



Fire Prevention Information Bulletin

RESIDENTIAL CARE OCCUPANCY MANITOBA FIRE CODE REQUIREMENTS

The requirements represented in this guideline are the result of an amendment to the Manitoba Fire Code under the Fires Prevention and Emergency Response Act (C.C.S.M c. F80) revised by the Office of the Fire Commissioner.

A Residential Care Occupancy in Manitoba (Group B, Division 4) means the occupancy or use of a building, or part thereof:

- a) As a residential care facility, other than a host family home, operating under a licence or letter of approval under the Social Services Administration Act
http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/current/_pdf-regs.php?reg=484/88%20R ; or
- b) as a child care facility operating under a licence issued under the Child Care facilities (other than foster homes) Licensing Regulation, Manitoba Regulation 17/99
http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/current/_pdf-regs.php?reg=17/99 ;

This does not include a facility used as a *treatment occupancy* or *detention occupancy*.

This guide applies to all existing residential care occupancies; including those that have letters of approval. These occupancies will be subject to annual fire inspections by Winnipeg Fire Department Fire Inspectors.

THIS GUIDE DOES NOT APPLY TO NEW CONSTRUCTION OF OR ADDITIONS TO RESIDENTIAL CARE OCCUPANCIES

Fire Inspectors will be checking for compliance to the new and requirements for Residential Care Occupancies effective April 16, 2016. These requirements include:

1. A fire safety plan must be developed and include;
 - a) Fire evacuation and procedures
 - b) Inspection and maintenance schedules of smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, CO detectors, emergency lighting and fuel-fired heating systems and appliances.
 - c) The location of smoke alarms
 - d) Identify two exits from every room and identify a safe meeting place outside the home.
 - e) Records of monthly fire drills, including evacuation times for future risk assessments as per licencing standards.

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- f) A floor plan must be posted on every floor showing the location of smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, emergency lighting, CO detectors, heating system, fire alarm panel, sprinkler system shut-off valve and emergency exits.
 - g) Post a narrative detailing basic evacuation procedures and any additional assistance required by residents.
 - h) The plan must be reviewed annually and updated when residents change or the assistance required by residents changes.
2. Each floor area must have two remotely placed means of egress except for floor areas used exclusively for building services, laundry or storage. Office spaces will not require a second means of egress on condition that the staff is not sleeping or resting in the office or basement floor area. (SEE TABLE IN APPENDIX A OF THIS GUIDELINE)
 3. Exit signs are required in Residential Care Occupancies with more than four Residential Care Clients. The exit signs must conform to the requirements of the Manitoba Building Code meaning all doors must have a lit exit sign above it or adjacent to it. This could be a self-illuminated sign with an electrical source, a photo luminescent sign that has a source of light to absorb, or in a room that is lit 24 hours a day.
As of January of 2021, emergency lighting is required in all Residential Care Occupancies; occupancies may want to consider installing combination exit signs and emergency lighting packs now to avoid increased costs for the future requirements.
 4. All Residential Care Occupancies (except if they are sprinklered) must maintain a flame spread rating of the walls and ceilings in a means of egress of 150 or less.
 5. Portable fire extinguishers must be installed in each floor area and serviced annually.
 6. Smoke alarms are required in each sleeping room, in a location between the sleeping rooms and the remainder of the floor area, and the hallway that serves sleeping rooms. Smoke alarms are required to be electrically hard-wired, with a battery back-up and interconnected so that the activation of one smoke alarm will cause all alarms within the dwelling unit to sound.
❖ **Before January 1, 2021, 10- year lithium battery powered smoke alarms will be permitted. Planning should be in place to comply with the requirements before January 2021.**

Fire Prevention strongly recommends that Residential Care Occupancies begin the development of plans to comply with the requirements for January 1, 2021 and January 1, 2026. We have been advised by the Office of the Fire Commissioner that funding may be available for the retrofit requirements and should be applied in advance of the retrofits taking place. As these due dates approach, the expectation is that the retrofit work will be complete and your occupancy will be in compliance with the requirements before the due dates.

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Requirements for January 1, 2021:

- Emergency Lighting is required in **all** Residential Care Occupancies;
 - In all exits, principal routes, public corridors.
 - Separate electrical supply from the rest of the building
 - Must be automatically actuated for at least 30 minutes when power is interrupted.
 - Shall provide at least 10 lx of illumination at the floor or tread level.

Requirements for January 1, 2026:

- Automatic sprinkler system shall be installed in **all** Residential Care Occupancies:
 - Except for 1-4 Residential Care Clients where it has been deemed unnecessary by the licencing authority following a risk assessment. (*Fire Inspector may request a copy of the risk assessment*)
 - In Residential Care Occupancies where there are 5-10 Residential Care Clients and there is no fire alarm system installed, the sprinkler system must have a water flow alarm.
 - Occupancies with more than 10 Residential Care Clients must have a sprinkler system installed. (no exceptions)
 - NFPA 13 Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems is the default system for residential care occupancies
 - NFPA 13R Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems in Low-Rise Residential Occupancies is permitted if the building is 4 stories or less and has 10 or less residential care clients or the building is 3 stories or less with 11-25 residential care clients.
 - NFPA 13D Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems in One- and Two-Family Dwellings and Manufactured Homes is permitted if the building contains no more than two dwelling units or suites, has no more than 4 residents and a 30 minute water supply can be met.
- Fire alarm system must be installed in a Residential Care Occupancy with more than 10 Residential Care Clients. (no exceptions)
 - If an existing fire alarm system is in place it will be assessed by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (Winnipeg Fire Department) and determined if it is acceptable.

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For more information on the requirements for Residential Care Occupancies contact:
Office of the Fire Commissioner
204-945-3322
1-800-282-8069
firecomm@gov.mb.ca

- Manitoba Regulation 221/2015 amends the Manitoba Fire Code Regulation 155/2011 (MFC) <http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/annual/2015/221.pdf>
- Manitoba Regulation 22/2015 amends the Manitoba Building Code Regulation 31/2011 (MBC) <http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/annual/2015/222.pdf>
- Residential Care User Guide.
http://www.firecomm.gov.mb.ca/docs/mb_res_care_userguide_mar2016.pdf

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APPENDIX A

| FLOOR AREA | BUILDING DESCRIPTION | CONDITION TO BE MET IN FLOOR AREA FOR SECOND MEANS OF EGRESS TO NOT BE REQUIRED |
|--|--|---|
| Any floor area above the first storey or any basement floor area | Any residential care occupancy | <i>No 2nd means of egress if</i> the floor area is used exclusively for building services, laundry or storage and offices where there is no sleeping or resting. |
| Any floor area above the first storey | Any residential care occupancy | <i>No 2nd means of egress if</i> floor area is served by a fire escape accessible by a <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Full-length door, or b) A casement window (vertically hinged) that <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Has an unobstructed opening of not less than 1100 mm high and 550 mm wide; and ii. Where the sill height is more than 900 mm above the floor is served by an interior stair and landing, the top of which is less than 900 mm below the window sill. |
| Second storey floor area | Any residential care occupancy | <i>No 2nd means of egress if</i> each bedroom in the floor area is served by a balcony that is accessible by a full-length door |
| Floor Area above the first storey | Building is sprinklered or has 1-4 residential care clients | <i>No 2nd means of egress if:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Each bedroom in the floor area is served by a balcony that is accessible by a full length door <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> b) Each bedroom window has all of the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a permanent EMERGENCY EXIT sign • is easily operable from the inside without special keys or knowledge • clear opening of 0.35m² (542 in²) and no distance less than 380mm • will stay open (i.e. doesn't spring shut or fall shut) |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sill height is 900mm off floor (or has landing) <p><u>(This means having an acceptable window does not require a balcony)</u></p> |
| Basement floor area | Any residential care occupancy | <p><i>No 2nd means of egress</i> if both of the following conditions are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The basement has a window that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Is easily accessible and clearly visible No portion of the window is below grade, except up to 150 mm if there is a window well providing a minimum clearance of 550 mm in front of the window and operation of the sash does not reduce this clearance to restrict escape. The window: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Can be opened, Is hinged to swing vertically Provides a minimum unobstructed opening of 0.385 m², with no dimension less than 500 mm Where the sill height is more than 900 mm above the floor is served by an interior stair and landing, the top of which is less than 900 mm below the window sill. The occupants of the building are capable of safely exiting without assistance in the event of a fire or other emergency. |

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