

5.10 Fire Safety

5.10.1 Introduction

The Corporation is responsible for carrying out the provisions of the Ontario Fire Code. This section outlines our responsibilities as well as inspections and testing required of related fire safety systems.

5.10.2 Responsibilities of Corporation (Owner)

- a) Establishment of emergency procedures to be followed at the time of an emergency;
- b) Appointment and organization of designated supervisory staff to carry out fire safety duties;
- c) Instruction of supervisory staff and other occupants so that they are aware of their responsibilities for fire safety;
- d) Assuring maintenance of building facilities provided for safety of the occupants;
- e) Provisions of alternative measures for safety of occupants during shutdown of fire protection equipment;
- f) Assuring that checks, tests and inspections as required by the Fire Code are completed on schedule and that records are retained.

5.10.3 Responsibilities - Superintendents

- a) The Superintendents are responsible for daily, weekly and monthly monitoring as required under the Fire Code of all fire safety equipment located within their site. Thereafter, "monitoring" includes visual inspections and written verification in the project's Fire Safety Log and immediate notification of equipment malfunction or shutdown to their assigned Property Manager or staff person on duty as well as the local Fire Dept. authorities.
- b) Additional Responsibilities:
 - i. Keep doors to stairways closed at all times.
 - ii. Keep stairways, landings, hallway, passageways and exits (inside and out) clear of obstruction at all times.
 - iii. Do not permit combustible materials to accumulate in any part of a stairway or other means of egress or elevator and ventilation

- shafts.
 - iv. Do not permit combustible waste materials to accumulate in quantities of locations which will constitute a fire hazard.
 - v. Promptly remove all combustible waste from all areas where waste is placed for disposal.
 - vi. Keep access roads clear and accessible for Fire Department use.
 - vii. Have a working knowledge of the fire alarm system and how it resets.
 - viii. Maintain the fire alarm system and other fire protection equipment in good operation at all times.
 - ix. In the event of any shutdown of fire protection equipment, notify the Fire Department and patrol the affected areas (ie. Hallways, underground garage etc.) Once every hour.
 - x. Arrange for a substitute in your absence.
- c) During an emergency situation:
- (i) Ensure the fire alarm has been activated.
 - (ii) Notify the Fire Department at 911 and inform them of the emergency condition.
 - (iii) Supervise the evacuation of the occupants.
 - (iv) Upon arrival of the fire fighters, inform the Fire Official regarding conditions in the building and co-ordinate the efforts of supervisory staff with those of the Fire Department.
 - (v) Provide access and vital information to fire fighters (ie. keys for access to suites, service rooms, elevators, etc.).
 - (vi) See that the Fire Alarm System is not silenced until the Fire Department has responded and the cause of the alarm has been investigated.
 - (vii) Reset the Fire Alarm System only when directed to do so by the Fire Department.
 - (viii) Contact monitoring company (if applicable) and advise that fire systems have been reset.

5.10.4 Responsibilities - Property Managers

- a) It is the responsibility of the Property Manager to ensure the required checking, testing, and inspecting of all fire protection equipment, warning and life safety systems are carried out as required by the Ontario Fire Code and recorded in the site's Fire Log Book.
- b) The Property Manager must work closely with the Project Superintendent staff to ensure responsibilities are clear.
- c) The Property Manager must inspect all fire safety equipment and

applicable logs as part of their monthly inspection of site. Deficiencies are to be documented in writing on the Inspection Report and rectified immediately. It is the responsibility of the Property Manager to maintain a close working relationship with the local fire authorities and ensure an inspection of the building by same be conducted on an annual basis.

- d) The Property Manger, in conjunction with the Manager, Housing Operations Division, is responsible for the preparation of the Fire Safety Plan.
- e) Additional Responsibilities of Property Manager:
 - (i) Be in complete charge of the approved Fire Safety Plan and the specific responsibilities of the site personnel.
 - (ii) Designate and train sufficient assistants to act in this position during any absence from the building.
 - (iii) Educate and train all building personnel and advise occupants in the use of the existing fire safety equipment and in the actions to be taken under the approved Fire Safety Plan.
 - (iv) Generally ensure that all provisions set out in the Fire Safety Plan are carried out.
 - (v) Holding of fire drills.
 - (vi) Notifications of the Chief Fire Official regarding changes in the Fire Safety Plan.

5.10.5 Fire Safety Log

- a) For projects equipped with fire safety equipment, including a fire alarm panel, sprinkler system, emergency lighting, etc., a Fire Safety Log (red hardcover book) will be maintained by the Superintendent or assigned staff person and monitored regularly by the Property Manager. The Fire Safety Log is to be kept in the site office.
- b) For projects with equipment limited to smoke detectors, exit lights, Emergency Lighting and Fire Extinguishers, standard log sheets (attached) will be used for recording purposes and will be kept in an accessible area either in a file folder legibly marked "Fire Safety Equipment" or a 3-ring binder in the site office (see attachments: Weekly Maintenance Requirements (1 form) and Monthly Maintenance Requirements (1 form) and Monthly Maintenance Requirements for Fire Extinguishers (1 form)).

5.10.6 Smoke Alarms

- a) Smoke alarms are tested by the Project Superintendent and/or the site

Property Manager. Date of testing is to be noted in the applicable space on the Corporation's Unit Inspection Form; and the Smoke Alarm Maintenance Checklist which must be signed by the tenant (copy attached). Malfunctions or disconnects are to be reported immediately to the assigned Property Manager and immediate repairs/replacement must be initiated in order to minimize risk to the tenant. Spare smoke detectors must be stocked at each site to ensure immediate replacement can be completed. In the event the replacement cannot be completed the same day, a battery operated alarm should be installed to provide protection on a temporary basis.

b) Frequency of Smoke Alarm Testing and Maintenance:

Smoke alarms should be tested:

- (i) annually
- (ii) at change of tenancy
- (iii) during a malfunction or replacement;
- (iv) following electrical renovations or servicing when smoke alarms are AC powered to ensure that the smoke alarm circuit has not been disconnected.

c) Routine Test and Maintenance:

- (i) The Smoke Alarm should be tested using the test device located on the smoke alarm or another test method recommended by the manufacturer. The Alarm signal should sound during this test. If interconnected smoke alarms are installed, all smoke alarms should sound the alarm when any one of the smoke alarms is tested.
- (ii) Do a visual check to ensure that the smoke alarm is securely fastened to the ceiling or wall.
- (iii) Do a visual check to ensure that the smoke alarm is not obstructed/installed in a manner that would prevent smoke from reaching or entering the smoke alarm (ie. The ventilation holes of the smoke alarm must be kept clean and unobstructed, any ceiling fans are not close enough to prevent air flow from reaching the smoke alarm, etc.).

d) Annual Test and Maintenance:

- i) Vacuum the exterior of the smoke alarm with a household vacuum cleaner. A brush attachment may assist in removing accumulated dust on the cover of the device. Caution: For smoke alarms that are AC powered, some manufacturers's specify that the power supply to the smoke alarm circuit be disconnected (normally a

separate breaker or fuse at the main panel) before vacuuming. AC powered smoke alarms should only be vacuumed externally and no attempt should be made to open the case. Follow the manufacturer's instructions at all times. **Remember to restore the power supply** when the cleaning is completed.

- ii) Do a visual check to ensure that the smoke alarm is securely fastened to the ceiling or wall.
- iii) After vacuuming, test the smoke alarm using smoke from an incense stick, punk stick or a cotton string placed in an ashtray or other suitable noncombustible container.
Caution: Smouldering materials used in this test should be disposed of in a manner that does not create a fire hazard. Direct open flames from matches lighters or candles should not be used to test smoke alarms.

d) Replacement of Smoke Alarms:

Smoke alarms should be replaced if:

- i) the smoke alarm does not sound an alarm during the test (after it is confirmed the AC power supply is not disconnected).
- ii) the exterior of the case is physically damaged.
- iii) the exterior case is painted.
- iv) the unit is covered with smoke stains, heavy grease or dirt accumulations.
- v) the smoke alarm caused frequent false alarms that are not the result of cooking or steam
- vi) the smoke alarm is more than 10 years old or has exceeded the manufacturer's recommended life cycle.

Where available, a copy of the smoke alarm manufacturer's instructions are to be provided to the resident.

e) Record keeping:

- i) Written records of corrective measures with regard to smoke alarm maintenance must be maintained as they demonstrate due diligence in smoke alarms maintenance.
- ii) Superintendent staff is responsible for completion and signing of the Smoke Alarm Maintenance Checklist each time an alarm is tested and/or replaced and is to ensure the resident signs at the bottom of the form as well. This form is to be filed in the Tenant Files kept in the Superintendents' Site Office.
- iii) In addition, at move-in inspection, residents are to receive the "Smoke Alarm Maintenance Information for Tenants and Occupants in Rental Units."

5.10.7 Lock Boxes

The local fire authorities upon review of a housing project may request the installation of a lock box which will contain applicable building keys (master, elevator keys) for use by fire fighters in the event of fire or other emergency. This lock box is normally located at the building entrance. The Fire Department has sole access to these boxes.

5.10.8 Annual Inspection and Testing of Fire Systems

- a) In accordance with the Ontario Fire Code, an annual inspection and testing of all fire systems is completed by qualified contractors each year. A tender is prepared by for all sites equipped with fire safety systems. Quotations are obtained from contractors acceptable to Durham Region Non-Profit Housing Corporation having jurisdiction for service.
- b) The Superintendent site staff or Property Manager must accompany the contractor during the inspection and testing of fire systems. It is the Property Manager's responsibility to converse with the Contractor in order to discuss and facilitate any deficiencies noted as a result of the test. Deficiencies are to be reviewed with the Manager, Housing Operations and are to be completed with top priority. The Contractor will issue a Certificate upon completion to verify all systems were inspected and working. The Certificate along with all paperwork including Inspections, Tests, deficiency reports etc. is to be filed in the tender file with a copy for the site office.

5.10.9 Fire Drills

- a) Fire drills are to be held in accordance with the Ontario Fire Code. The Property Manager as well as Superintendent staff are to participate in the drill. Tenants are to be given 24 hour advance warning of the drill by posting of Notices in common areas and are encouraged to participate. The Fire Department is notified prior to the drill and immediately afterwards once systems are reset.
- b) During the fire drill, the Superintendent staff are to follow through their list of responsibilities as outlined in the Fire Safety Plan. All staff members are to be familiar with their procedures and fire alarm panel, therefore, it is necessary for all to participate in procedures and resetting of the fire alarm panel.
- c) Fire bells are checked by staff persons present to ensure all operate.

- d) A Fire Drill Report is to be completed by the Property Manager and kept on file for reference (a copy is attached).

5.10.10 Fire Safety Plan

- a) The Fire Safety Plan is to be prepared by the Property Manager in conjunction with the Manager, Housing Operations prior to occupancy of the building. A copy of a standard Fire Safety Plan is attached. The Plan is divided into sections to include:
- ▶ Introduction
 - ▶ Building & Human Resources
 - ▶ Instructions to Occupants on Fire Procedures
 - ▶ Emergency Procedures
 - ▶ Control of Fire Hazards in the Building
 - ▶ Appointment & Organization of Supervisory Staff
 - ▶ Fire Drills
 - ▶ Fire Safety Maintenance Requirements
 - ▶ Non Ambulatory: Persons Requiring Assistance
 - ▶ Alternate Measures for Occupant Fire Safety
 - ▶ Distribution, Posting of Schematic Diagrams & Records
- b) The Fire Safety Plan must be approved by the local fire authorities. The original is kept on file and copies are distributed to all staff responsible for coverage at the applicable site. The Property Manager is to review the Fire Safety Plans for their applicable portfolios on an annual basis in order to make necessary changes and updates and is to provide updated copies to the local Fire Department and all applicable staff.

5.10.11 Tenant Evacuation Process

A copy of a standard Tenant Evacuation Process package is attached and is given to the tenant at lease signing by the Tenant Placement Officer/Rent Assessment Officer.

5.10.12 Carbon Monoxide Alarms

- a) Carbon monoxide alarms will be installed in corporation projects in accordance with local municipal bylaws. The bylaw will dictate the type of carbon monoxide alarms to be installed. Currently the corporation installs plug-in alarms within the units and hard wire alarms within common areas.
- b) Frequency of Carbon Monoxide Alarm Testing and Maintenance:
- Carbon monoxide alarms should be tested by corporation staff:

- a) annually;
 - b) at change of tenancy;
 - c) during a malfunction or replacement and;
 - d) following electrical renovations or servicing, to ensure power maintained to alarm unit;
- c) Routine Test and Maintenance (at unit turnovers, etc.):
- i) Do a visual check to ensure alarm is plugged in securely to outlet and is not obstructed by furniture, drapes, etc.
 - ii) The carbon monoxide alarm is equipped with a Test/Reset button. Test unit by pressing Test/Reset button. Alarm signal should sound during this test.
- d) Annual Test and Maintenance:
- i) Do a visual check to ensure alarm is plugged in securely to outlet and is not obstructed by furniture and drapes, etc.
 - ii) Vacuum the air vents located on the front of the carbon monoxide alarm with a household vacuum.
 - iii) The carbon monoxide alarm is equipped with a Test/Reset button. Test unit by pressing Test/Reset button. Alarm signal should sound during this test.
- e) Replacement of Carbon Monoxide Alarms:

Carbon monoxide alarms should be replaced if:

- i) the alarm does not sound during the test (after it is confirmed the AC power supply is not disconnected).
- ii) the exterior of the case is physically damaged.
- iii) the exterior case is painted.
- iv) the unit is covered with smoke stains, heavy grease or dirt accumulations.
- v) there are frequent false alarms that are not the result of cooking or steam.
- vi) the alarm has exceeded the manufacturer's recommended life cycle.

Where available, a copy of the carbon monoxide alarm manufacturer's instructions are to be provided to the resident.

- f) Record keeping:
- i) Written records of corrective measures with regard to carbon

monoxide alarm maintenance must be maintained as they demonstrate due diligence in alarm maintenance.

- ii) Superintendent staff is responsible for completion and signing of the Carbon Monoxide Alarm Maintenance Checklist each time an alarm is tested and/or replaced and is to ensure the resident signs at the bottom of the form as well. This form is to be filed in the Tenant Files kept in the Superintendents' Site Office.