Under the Building Code (Division B, Section 9.7 of the Ontario Fire Code) CLW residences are classified as “care occupancy.”

Care Occupancy means: “an occupancy in which special care is provided by a facility, directly through its staff, or indirectly through another provider, to residents of the facility, a) who require special care because of cognitive or physical limitations b) and who, as a result of those limitations, would be incapable of evacuating the occupancy, if necessary, without the assistance of another person”

In a fire, “supervisory staff,” which includes all CLW employees and volunteers, are responsible for the evacuation of the people we support.

Fire Drill Training
During a fire emergency, employees must evacuate people supported until one of two conditions are met:

1) They are relieved by the fire department
2) The staff member deems the situation too unsafe to continue
What has CLW done to enhance the ability of a home to allow egress during a fire emergency?

- Installed smoke alarms in all areas, including individual rooms;
- Provided fire extinguishers in all residences;
- Installed NFPA 13D compliant sprinkler systems in all homes, in all rooms, and supplied sprinklers with a municipal water source;
- Provided metal doors in some areas that may be hard to evacuate;
- Ensured grade-level points of egress where necessary;
- Widened doors and other custom features, where necessary;
- Avoided operating high-occupancy homes;
- Provided staffing resources 24hrs per day;
- Provided ongoing staff training; and
- Ensured that devices, procedures, policies, training are monitored and maintained.
What does CLW need to do to ensure we comply with the expectations of the Ontario Fire Marshal’s Office with respect to evacuations?

- We need to be sure that there are sufficient resources to allow for egress during a fire emergency. This includes having staff, fire suppression tools, specific physical features within a home, proper training, clear policies and conducting fire drills that represent the “worst case scenario.”

- We also need to be sure that people supported have the proper equipment to enable employees to assist them during an emergency. This could include slings, wheelchairs, custom beds, lifts, walkers and a number of other items.
The resources and supports that CLW provides are used to calculate the time required to evacuate a home during a fire. The considerations involved include:

- Determining individualized needs of people supported and identifying those individualized needs within a category (provided by the Fire Department).
- Using the category to determine how much time is needed to evacuate a specific individual from a home.
- Adjusting the time available to evacuate the home based on features like: types of doors used, location of smoke alarms, whether there are stairs, whether people can be moved on hospital beds, whether sprinkler systems are installed, and how many staff are on shift.

*The fire department provides us with a formula. Once we enter the information above, the formula generates three times:

1) The time required to evacuate a specific home
2) The time allowed to evacuate a specific home (sprinklers working)
3) The time allowed if the sprinklers malfunctioned
So... how did we do?

- Based on the physical features of CLW owned homes, the fact that smoke alarms are in every room and the fact we have sprinklers installed, the homes are considered to be very resilient during a fire.

- All of the homes at CLW allow for sufficient time to evacuate, even in the event that the sprinkler systems malfunction.

- The biggest factor to consider is that, as an employee you **absolutely must slow the spread of the fire by closing the doors** as you evacuate people. An example follows:
In a large bedroom, a smoke alarm will take 15-45 seconds to activate. Because we have sprinklers installed, that room is considered “tenable,” or safe, for at least 5 minutes.

As long as you close the door after evacuating the person from their room, and the fire is still contained within that room, you will have the ample time to evacuate the rest of the home. A chart follows, adapted from the Ontario Fire Marshal’s office. This illustrates the time a fire will be contained within a room:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Door</th>
<th>Without Sprinkler</th>
<th>With CLW’s Type of Sprinkler</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wood panel or hollow core door</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
<td>65 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollow metal door</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>90 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
So what are we going to do differently going forward?

Essentially, our fire drills are going to change quite a bit. Here’s how:

1. Twice per year (during months with a time change), drills will be conducted under the worst conditions, meaning that only one employee will participate. Others will observe and critique.
2. People supported will be asked to lie in their beds, simulating night time
3. We will use a “fire cone” to signify the location of the fire, and provide training to those we support with the goal being to identify alternate exits
4. We will ensure that doors are closed after people are evacuated from areas
5. We will debrief after all drills and determine what we did well and what needs to be improved-upon.
6. We will work together to provide recommendations that enhance safety and enhance our ability to evacuate people during a fire.
What Else?

We are setting more standards…

All people supported at CLW will need to meet one of the following criteria during a fire:

1) They can get out of bed and exit the building on their own, or with verbal or limited physical prompting during a fire.

2) They can transfer from their bed to their wheelchair with assistance from a staff member of lower-than-average physical strength.

3) They have the equipment and physical room features to allow one employee to use a lift to transfer them to their wheelchair. This includes: a dedicated lift (charged), a wheelchair that is in place in the room, a sling (folded on their wheelchair at night), no physical obstructions that would get in an employee’s way during the transfer process.
What Else?

We will be teaching people…

• After every fire drill, we debrief. Through practice and discussion, we will teach each other and the people we support. This will increase our collective knowledge and our ability to react well during an emergency.

We will bring up concerns…

• You will encounter questions, concerns and problems. Please share your thoughts with your Support Coordinator and your Manager, Support and be sure you understand their responses.

If something doesn’t make sense, challenge it!
A Learning Process…

Many of the life-saving skills that are required in a fire are not regularly practiced. Over time, employees should lead training to teach other employees and people supported, as appropriate, for the following skills (these should be highlighted in the “debriefing” section of the fire drill report):

- **Pause** before opening a door and feel the door for heat. If it’s not hot, feel the door knob for heat.
- If the door and door knob are not hot, open the door very slightly at first. If smoke pours in:
  - Close the door, try to seal any openings, **go to the window**. If possible, escape through the window (ground level).
  - If the path is safer, stay low to avoid smoke and proceed to the nearest exit.
- If you will be stuck in smoke and cannot escape, try to cover your mouth with a damp cloth to filter the smoke.
What else can we do?

Take extra care to check and double-check the safety equipment at the home, making sure that:

• Fire extinguisher gauges are in the green zone;
• Batteries changed in smoke detectors at every time change (daylight savings);
• Fire extinguisher is removed monthly from holster and tipped upside-down a few times to ensure mixture and pressure;
• Bedrooms are audited for safety: does the furniture arrangement allow for safe egress during an emergency?;
• Extension cords are not used within the home;
• Only CSA approved power bars are used;
• Wires are not run under carpets; and
• You know your fire safety plan, your exits and the location of your extinguishers.
What do I do now?

This training has 4 parts:

1. Watch this PowerPoint presentation
2. Read (or re-read) the fire plan for your support location
3. Read the “Emergencies Procedure” found under the “Emergency Procedures” heading of the online Health and Safety Resource.
4. Complete the corresponding quiz on SOPTracker.

If you have any questions please contact your Manager, Support

Thanks!

Fire Drill Training