




Gas Leak Emergency Plan – CODE GREY (Policy and Procedures)

Manual	Emergency Plans – Module 3	Policy Number	EM-03.12 (v.1.9)
Applies to	All Long-Term Care Staff, Students and Volunteers		
Effective Date	November 18, 2022	Replaces	N/A

PURPOSE: The policy provides guidelines 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	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  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, nausea and dizziness, as well as confusion, drowsiness, loss of consciousness and even death
Staff	<p>Means a person who works at the Home either:</p> <p>(a) As an employee of the Region/Home. This includes unionized staff, including but not limited to CUPE 905 Long-Term Care</p>

	<p>Bargaining Unit Staff (excluding Seniors Community Program Staff), and Non-Union staff working in the Homes. This also includes any redeployed Regional staff</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(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> <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. 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. 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. 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:
 - See **Appendix A1: Newmarket Health Centre outside main gas shut-off valve location**
 - See **Appendix A1: Newmarket Health Centre 1st floor gas shut-off valve locations**
 - See **Appendix B: Maple Health Centre gas shut-off valve locations**

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. See **Carbon Monoxide Monitoring Policy and Procedures**, and
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 Gas Provider **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 and the Manager of Production and Support Services
- 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 (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. See **Carbon Monoxide Monitoring Policy and Procedures**

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 stakeholders 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. 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**
- Delegate staff members to:
 - Act as a runner to meet Gas Provider 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 Gas Provider Personnel and the Fire Department

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

Note: Gas Provider 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, Gas Provider 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 (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 (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 Education and Wellbeing Team to ensure staff supports are in place for those who experienced distress. See **Appendix D: Suggested Support Resources in Emergency Recovery Plan (Policy and Procedures)**

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:

Role	Responsibilities
All staff, students and volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Report and support a CODE GREY, as required
Charge Nurse (or designate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assume command of a CODE GREY ● Complete actions as required by the Long-Term Care Emergency Recovery Plan
Director of Care (or designate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initiate Mandatory Critical Incident System, if required
Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 (Appendices A and B)



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

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
Joint Health and Safety Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<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>		
Related Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix A1: Newmarket Health Centre Outside Main Gas Shut-Off Valve Location • Appendix A2_ Newmarket Health Centre 1st Floor Gas Shut Off Valve Locations • Appendix B: Maple Health Centre Gas Shut-Off Valve Locations • Related Home Policies: Emergency Planning Policies and Placemats; Mandatory and Critical Incident Reporting Policy and Procedures; Carbon Monoxide Monitoring Policy and Procedures; Manufacturers Manuals; and Maintenance Policies • Related Regional Policies: None 		
Policy Contact	Senior Program Analyst	Review Period	Annually