions apply for those in (b) and (c) who provide occasional maintenance and repair services to the Home and will not provide direct care to residents. These staff will receive information about emergency plans before commencing their services</p>
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POLICY: The key requirements of this policy are:

1. The **Boil Water Advisory Emergency Plan (CODE GREY) MUST** be activated by the Administrator:
 - Upon receipt of a boil water advisory from the Medical Officer of Health or a Public Health Inspector
2. All staff have a duty to support and respond to a **CODE GREY**
3. **Equipment and Supplies:** The Homes will ensure staff have access to resources, supplies, personal protective equipment, and equipment to adequately respond to a **CODE GREY**
4. **Communications:** The Homes will be equipped with an effective public address system for announcing **CODE GREY** to those in the Home
5. **Reporting:** The Home has a duty to report the contamination of the drinking water supply to the Ministry of Long-Term Care immediately
6. **Education and Training:** All staff, students and volunteers will be provided with education and training on the **Boil Water Advisory Emergency Plan (CODE GREY)** at orientation and annually thereafter

Note: For CODE GREY Testing and Exercise requirements, please see the **Long-Term Care Emergency Preparedness and Response Training and Exercise Plan**

PROCEDURES: This section contains procedures for the following:

- A. **Activating and responding to a CODE GREY**
 - B. **During a CODE GREY**
 - C. **Ending a CODE GREY**
 - D. **Post CODE GREY Procedures and Documentation**
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- A. **Activating and responding to a CODE GREY**



The Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours) will:

- Notify all users of the system regarding the boil water advisory. See **Long-Term Care Emergency Communications Plan**
- Inform and consult with the Director, Seniors Services on whether to activate the Incident Management System (IMS). See **Long-Term Care Emergency Plan** and **Food and Fluid Plan (Policy and Procedures)**

Note: The **Food and Fluid Plan (Policy and Procedures)** confirms the Homes have potable water tanker truck connections where a tanker can bring water to the Homes and pump directly into buildings. **Potable water is drinkable**

- Delegate staff members to access supplies, as needed, from the **General Emergency Response Kit**
- Consult with York Region Public Health and the Home’s municipal water operators. See **Appendix B: External Stakeholder Consultation Table in Emergency Planning Stakeholder Consultation Plan (Policy and Procedures)** for details
- Take command of the emergency and delegate a staff member to announce the following statement **three times** over the public address system:

“CODE GREY BOIL WATER ADVISORY”

B. During a CODE GREY

All staff will:

- Use **Appendix A: Guide to Using Water Safely During a Boil Water Advisory** until potable water is connected to the Home

Note: Following boil water advisory protocols (**Appendix A**) is required when the Homes’ water is not safe for drinking or other uses. **Potable water is drinkable**

- The following roles will lead implementing the protocols in **Appendix A: Guide to Using Water Safely During a Boil Water Advisory** until potable water is connected to the Home

Role	Topic in Appendix A: Guide to Using Water Safely During a Boil Water Advisory
Administrator (or designate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Services at the Home • Signage at the Home (Appendix B: Do Not Drink This Water Sign)



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Role	Topic in Appendix A: Guide to Using Water Safely During a Boil Water Advisory
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm any additional directions outside of what is provided in Appendix A depending on the circumstances with York Region Public Health and the IPAC lead (or designate)
Manager of Production and Support Services (or designate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water for drinking • Food Preparation • Dishwashing • Laundry • Cleaning Environmental Surfaces, Devices and Equipment (high-touch surfaces)
IPAC lead (or designate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand Hygiene • Personal Hygiene • Activate enhanced Surveillance for Enteric Illness (See IPAC #15 Surveillance)
Charge Nurse (or designate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning Environmental Surfaces, Devices and Equipment (medical devices and resident care equipment) • Medical Procedures

The Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours) will:

- Provide timely situational updates to those who live in and work at the Home. See **Long-Term Care Emergency Plan** (for IMS) and **Long-Term Care Emergency Communications Plan**
- Ensure the Home is compliant with guidance provided by the Medical Officer of Health or Public Health Inspector
- Support and facilitate any water testing needed at the Homes

The Supervisor, LTC Maintenance & Security (or designate) will:

- See **Food and Fluid Plan (Policy and Procedures)** for water tanker procedures
- Plan for and implement actions required to connect potable water to the home, such as:
 - Ensure all filters are removed
Note: Filters not to be replaced until boil water advisory lifted
 - Starting on the first floor of each Home open each faucet for **three minutes** to flush municipal water from the system
Note: This is not needed for domestic hot water as boilers set at 165 degrees Fahrenheit
 - Remove signage as each faucet is flushed (**Appendix B: Do Not Drink This Water Sign**)
Note: All steps must be completed prior to use of water taps/appliances

The Charge Nurse (or delegate) will:

- Check all residents, staff and others for signs and symptoms of enteric illness and ensure care is provided
Note: Notify the IPAC Lead, DOC, attending physician and Medical Director of any residents with enteric illness
- Upon notification of incident/injury of **employees**, request the employee's supervisor follow the employee incident / injury process. See [Incident and Concern Reporting](#)
- Upon notification of incident/injury of **students, volunteers, agency staff and contracted service providers**, notify the supervisor of that individual about the need to complete the **Non-Regional Incident Reporting Form**

C. Ending a CODE GREY

1. The Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours) will:

- Receive confirmation of a boil water advisory ending from the Medical Officer of Health or a Public Health Inspector

2. The Supervisor, LTC Maintenance & Security (or designate) will:

- Plan for and implement actions required to disconnect potable water from the Home and reconnect the municipal supply, such as:

Newmarket Health Centre	Maple Health Centre
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flush hydrants outside first, then using the sprinkler flow valves flush the rest of the system, then flush remaining pipe before back flow preventer 2. Disconnect potable water and reconnect municipal water 3. Ensure all filters are replaced <p>Note: All steps must be completed in order prior to use of water taps/appliances</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Place signage on each faucet prior to reconnection (Appendix B: Do Not Drink This Water Sign) 2. Disconnect potable water and reconnect municipal water 3. Starting on the first floor of each Home open each faucet for three minutes to flush new municipal water through the system <p>Note: This is not needed for domestic hot water as boilers set at 165 degrees Fahrenheit</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Remove signage as each faucet is flushed (Appendix B: Do Not Drink This Water Sign) 5. Ensure all filters are replaced <p>Note: All steps must be completed in order prior to use of water taps/appliances</p>

- Notify the Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours) that municipal water is reconnected
- 3. The Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours) will:**
- Ensure any additional measures are taken. See Steps to Take After the Boil Water Advisory is Lifted in **Appendix A: Guide to Using Water Safely During a Boil Water Advisory**
 - Delegate a staff member to announce the following statement **three times** over the public address system:
“CODE GREY BOIL WATER ADVISORY. All clear”
 - Once a **CODE GREY** has been declared over, normal operations can resume

D. Post CODE GREY Procedures and Documentation

The Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours) will:

- Delegate staff to ensure all emergency response equipment taken from the General Emergency Response Kit is replenished and cleaned. See **Resources, Supplies, PPE and Equipment Emergency Plan**
- Conduct debrief(s) and other actions as required by the **Long-Term Care Emergency Recovery Plan**
- In consultation with the Director, Seniors Services:
 - Deactivate the Incident Management System (IMS), if activated
 - Notify the Education and Wellbeing Team to ensure staff supports in place for those who experienced distress. See **Appendix D: Suggested Support Resources in Emergency Recovery Plan (Policy and Procedures)**

The Director of Care (or designate) will:

- Follow the **Mandatory and Critical Incident Reporting Policy and Procedures**
- Notify Joint Health and Safety Committee regarding all incidents involving staff, volunteers, visitors, and contract workers

The Charge Nurse (or designate) will:

- Report any incidents for visitors and other members of the public using the **Bodily Injury Reporting Form**

A Supervisor of any employee involved in the incident (and who sustains an injury or a near miss) will:

- Follow the employee incident / injury process. All incidents must be reported through the **Online e-Incident Report Form** on the Homes' Incident Reporting System

Note: All incidents (including near misses) must be investigated by employers. See [Incident and Concern Reporting](#)

A Supervisor of a student, volunteer, agency staff or contracted service providers, involved in the incident (and who sustains an injury or a near miss) will:

- Complete the **Non-Regional Incident Reporting Form**

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:



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Role	Responsibilities
All staff, students and volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support a CODE GREY
Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assume command of a CODE GREY • Implement actions when water is not safe for drinking or other uses. See Appendix A: Guide to Using Water Safely During a Boil Water Advisory • Following consultation with the Director, Seniors Services, activate the Incident Management System (IMS) and deactivate when emergency is over • Provide timely situational updates to those who live in and work at the Home • Complete actions identified in the Emergency Recovery Plan
Emergency and Contingency Planning Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide education and training on Emergency Plans • Complete After-Action Review (AAR) as required by the Long-Term Care Emergency Recovery Plan
Education and Wellbeing Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure staff supports are in place for those who experienced distress. See Appendix D: Suggested Support Resources in Emergency Recovery Plan (Policy and Procedures) • Maintain staff records of education and training
Medical Officer of Health or a Public Health Inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue and lift Boil Water Advisories • Provide guidance during Boil Water Advisories, as required
Supervisor, LTC Maintenance & Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete actions required in the Food and Fluid Plan (Policy and Procedures) for water tanker procedures • Complete actions required to connect potable water to the home, then disconnect potable water from the home and reconnect the municipal supply

Authority	<i>Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021 s. 82(2)8 and 90; General Regulation 246/22 s.115, 263(2)2, 268, 270, 271(1)f and 273; CARF Aging Services Standards; and York Region Seniors Services Administration</i>
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Related Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix A: Guide to Using Water Safely During a Boil Water Advisory • Appendix B: Do Not Drink This Water Sign • General Emergency Response Kit • Related Home Policies: Emergency Planning Policies and Procedures; Mandatory and Critical Incident Reporting Policy and Procedures; Infection, Prevention and Control Policies and Procedures; Environmental Services - Housekeeping and Laundry Services Policies and Procedures; and Manufacturers Manuals • Related Regional Policies: None • LTC Emergency Preparedness Manual 		
Policy Contact	Senior Program Analyst	Review Period	Annually