

# Understanding and Managing Fire Safety in Housing Accommodation

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## Agenda

1. Fire Safety Regulations
2. Occupancy Classification
3. Managing Fire Safety
4. Inspection Orders

## Housing Accommodation ?

I am referring to houses; detached, semi detached, row houses; apartment buildings; condominium buildings



## Building Code / Fire Code Terms

- Residential Occupancy
- Retirement Home regulated under the Retirements Homes Act 2010
- Care Occupancy

## 1. Fire Safety Regulations

Ontario  
Building Code



Ontario Fire  
Code



## Fire Safety Features

Building Code and Fire Code requirements

based upon:

- Building Height
- Building Size, and
- Building Occupancy

## Ontario Building Code

*Regulates*

- ◆ New Buildings
- ◆ Additions
- ◆ Renovations
- ◆ Changes of use or occupancy



# Ontario Building Code

## *Purpose*

- ◆ Minimum standards for new construction
- ◆ First introduced in 1975




# Ontario Building Code

## *Roles and Responsibilities*


- ◆ Owner / agent must comply
- ◆ Enforced by Municipal Building Department through building permit
- ◆ Advice and development by Buildings Branch (MMAH)






# Ontario Fire Code

- ◆ Regulates Fire Safety in existing buildings and premises
- ◆ Introduced in 1981


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# Ontario Fire Code

*Purpose*

- ◆ Provide an acceptable level of fire safety in existing buildings and on existing premises

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# Ontario Fire Code




## ***Roles and Responsibilities***

- ◆ Owner or specified individual must comply
- ◆ Enforced by Municipal Fire Departments
- ◆ Advice and Development by Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management (MCSCS)

## **Owner Definition**




means any person, firm or corporation having control over any portion of the **building** or property under consideration and includes the persons in the **building** or property




# Ontario Fire Code

## *Contents*

- ◆ Division A – Compliance, objectives, functions
- ◆ Division B – Acceptable Solutions (technical provisions)
- ◆ Division C – Administration

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# Ontario Fire Code

## Division B - Part 1

### *General*

- ◆ Records of tests and inspections
- ◆ Referenced documents

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# Ontario Fire Code

## Division B - Part 2

### *Building & Occupant Fire Safety*

- ◆ Fire Separations
- ◆ Finishes
- ◆ Fire Hazards
- ◆ Fire Department Access
- ◆ Service Equipment
- ◆ Safety to Life


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# Ontario Fire Code

## Division B - Part 2, Cont'd

- ◆ **Emergency Planning**
- ◆ Tents & Air Supported Structures
- ◆ Day-Care Centres
- ◆ Insulation & Reinsulation
- ◆ Covered Malls
- ◆ Installation of Smoke Alarms / **CO Alarms**
- ◆ Outdoor Public Amusement Areas
- ◆ Portable Oxygen Systems


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# Ontario Fire Code

Division B - Part 3

*Property Protection for Industrial & Commercial Occupancies*




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# Ontario Fire Code

Division B - Part 4

*Flammable & Combustible Liquids*



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# Ontario Fire Code

## Division B - Part 5

*Hazardous Materials, Processes and Operations*

E.G. Hot works such as cutting and welding

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# Ontario Fire Code

## Division B - Part 6

*Fire Protection Equipment*

- ◆ Portable Extinguishers
- ◆ Fire Alarm & Voice Communication Systems
- ◆ Standpipe & Hose Systems
- ◆ Sprinkler Systems
- ◆ Water Supplies
- ◆ Emergency Power
- ◆ Special Extinguishing Systems

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# Ontario Fire Code

## Division B - Part 7

*Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Fire Emergency Systems in High Buildings*

- ◆ Firefighters Elevators
- ◆ Venting to Aid Fire Fighting
- ◆ Central Alarm & Control Facility
- ◆ Voice Communication Systems
- ◆ Smoke Control Equipment


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# Ontario Fire Code

## Division B - Part 8

*Demolition*

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# Ontario Fire Code



## Division B - Part 9 - *Retrofit*


- ◆ **9.2** Assembly Occupancies - **1983**
- ◆ **9.3** Boarding, Lodging and Rooming Houses - **1983**
- ◆ **9.4** Health Care Facilities - **1987**
- ◆ **9.5** Buildings up to and Including 6 Storeys in Building Height With Residential Occupancies - **1992**
- ◆ **9.6** Buildings Higher Than 6 Storeys in Building Height with Residential Occupancies - **1992**
- ◆ **9.7** Buildings with a Care Occupancy or a Retirement Home - **2014**
- ◆ **9.8** Two Unit Residential Occupancies - **1994**
- ◆ **9.9** Hotels - **2007**

# Application of Fire Code Retrofit

Based upon

- Building Occupancy






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## 2. Occupancy Classification

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## Housing Accommodation


Three key definitions:

- Retirement Home
- Care Occupancy
- Residential Occupancy

Funding ?


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## Retirement Home Definition

means a retirement home regulated under the **Retirement Homes Act, 2010**, regardless of whether it is a **care occupancy** or a **residential occupancy**

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## Care Occupancy Definition



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.....


## Care Occupancy Definition, Cont'd



.....


- (a) who require special care because of cognitive or physical limitations, and
- (b) who, as a result of those limitations, would be incapable of evacuating the **occupancy**, if necessary, without the assistance of another person.






## An occupancy must have all of the following characteristics to be a Care Occupancy:

- Special care is provided by a facility, directly through its staff or indirectly through another provider, to residents
- Residents require special care because of cognitive or physical limitations
- Residents, as a result of these limitations, are incapable of evacuating the occupancy without the assistance of another person


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## What is meant by Special Care ?

Means care that is provided to residents because they have physical or cognitive limitations.


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## What is a facility ?



Facility means a building or a portion of a building designed, built or used to serve a specific function.

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## Facility – Yes or No ?




- Building operator provides both accommodation and special care services to tenants





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## Facility – Yes or No?




- Apartment building
- Tenants lease apartments directly from the landlord
- Some tenants contract directly with an outside agency for the provision of special care services
- The landlord has no involvement with the provision of special care services.





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## Facility – Yes or No?



- Apartment building
- Apartments on one floor are leased by an outside agency for the purpose of providing special care services and living accommodation to its clients.
- The landlord has no involvement, directly or indirectly, with the provision of special care services.



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## What is meant by Cognitive Limitation ?

Someone is considered to have a cognitive limitation if they

- do not understand or remember what activation of the fire alarm system means, or
- do not understand or remember what to do once the alarm has been activated.


## What is meant by Physical Limitation ?

Someone is considered to have a physical limitation if the limitation

- renders that person incapable of moving to a point of safety without assistance from another person.

## Care Occupancy as Residential Occupancy

A care *occupancy* may be classified as a Group C *major occupancy* provided.....next slide.....




OFC reference to OBC 3.1.2.5.

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## Care Occupancy as Residential Occupancy

- Occupants live as a single housekeeping unit in a *suite*,
- Sleeping accommodation provided for not more than 10 persons, and,
- Not more than 2 occupants require assistance in evacuation in case of an emergency.



OFC reference to OBC 3.1.2.5

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## Residential Occupancy Definition


means an **occupancy** in which sleeping accommodation is provided to residents who are not harboured for the purpose of receiving special care or treatment and are not involuntarily detained

## Retrofit Provisions that took effect January 01, 2014

Affect buildings that contain

- Long Term Care Homes
- Retirement Homes, as defined
- Care Occupancies


**Does not effect buildings with Residential Occupancies**




## Retrofit Section 9.7 - Jan 01, 2014

Applies to:


- Buildings containing care occupancies
- and
- Buildings containing retirement homes

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## Section 9.7 – Compliance Dates

<u>Fire Safety Feature</u>	<u>Compliance Date</u>
Smoke alarms	Mar. 01, 2014
Emergency lighting	Jan. 01, 2015
Fire alarm signal to fire dept.	Jan. 01, 2015

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## Section 9.7 – Compliance, Cont'd

<u>Fire Safety Feature</u>	<u>Compliance Date</u>
Sprinkler signal to fire dept.	Jan. 01, 2015
Self-closing devices	Jan. 01, 2016
Voice communication system	Jan. 01, 2016
Sprinkler system	Jan. 01, 2019

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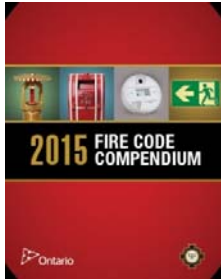
# 3. Managing Fire Safety

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## Fire Safety Plan Required by

- Ontario Fire Code (Section 2.8)



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## What Is a *Fire Safety Plan*?



- It is a unique document tailored to the individual needs and resources of a specific property.
- Owner's/Operator's "Fire Safety Manual"

## *Fire Safety Plan* Must Be:



- **Developed** by the owner
- **Approved** by the Chief Fire Official
- **Implemented** by the owner
- **Reviewed** annually and updated as necessary

## What Is In A *Fire Safety Plan*?




- Emergency Procedures
- Appointment and training of Supervisory Staff
- Building Fire Emergency Features
- Fire Drill Procedures
- Provisions to Control Fire Hazards
- Maintenance of Building Facilities
- Information for Firefighters
- Alternative Measures

## Emergency Procedures




- Sounding the fire alarm
- Notifying the fire department
- What to do upon hearing the fire alarm
- Evacuating occupants, including special provisions for people needing assistance
- Procedures for the use of elevators
- Confining, controlling and extinguishing the fire



## Emergency Procedures

- Procedures must be posted prominently on each floor

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## Appointment And Organization Of “Supervisory Staff”

- There must be sufficient supervisory staff available in care occupancies to carry out the duties as required in the fire safety plan

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## Supervisory Staff ?

- Those who have been assigned duties under the Fire Safety Plan

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## Appointment And Organization Of “Supervisory Staff”

- Training must be provided to Supervisory Staff
- Supervisory Staff must receive written instructions

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## Building Fire Emergency Features

- Containment
- Means of Egress
- Fire Alarm and Detection
- Suppression


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## Fire Drills

- Develop fire drill procedures in consultation with the fire department
- Keep a record of each fire drill


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## Control Of Fire Hazards




- Identify fire hazards
- Establish procedures to:
  - control
  - minimize, or
  - eliminate the hazards


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## Potential Fire Hazards



- smoking
- hot works
- poor housekeeping, kitchen, laundry
- flammable and combustible liquids
- disposal of wastes and other substances
- oxygen
- other ignition sources or risks

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## Maintenance of Building Features (As Required By Fire Code)

- **Check**
- **Inspect**
- **Test**
- **Maintain**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• fire routes</li><li>• fire separations</li><li>• fire doors</li><li>• emergency lighting</li><li>• exit signs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• fire alarm system</li><li>• sprinkler system</li><li>• fire hose system</li><li>• fire extinguishers</li><li>• water supplies</li><li>• other</li></ul>
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## Implementing alternative measures

For occupant safety during temporary shut down of fire safety systems



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## Information For Fire Fighting

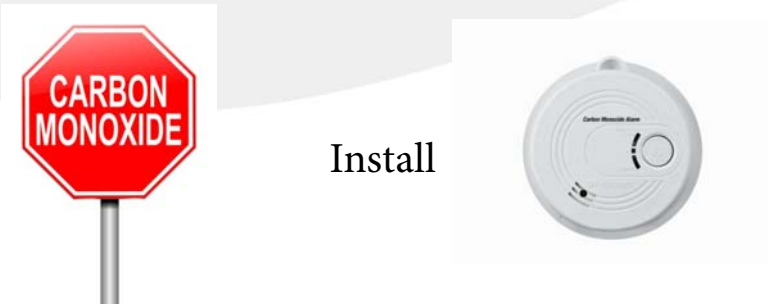


- Train Supervisory Staff to provide access to firefighters
- Provisions for after regular business hours
- Provide important information to firefighters upon their arrival

## Implementing a *Fire Safety Plan*:



- Minimizes fire risks to building occupants
- Establishes safe procedures to follow in the event of a fire
- Controls fire hazards in the workplace
- Coordinates fire department response and related activities with staff



Install


Residential buildings with fuel fired appliance or attached garage:

- Buildings with up to 6 residential units – April 15, 2015
- Buildings with more than 6 residential units – October 15, 2015

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## **4. Inspection Orders**

under the

# **Fire Protection and Prevention Act (FPPA)**


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## **Authority under the FPPA**

Following an inspection, an inspector may order owner or occupant of land or premises to take any measure necessary to ensure fire safety

S21. (1)

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## Contents of an Order

- Reasons for the order
- Explanation of the action required by the order
- Time to comply with the order
- Right to request a review and the right to appeal

s23.

## Right to request a review: Right to appeal

- Owner/occupant has the right to request a review by the Fire Marshal, except
  - In the case of an order made by the Fire Marshal, has a right to appeal to the Fire Safety Commission

s23.

## Request for Review by Fire Marshal

Request must be submitted in writing to the Fire Marshal within 15 days after the order is served.

Time may be extended, upon request, if there are reasonable grounds.

Request for review does not have to be supported with reasons or documentation.

All time frames based on calendar days

s.25.

## Powers of Fire Marshal

- Fire Marshal may
  - Confirm, amend or rescind the order, or
  - Refer the matter to the Fire Safety Commission;
- A hearing is not required to be held.
- Request for review operates as a stay.
- Fire Marshal may, upon request made by inspector, order that the stay be lifted if necessary in the interest of public safety.

FPPA, s. 25.(4)(5)(6)(7)

## Processing Requests for Reviews

Step 1: Confirm Request is Eligible for Review

Step 2: Validate Dates

Step 3: Confirm contents comply with FPPA

## Processing Requests for Reviews

- Step 4: Send acknowledgement letter
  - Addressed to Appellant and Inspector, and copied to Fire Chief

## Processing Requests for Reviews

- **Step 5: Submission of Additional Information**
  - Both parties are provided with opportunity to submit additional information to support their position/make their case – 4 weeks
  - May consist of photographs, reports, test results, etc.
  - Other party may request copy of information submitted
  - Requests for extension of time to submit additional material may be considered

## Processing Requests for Reviews

- **Step 6: Review**
  - Evaluated on a case by case basis by Fire Marshal Delegate
  - Based on information submitted by appellant and respondent to substantiate their positions

## Processing Requests for Reviews

- Step 7: Decision
  - Addressed to Appellant, Inspector, copied to Fire Chief
  - Summarizes the background
  - UPHOLDS, RESCINDS or AMENDS the work ordered
  - Compliance date: varies on a case by case basis
  - Reasons included to explain the decision

## Processing Requests for Reviews

- Step 8: After Decision is Issued
  - Either party may appeal Decision to the Fire Safety Commission (FSC).
  - Upon request, the Fire Marshal provides copies of pertinent documents to FSC



## Closing Note on Orders

The review process does not preclude the parties from working towards a resolution, upon which the order can be withdrawn by the inspector.

# The End

