External Disaster – Chemical Spill – Minor/Major/External Air Exclusion		Policy Manual Section: **Section 4—Emergency Management Planning**
Created: 10/97	**Last Updated: 6/23**	**Last Reviewed: 01/26**
Act/Regs: Fixing Long Term Care Act 2021, General ORCA Reg 166/11, s.24		**Page: 1 of 4**

PURPOSE

The purpose of the chemical spill emergency procedures is to establish a clear management system that organizes functions, tasks, and staff responsibilities in response to a chemical spill or a situation requiring external air exclusion. This plan promotes effective communication and coordination and provides staff with clear direction regarding leadership, roles, and responsibilities.

PROCEDURE

A "spill" may involve pharmacological, biohazardous, toxic, or combustible substances and must be properly contained, cleaned, and disposed of using appropriate methods based on the nature of the substance.

Non-Threatening (Minor) Internal Chemical Spill

Maintenance, the Director of Nursing (DON), and the Administrator will determine the type of chemical involved. The Safety Data Sheet (SDS) binder must be consulted to identify appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleanup procedures. If the chemical is unknown, call 911 and follow the directions of the Fire Department upon arrival.

Typically, internal cleaning or laundry chemical spills present minimal risk to residents, staff, or the building and can be managed using an emergency spill kit. Spill kits are located on the top shelf in the Receiving Entrance storeroom.

1. Remove residents from the immediate area.
2. Open windows and exterior doors to ventilate the area.
3. Secure the area using safety cones or caution tape.
4. Report the spill to the Supervisor.
5. If the chemical is known, consult the SDS for proper cleanup procedures.
6. The Supervisor will assign appropriate staff to clean the spill using the emergency spill kit.

Threatening (Major) Internal Chemical Spill

A major spill presents a health hazard and cannot be safely contained using standard spill kits. It may pose risks such as entering the sewer system, reacting with other chemicals, becoming airborne, or spreading beyond the property. Immediate reporting is required.

1. Report the spill to the Administrator, DON, or Charge Nurse.
2. Call 911 if the spill poses an immediate threat to residents or staff.
3. Remove residents from the immediate area.

4. Open windows and exterior doors to ventilate the area, if safe to do so.
5. If the spill occurs in a resident care area, initiate horizontal evacuation procedures.
6. If the spill occurs outside the residence, follow the direction of Emergency Services.

Air Exclusion – External Chemical Spill

In the event of an external chemical hazard requiring air exclusion, the **Supervisor (Charge Nurse – Nursing Home)** will ensure all entry points for outside air are secured. The following actions must be taken immediately:

1. Announce over the P.A. system:
   "Attention staff: Code Orange, Code Orange, Code Orange – Air Exclusion is in effect."
   Notify the Director of Nursing, Administrator, and Director of Support Services.
2. Activate the fire alarm system to initiate emergency procedures.
3. Call 911.
4. Close all windows and exterior doors.
5. Turn off all air conditioning units and set air intake systems to the closed position. Seal gaps around window units with duct tape (available in the Maintenance Office).
6. Turn off all ceiling and exhaust fans throughout the facility, including washrooms, lounges, offices, dietary areas, and the retirement home.
7. Shut down all air make-up units. Access switches located in:
   - Maintenance Hall custodial closet
   - East Wing custodial closet
   - Dietary Department (Maintenance Hall door)
   - Retirement Home custodial closet
   - Glass vestibule between buildings
   - Electrical closet leading to retirement suites
8. Use tape and plastic (e.g., black garbage bags) to seal vents, exhaust grills, dryer vents, and any other external openings.
9. If there is a risk of explosion, close all curtains and blinds. Keep residents and staff away from windows.
10. Follow the directions of the Fire Department upon arrival.
11. Monitor local radio or television for updates and instructions.
12. The Administrator or designate will notify the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Health.
13. Complete a Critical Incident Report.
14. Conduct and document a debriefing, including evaluation and improvement planning.
15. Maintain air exclusion measures until directed otherwise by emergency authorities. Evacuation decisions will be made by emergency services.
16. Refer to the Evacuation Emergency Policy for additional guidance.

Conduct Debriefing Meeting / Plan for Recovery

A debriefing will be conducted to ensure all required notifications have been completed and appropriate corrective actions have been taken. This includes residents, substitute decision-makers, staff, volunteers, and students.
The debriefing process provides an opportunity to:

- Evaluate the response and revise procedures
- Identify lessons learned
- Address concerns
- Provide support, including referral to Employee Assistance Programs if needed

Residents will be monitored for signs of distress or trauma, with referrals made to appropriate support as required.
Recovery planning will be tailored to the specific event and will focus on restoring services, infrastructure, and operations.

- **Short-term recovery** may include repairs and staffing adjustments.
- **Long-term recovery** may include enhancements to safety systems and emergency preparedness.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

Charge Nurse – Nursing Home

Acts as Incident Manager during a major event. Responsible for:

- Announcing Code Green (evacuation) or Code Orange (air exclusion) three times over the P.A. system
- Directing all staff to report to the Nursing Station for assignments
- Ensuring communication equipment (e.g., walkie-talkies) is distributed
- Completing incident documentation and Critical Incident Reports (LTC; Retirement Home to notify RHRA)
- Conducting debriefing and updating care plans as needed

Charge Nurse – Retirement Home

- Reports to and support the Nursing Home Charge Nurse
- Assists with response activities as required
- Notifies RHRA once the emergency has concluded

Retirement Home Staff

- Report to the Charge Nurse
- Assist with evacuation or air exclusion procedures as directed

---

Nursing Department Staff

- Report to the Charge Nurse
- Assist with resident evacuation or air exclusion procedures

---

Administrator

- Coordinates with the DON and Director of Support Services
- Assists with evacuation or air exclusion efforts

- Manages communication and ensures minimal disruption
- Acts as the sole media spokesperson in accordance with the Communication Plan

---

Director of Nursing

- Supports the Incident Manager
- Assists with coordination and clinical oversight

Dietary, Laundry, Housekeeping, and Recreation Staff

- Report to the Charge Nurse
- Assist with evacuation or air exclusion procedures as directed

---

Dietary/Housekeeping Aide – Retirement Home

- Reports to the Charge Nurse
- Assists with evacuation or air exclusion procedures

Director of Environmental Services / Maintenance Staff

- Report to the Charge Nurse
- Assist with evacuation or sealing the building during air exclusion
- Gather and use supplies (tape, plastic, tools) to secure ventilation points

---

Human Resources and Information Manager

- Reports to the Charge Nurse
- Assists with evacuation or air exclusion procedures as directed

---

Volunteers / Visitors

- Remain with the residents they are visiting
- Follow the direction of the Charge Nurse