

Riverview Gardens - Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Emergency Response Plan

Weather Related Emergencies - Annex H

Policy Code: EME EXT

Issued: March 2010

Revised: April 2025

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Policy

Riverview Gardens recognizes that the potential for severe weather exists and will plan for and respond appropriately in the event of a severe weather event. A severe weather event would constitute any weather condition that would result in damage to the building, disruption of essential services where the residents and/or staff could be impacted or injured.

This Annex is available for staff.

Procedures

When there has been an advisement or forecast of severe weather, the responsible registered staff member and/or Administration will monitor the local radio, TV station or internet for any additional warnings and direction.

Weather Related Emergency Definitions

Environment Canada's Meteorological Service is responsible for issuing all Canadian weather alerts using a variety of different technologies. Watches, Warnings and Special Weather Statements alert Canadians to a number of weather conditions that are occurring or are expected to occur, that could impact your safety or cause damage to property or the environment.

Watches provide a "heads-up" that conditions *are favourable* for a possible summer or winter storm. This storm could affect your safety or at least cause inconvenience, but at this time there is uncertainty about the track and strength of the system. A watch in the summer may be issued up to six hours before the event and in the case of winter events at least 12 to 24 hours in advance.

Warnings alert you when severe weather *is occurring or will occur*. Warnings are issued ideally when severe weather is expected to affect land-based communities within at least six to as much as 24 hours. Storms related to thunderstorms offer shorter advance notification and may be issued less than one hour in advance. Updated statements are reissued at least every six to eight hours or as needed, so you can stay up to date on the developing situation. More than one type of warning for a location can be in effect.

Special Weather Statements are issued for weather events that are unusual, cause general inconvenience or public concern and cannot adequately be described in a weather forecast.

For further information please see Environment Canada's web site at:
<http://www.ec.gc.ca/meteo-weather/default.asp?lang=En&n=C9A8D735-1>

Snow storm/Ice Storm

When more than one winter hazard is expected to occur, then a winter storm alert may be issued. Be aware of the potential for heavy snow, reduced visibilities, strong winds, freezing rain or extreme wind chill.

A **winter storm watch** will alert you to the potential of hazardous conditions. It will precede a variety of potential warnings and may be issued up to 48 to 60 hours in advance.

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A **winter storm warning** will alert you that combinations of hazardous winter conditions are occurring or expected to develop shortly. A warning is normally not issued more than 12 to 14 hours in advance.

A **snowfall warning** is issued when hazardous amounts are expected to fall over a 12- or 24-hour period. Snowfall warnings are not issued more than 12 to 24 hours in advance and in some regions a *Winter Storm Watch* may give advance notification to a warning. A *Special Weather Statement* may be issued for lesser amounts in special circumstances.

A **blizzard warning** is issued when winds of 40 km/h or more, are expected to cause widespread reductions in visibilities to less than one kilometre, due to blowing snow, for at least four to six hours. Warnings are generally issued 12 to 24 hours in advance. In some regions a blizzard warning may be preceded by a *Winter Storm Watch*. Blizzard conditions generally do not last more than six to 12 hours, but have been known to last four to six days. Often blizzard conditions will develop suddenly after the passage of a storm system.

Thunderstorms & Rainfall

A **severe thunderstorm watch** is issued *when conditions are likely* for the development of thunderstorms, some of which may become severe thunderstorms with large hail, heavy rain, deadly lightning or damaging winds and possibly tornadoes within the areas and times specified in the watch.

You should use this time to secure loose objects, ensure residents and/or staff are prepared to take action and listen carefully for an updated weather report.

A **severe thunderstorm warning** is issued *when a severe storm has developed*, producing one or more of the following conditions:

- flooding rain,
- destructive winds with gusts greater than 90 km/h,
- hail of at least 10 to 20 mm in diameter,
- intense lightning,
- severe thunderstorms may also produce tornadoes.

The storm's expected motion and developments will be given in the warning. If you are in the area specified, *take shelter*.

Rainfall warning is issued when heavy or prolonged rainfall is sufficient to cause local or widespread flooding or flash floods.

A rainfall warning is generally issued not more than 24 hours in advance and is not preceded by a watch.

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Staff Roles - Charge Nurse:

1. Charge Nurse - Second Floor RN on days and Designated Charge Nurse on Evenings and Midnights
2. Ensure all residents are inside during a thunderstorm warning by sending 2 staff to check courtyard and calling RPN on each floor to determine residents off the floor.
3. Lock door leading out to the courtyard if necessary (housekeeping and maintenance both have keys)

Flooding

Flooding occurs when water in a river, stream or lake exceeds its bank. Flooding can be caused by many factors, including the amount and type of precipitation, the condition of drainage flow and climate.

In the event of a potential flood the Director, Seniors Services or designate will determine if an evacuation of the facility is required or if it's safer to shelter in place.

This will be determined by the mitigating factors at the time including, time of year, if and how quickly the building can be sandbagged, other areas in the city that are impacted etc.

Tornado's

Notification of a tornado alert will come from Environment Canada through the use of the radio, TV and email notifications. The alerts they may issue are:

- A **tornado watch** is issued when severe thunderstorms have *developed* and there is the possibility of one or more tornadoes developing within the areas and times specified in the watch. Be prepared to take action if a warning is issued.
- A **tornado warning** is issued when one or more *tornadoes are occurring* in the area specified *or detected on Doppler radar*. The expected motion, development and duration will be given in the warning. Find appropriate shelter.

Safety tip: remember that severe thunderstorms sometimes produce tornadoes with little or no warning. Treat all funnel clouds and tornadoes seriously. If you see a funnel approaching or large hail is falling you should immediately notify the Charge Nurse so appropriate steps can be taken to secure the safety of the residents and staff.

Any employee on duty who hears a tornado warning will advise the Charge Nurse or the RN on their floor.

Staff Roles - Charge Nurse

Steps for charge nurse (Second Floor RN on days and Designated Charge Nurse on Evenings and Midnights):

1. Announce overhead the following:

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“Attention all staff we are under a Weather Warning, relocate all residents to the corridors away from windows” X 3;

“Attention all RPN’s, distribute walkie talkie’s to staff on emergency channel 3.0” X 3

2. Provide further direction to the staff as required for the safe relocation of residents in the home (i.e. away from windows, in the corridors etc.);
3. Delegate 2 employees as a pair to check the outside grounds quickly and bring in any residents from the Garden area. If it is not safe to return to the floors congregate in the service corridor away from windows and exterior doors;
4. Ensure staff are relocated away from windows and exterior doors;
5. Following the tornado the Charge Nurse will notify the Director, Senior Services or designate if the home was contacted by the tornado;
6. The Charge Nurse will contact maintenance staff for an assessment of the damage and assign other staff to assist the assessment as required;
7. *If there is extensive damage* the Charge Nurse or designate will dial 911 and provide the information to dispatch, including our address of:

519 King Street West

8. Residents and staff who are in immediate danger due to damage to the facility will be relocated within the home as quickly and safely as possible, and will be evacuated outside the home if necessary and safe to do so;
9. If an updated assessment needs to be provided to the Director, Senior Services or designate the Charge Nurse will do so as quickly as possible, at that time the Director, Senior Services or designate will provide any necessary further instructions and will determine if the Department Operations Center (see Annex Q) needs to be established and whether the fan out lists will be activated;
10. If after the tornado if there is limited or no damage to the home the Charge Nurse will announce overhead the following:

“Attention all staff, weather warning all clear please return residents to their rooms” X3

11. The Charge Nurse will ensure any necessary cleanup is started/completed and that all staff and residents are accounted for;
12. The Charge Nurse will document any reports of damage and the response and provide the information to the Director, Senior Services or designate at the end of shift.

Staff Role - Director, Seniors Services or Designate

In the event a tornado makes contact with RVG, the Director, Seniors Services or Designate, will determine based on the extent of damage from the tornado, what of the following needs to be completed:

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- Determine if the members of the Emergency Control Group should be notified.
- Determine whether or not the Department Operations Center should be activated;
- Determine at that time, if at all, that the following groups need to be notified:
 - General Manager Health and Human Services;
 - Mayor & Council;
 - Ministry of Labour;
 - Ministry of Long Term Care
- Oversee the clean-up and repair of the home as required. If the damage to the home is extensive partial or complete evacuation may be required. If so please refer to Code Green.

Department Operations Center

The Department Operations Center (DOC) is the command center for the evacuation. It is where the Emergency Control Group will direct, coordinate, communicate and support emergency operations on the residential units.

Emergency Control Group

The Emergency Control Group (ECG) are members of Riverview Gardens management team who are responsible for coordinating the provisions of the essential services necessary to minimize the effects of an emergency effecting the home. The ECG consists of the following members:

| Position | Alternate |
|--|--|
| Director, Seniors Services | 1. Director of Nursing 2. Manager, Long Term Care |
| Director of Nursing | 1. Nurse Manager |
| Manager, Long Term Care, Emergency Portfolio | 1. Manger, Long Term Care, HR |
| Supervisor, Maintenance Services | 1. Supervisor, Environmental Services |
| Supervisor, Environmental Services | 1. Supervisor, Maintenance |
| Supervisor, Food Services | 1. Food Service Coordinators 2. Dietitian |
| Supervisor, Therapeutic Recreation & Volunteer Services | 1. Coordinator, Training and Safety 2. Volunteer Services Assistant |
| Medical Director | 1. Alternate doctor 2. CKHA |
| Social worker** | 1. Social Worker 2. Medical Secretary |

** The Social Worker may not be a regular member in the Department Operations Centres but has been assigned backups due to the nature of the tasks completed by this position.

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Providing guidance as requested to the ECG from the Municipality of Chatham-Kent would be the Assistant Chief, Fire & Emergency Services (designated Community Emergency Management Coordinator – CEMC).

Notifications of weather alerts

Environment Canada and the Weather Network will send out weather alerts via email through a subscribe system. The following positions will receive weather notifications on their work supplied cellular device:

- Director, Seniors Services
- Director of Nursing
- Manager, Long Term Care
- Supervisor, Maintenance Services
- Supervisor, Environmental Services

When a notice for a Tornado Watch or Warning is received after hours, when possible contact will be made to the Charge Nurse to advise them of the weather alert and to take the appropriate action.