

# GAS LEAK EMERGENCY PLAN – CODE GREY

## Purpose

The policy provides direction for staff to respond to and manage a gas leak (such as natural, carbon monoxide) at the Homes to protect the safety and security of residents, staff members, volunteers and visitors.

## DEFINITIONS

### CODE GREY

A term that alerts staff to an infrastructure loss or failure of substantial significance (such as gas leaks, boil water advisory, flood, or loss of one or more essential services)

### Emergency

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

### Natural Gas Leak

Natural gas is odourless in its pure state. A substance is added to give natural gas a distinctive rotten egg smell. Signs of a natural gas leak could include one or more of the following:



Sight: Damaged connections to natural gas appliances or vegetation that is dead or dying for no reason



Sound: Hissing or whistling



Smell: A distinctive rotten egg or sulphur-like odour

### Carbon Monoxide (CO)

Carbon monoxide is a colourless, odourless, tasteless, toxic gas. Exposure to CO or natural gas can cause several serious symptoms including flu-like symptoms such as headaches,

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nausea and dizziness, as well as confusion, drowsiness, loss of consciousness and even death

## Staff

Means a person who works at the Home either:

(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)

**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

## Policy

The key requirements of this policy are:

1. Immediate Investigation: To ensure the safety of those who live and work at the Homes, all reports of odors shall be treated as real and investigated immediately
2. Activation: The *Gas Leak Emergency Plan (CODE GREY)* MUST be activated by any staff member, student, or volunteer:
  - Upon discovering signs of a natural gas leak, or
  - In response to a carbon monoxide alarm, or
  - If there are signs that residents, staff or others in the Home have symptoms of carbon monoxide and/or natural gas exposure
3. Response: All staff have a duty to support and respond to a CODE GREY
4. 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
5. Communications: The Homes will be equipped with an effective public address system for announcing CODE GREY to those in the Home
6. Reporting: The Home must report a critical incident that presents an emergency to the Ministry of Long-Term Care immediately

**Note:** This includes an environmental hazard that affects the provision of care or the safety, security or well-being of one or more residents for more than 6 hours (such as a breakdown of a system in the Home or a loss of essential service).

7. Education and Training: All staff, students and volunteers will be provided with education and training on the *Gas Leak Emergency Plan (CODE GREY)* at orientation and annually thereafter

**Note:** For CODE GREY testing and exercise requirements, 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

### A. Activating and responding to a CODE GREY

**The staff member who discovers signs of a natural gas leak will:**

- Try to isolate the gas leak if possible
  - Note:** Turn valve clockwise to shut off
- Notify the Charge Nurse (or designate) immediately
- Ensure you and others immediately leave the affected area of a suspected natural gas leak
  - If the gas leak is suspected to be inside the Home, open all windows in the area to facilitate fresh air, if it is safe to do so
  - If the smell is detected outside, close any windows that are in the proximity of the area
- Follow these safety precautions when near the gas leak to avoid creating sparks that could ignite the gas:
  1. Don't use phones or electronics
  2. Don't turn appliances or lights on/off,
  3. Don't smoke or use lighters or matches,
  4. Don't spray air freshener, paint or other aerosols in the area or near the detector,

5. Don't start any vehicles or motors near the area

**The Charge Nurse (or designate will):**

- If the source of gas leak cannot be determined or contained, call Enbridge's 24-hour emergency number and emergency services at "8-911"

**Note:** Never assume someone else has called. If the natural gas is burning, call emergency services on "8-911" immediately and activate the Home's *Fire Safety Plan*

- Notify all users of the natural gas system regarding the natural gas leak, including the Supervisor, LTC Maintenance & Security, Manager, Support Services and Adult Day Program Supervisor (Maple)
- Notify the Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours)
- Take command of the emergency and delegate a staff member to announce the following statement three times over the public address system: "CODE GREY NATURAL GAS LEAK (location or Home Area(s))"

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

- Inform and consult with the Director of Seniors Services on whether to activate the Incident Management System (IMS). See *Long-Term Care Emergency Plan*

**Note:** Contact Corporate Occupational Health and Safety through IMS for air monitoring and assistance.

**Note:** Decisions about shutting down air conditioning units to limit gas-laden vapors from entering the rest of the Home may need to be made in consultation with the Supervisor, LTC Maintenance & Security (or delegate) OR those first on site.

- In consultation with the the Supervisor, LTC Maintenance & Security and any Emergency Services, consider the need to evacuate residents, staff and others from the location of the gas leak to a safe location. See *Evacuation Plan – CODE GREEN (Policy and Procedures)* and *External Disaster Emergency Plan – CODE ORANGE (Policy and Procedures)*
- Ensure the *LTC Emergency Communications Plan* is activated to notify all impacted parties, as appropriate

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

- Shut down air conditioning units to limit gas-laden vapors from entering the rest of the Home, if requested by authorities

## **B. DURING A CODE GREY**

**The Charge Nurse (or delegate) will:**

- Check all residents, staff and others in affected area for signs and symptoms of Carbon Monoxide and / or Natural Gas Exposure and ensure care is provided

**Note:** Treat symptoms of carbon monoxide exposure as an emergency.

- Upon notification of incident/injury of employees, request the employee's supervisor follow the employee incident / injury process
- 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*
- Delegate staff members to:
  - Act as a runner to meet Enbridge Personnel and the Fire Department at the entrance to the Home
  - Open or close windows in unaffected areas, if it is safe to do so (if the gas leak is suspected to be inside the Home, all windows in the area should be opened to facilitate fresh air; if the smell is detected outside, it is important to close any windows that are in the proximity of the area)
  - Monitor residents in unaffected areas for signs and symptoms of Carbon Monoxide and / or Natural Gas Exposure
- Comply with direction provided by Enbridge Personnel and the Fire Department

**Note:** If an evacuation is required, the follow the *Evacuation Plan – CODE GREEN (Policy and Procedures)*.

**Note:** Enbridge personnel at the Home will work with the Fire Department to identify needs and be responsible for locating and eliminating the source of the leak.

**Note:** If the Home loses its gas supply as a result of a leak, activate *Loss of Essential Services – CODE GREY (Policy and Procedures)*.

## C. ENDING A CODE GREY

**The Charge Nurse (or delegate) will:**

- Declare the CODE GREY over when the Fire Department, Enbridge or Supervisor, LTC Maintenance & Security (or designate) confirms the gas leak has been repaired, gas is turned on and it has been deemed safe for the staff and residents' return
- Delegate a staff member to announce the following statement three times over the public address system: "CODE GREY NATURAL GAS LEAK. All clear"
- Notify the Administrator (or designate during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours)

**Note:** Once a CODE GREY has been declared over, and Carbon Monoxide (CO) levels

are returned to 0 ppm, normal operations can resume.

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

- Ensure standing pilot lights on gas equipment are lit

## **D. POST CODE GREY PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENTATION**

**The Charge Nurse (or designate) will:**

- Report any incidents visitors and other members of the public using the *Bodily Injury Reporting Form*
- Conduct debrief(s) and other actions as required by the *Long-Term Care Emergency Recovery Plan*

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

- In consultation with the Director, Seniors Services:
  - Deactivate the Incident Management System (IMS), if activated
  - Notify the Wellbeing Team to ensure staff supports are in place for those who experienced distress

**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 Management System

**Note:** All incidents (including near misses) must be investigated by employers.

**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**

**All staff, students and volunteers**

- Report and support a CODE GREY, as required

### **Charge Nurse (or designate)**

- Assume command of a CODE GREY
- Complete actions as required by the *Long-Term Care Emergency Recovery Plan*

### **Director of Care (or designate)**

- Initiate Mandatory Critical Incident System, if required

### **Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours)**

- Following consultation with the Director, Seniors Services, activate the Incident Management System (IMS) for gas leaks and deactivate when emergency is over

### **Supervisor, LTC Maintenance & Security**

- Manage the repair/remediation in the affected area
- Manage contact information for response personnel
- Maintain schematic diagrams of the Homes showing the location of the gas valves

### **Emergency Management Specialist**

- Provide education and training on Emergency Plans
- Complete After-Action Review (AAR) as required by the *Long-Term Care Emergency Recovery Plan*

### **Education Team, Seniors Services**

- Maintain staff records of education and training

### **Joint Health and Safety Committee**

- Where required, a JHSC Worker member can assist in the investigation of the gas leak
- Review incident findings and provide recommendations on appropriate follow-up based on developing trends and root cause(s)

## **AUTHORITY**

*Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021; General Regulation 246/22; Occupational Health and Safety Act; Accreditation Standards Manual, as current; and York Region Seniors Services Administration*

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