

# Riverview Gardens - Municipality of Chatham-Kent

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

### WATER EMERGENCY – ANNEX L

Policy Code: EME WAT

Issued: March 2010

Revised: May 2026

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#### Policy

Riverview Gardens will be prepared for and respond appropriately in the event of a water emergency. RVG will implement the following procedures.

Please note: this information is based on a loss of water or a boil water advisory. If at the time of a water emergency the Public Health Unit (PHU) issues guidelines contrary to this policy, the higher level of procedure will be followed, whether it is this procedure or the guidelines issues by PHU.

#### Procedures

##### Water Loss

Water loss to the home may be caused by any number of factors. The Director, Seniors Services, or designate, will be responsible for notifying the MOLTC of the loss of an essential service\*. Regardless of the cause, the loss of water will result in a change to numerous procedures.

*\* Contamination of drinking water supply or an emergency, including loss of essential services, requires immediate notification of the MOLTC.*

##### Water Supply

If there is a complete loss of water to the home a supply of water is found with the emergency stock. There are individual bottles for resident beverages and there are larger containers to be used for cooking and hand washing. If it is Monday through Friday from 8:00 – 16:00 the Inventory Control/Receiver should be contacted at ext 6707. If it is after hours maintenance should be contacted at 6706 or 6709. If it is between the hours of 23:00 – 07:00 the on-call phone should be used to contact maintenance. A supplier is available to replenish the supply as soon as possible in an emergency situation. The supplier will be contacted by the Inventory Control/Receiver or the Supervisor, Environmental Services or designate.

Contact information is:

Fastenal Canada  
900 Richmond Street, Chatham  
Office: 519-358-7654

##### Hand Washing

Hands that are not visibly soiled will be cleaned using the alcohol hand sanitizer. For hands that are visibly soiled staff will clean their hands using soap and bottled water.

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#### **Drinking**

During a water loss event, bottled water will be provided for residents and staff use only. Cases of bottled water are stored with the emergency stock in Room S118.

#### **Bathing**

All personal care will be provided using Wet Wipes & disposable wash clothes while there is a loss of water. In the event that a resident misses a bath due to loss of water service, staff will notify the Nurse Manager or delegate to ensure that alternate arrangements for a bath are made.

#### **Toileting**

If needed, toilets can be used providing there is water in the bowl but they are NOT to be flushed when there is a complete loss of water. Once water is restored any toilet that was used must be flushed. Staff will need to advise residents who are independent of the procedure.

#### **Cleaning**

Any liquid spills should be mopped up as quickly as possible with a dry mop head. Any spills that become dry will first need to be wet by a product from a spray bottle found on a housekeeping cart. Vert-2-Go neutral for any items that are not blood or body fluids, ED (Everyday Disinfectant) for spills that are blood or body fluids.

#### **Code Red**

In the event of a complete loss of water the Supervisor Maintenance Services, or designate, will need to notify the Fire Department by calling 519-352-1100. Should a fire occur during a loss of water the fire hoses and sprinkler system will not function. The Fire Department when responding will either make arrangements to use a hydrant further away from the home or they will supply a tanker truck. The immediate internal response to a Code Red does not alter due to a lack of water; however, containment of the fire becomes that much more critical. Because of the failure of the sprinklers the spread of the fire may be more widespread which may result in a larger evacuation zone. This will be determined when the fire department arrives on scene.

#### **Planned water shut down**

Contingency plans for a planned water shut down will operate like a water loss situation. Department heads will be responsible for ensuring steps are taken to ensure the essential

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tasks are completed and that staff have the tools they require ahead of time based on the situation at hand.

## Water Contamination

In the event of a boil water advisory the Public Health Unit is responsible for notifying members of the community, including Riverview Gardens. This notification could come via telephone, email, door to door or if it's a large enough area notification could come from the media.

For our purposes our response will be the same for a Boil Water Advisory (BWA: This is used when boiling the water is adequate to render the water safe for use) and a Drinking Water Advisory (DWA: This is used when action other than boiling the water is necessary to protect users), unless advised otherwise by Public Health.

## Water Supply

If there is a contamination of the water supply to the home a supply of bottled water is found with the emergency stock. There are individual bottles for resident beverages and there are larger containers to be used for cooking and hand washing. If it is Monday through Friday from 8:00 – 16:00 the Inventory Control/Receiver should be contacted at ext. 6707. If it is after hours maintenance should be contacted at 6706 or 6709. The supplier will be contacted by the Inventory Control/Receiver or the Supervisor, Environmental Services or designate.

Contact information is:

Fastenal Canada  
900 Richmond Street, Chatham  
Office: 519-358-7654

## Hand Washing

If the boil water advisory has been issued staff can continue to wash their visibly soiled hands with soap and water and then use the alcohol hand sanitizer afterwards.

The Charge Nurse is responsible to ensure at each of the sinks, excluding resident rooms, a sign will be posted indicating that the water is not safe for consumptions (see end of Annex for copy of sign).

If the boil water advisory has been issued because of an outbreak, water can be used for hand washing by placing 1.5 ounces (about 45 millilitres) liquid bleach in 10 gallons (45 litres) of water. Mix and let stand for at least 10 minutes prior to use. Staff would then

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use the treated water with soap and wash their hands according to routine practices, followed by alcohol hand sanitizer

#### **Drinking**

During a boil water advisory or drinking water advisory only bottled water will be provided to the residents and staff for drinking. Residents who are cognitive will need to be informed by staff on the units that there is a boil water advisory and not to drink water directly from the taps. The Charge Nurse will be responsible for making an overhead announcement advising there is a water advisory and that water from the sinks should not be consumed.

#### **Bathing**

Depending on the type of water contamination, those residents who require a bath that may be bathed as necessary and as scheduled. If this is not feasible care will be provided as if there was a total loss of water.

#### **Toileting**

Toilets can continue to be used during a boil water advisory.

#### **Cleaning**

If a boil water advisory has been issued chemicals may still be dispensed, unless otherwise advised by the PHU.

If a drinking water advisory has been issued contact should be made with Public Health by the Supervisor, Environmental Services, or designate, for clarification on the use of water mixed with chemicals for disinfection and cleaning of the home.

#### **Laundry**

Continuation of the laundry functions will be determined by the nature of the contamination. The Supervisor, Environmental Services will make alternate arrangements for stock based on the situation at hand.

#### **Signage and Communication**

The Charge Nurse will be responsible with ensuring signs are posted at the entrance doors, drinking fountains, public sinks and in the elevators advising staff, residents and visitors that a boil water advisory has been issued by the Public Health Unit. (A signage template is found at the end of the policy).

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#### Dietary Services Specific Procedures

The Dietary Department is responsible to provide quality food and nutrition services prepared and served in an attractive, safe, and sanitary manner, within budget allowance, for the optimum satisfaction of the Resident. Included in this responsibility is operating under safe conditions during a loss of water or a boil water advisory. Below are guidelines to be followed under such circumstances.

Dietary Services will utilize disposable plates, utensils and cups as required based on the water loss or contamination at hand. The Supervisor, Dietary Services, or designate, is responsible with making the decision to either continue using regular dishes or to switch to disposable products.

#### **Water Loss**

If there is a complete loss of water to the home a supply of water is found with the emergency stock. There are individual bottles for resident beverages and there are larger containers to be used for cooking and hand washing. If it is Monday through Friday from 8:00 – 16:00 the Inventory Control/Receiver should be contacted at ext. 6707. If it is after hours maintenance should be contacted at 6706 or 6709. A supplier is available to replenish the supply as soon as possible in an emergency situation. The supplier will be contacted by the Inventory Control/Receiver or the Supervisor, Environmental Services or designate.

Contact information is:

Fastenal Canada  
900 Richmond Street, Chatham  
Office: 519-358-7654

#### **Food and Water**

##### Food

The home would need to switch to the emergency menu using bottled water for any items necessary. Last minute adjustments would be made based on the situation at hand.

##### Water for drinking

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Staff will use bottled water for drinking. Bottled water for residents and large volume bottled water is available in the Emergency Stock; contact the Inventory Control/Receiver at Ext. 6707 or Charge nurse at Ext 6700 (after hours) for access.

#### Water for cleaning fruit and vegetables and other foods

Use bottled water to clean fruit, vegetables and any other food product requiring cleaning. Bottled water for residents and large volume bottled water is available in the Emergency Stock; contact the Inventory Control/Receiver at 6707 for access.

#### Water for cooking

- Steam cooking is not available if there is a loss of water to the home;
- Use bottled water for foods that require water to be added before cooking or to be cooked with water;
- Bottled water for residents and large volume bottled water is available in the Emergency Stock; contact the Inventory Control/Receiver at 6707 for access.

#### Water for beverages other than water

- Coffee or tea from the *machines* **cannot** be used. Machines must have lines flushed according to manufacturer's directions after water is restored.
- Coffee and tea can be made with bottled water if a kettle is available.
- Juice from the machines **cannot** be used - substitute canned or bottled juice or drink crystals made with bottled water.

#### **Hand Washing**

Hands are to be washed using soap and bottled water. Bottled water for residents and large volume bottled water is available in the Emergency Stock; contact the Inventory Control/Receiver at 6707 for access.

#### **Equipment**

##### Dishwasher use

All servery dishwashers and the main kitchen dishwasher at RVG will not function if there is a loss of water to the home. Use disposable dishes.

##### Ice - Do not use

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Discard all ice made previously and disinfect the ice machines with a bleach solution before reusing. Mix ¼ cup (about 60ml) bleach into 1 gallon (4.5 litres) water for this purpose.

#### Disinfect counter tops, resident tables or cleaning of food service equipment

Counter tops, resident tables or cleaning of food service equipment should be washed with department multipurpose cleaner and then a food grade approved quaternary disinfectant. As the products are mixed as needed from a dispenser during a water loss the products would need to be hand mixed with bottled water when needed, based on the manufacturers recommendations. Products should be mixed with limited waste.

### **Water Contamination**

In the event of a boil water advisory the Public Health Unit is responsible for notifying members of the community, including Riverview Gardens. This notification could come via telephone, email, door to door or if it's a large enough area notification could come from the media.

For our purposes our response will be the same for a Boil Water Advisory (BWA: This is used when boiling the water is adequate to render the water safe for use) and a Drinking Water Advisory (DWA: This is used when action other than boiling the water is necessary to protect users), unless advised otherwise by Public Health.

### **Food and Water**

#### Food

The home would need to switch to the emergency menu using bottled water for any items necessary. Last minute adjustments would be made based on the situation at hand.

#### Water for drinking

Use bottled water for drinking. If bottled water is not available then water that has been brought to a rolling boil for a minimum of one (1) minute and cooled is acceptable, unless advised otherwise by the Public Health Unit. Bottled water for residents and staff and large volume bottled water is available in the Emergency Stock; contact the Inventory Control/Receiver at 6707 for access.

#### Water for cleaning fruit and vegetables and other foods

Use bottled water or water that has been brought to a rolling boil for a minimum of one (1) minute and cooled to clean fruit, vegetables and any other food product requiring

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cleaning. Bottled water for residents and large volume bottled water is available in the Emergency Stock; contact the Inventory Control/Receiver at 6707 for access.

#### Water for cooking

- Steam cooking is acceptable providing the equipment is turned on full steam capacity for 5 minutes before food is placed in steamer or combi-oven.
- Use bottled water or water that has been brought to a rolling boil for a minimum of one (1) minute prior to use for foods that require water to be added before cooking or to be cooked with water.
- Bottled water for residents and large volume bottled water is available in the Emergency Stock; contact the Inventory Control/Receiver at 6707 for access.

#### Water for beverages other than water

- Coffee or tea from the machines cannot be used.
- Coffee and tea can be made with bottled water or water that has been brought to a rolling boil for a minimum of one (1) minute.
- Juice from the machines cannot be used-substitute canned or bottled juice or drink crystals made with water that has been brought to a rolling boil for a minimum of one (1) minute prior to use or use bottled water.

#### **Hand Washing**

Hands are to be washed using soap and water, then sanitized with an alcohol based hand sanitizer. Any employee who will be directly handling food will then be required to wear disposable gloves.

Based on directions received from the Public Health Unit, under some circumstances hands may need to be washed using water that has been treated with a bleach solution of 45ml in 45l of water (1.5 ounces in 10 gallons). Bleach is stored with the dietary emergency supplies in the Dry storage room at the back of the main kitchen. Hand sanitizer may be used after hand washing is complete and disposable gloves will be worn for direct contact with food

#### **Equipment**

##### Dishwasher use

All servery dishwashers and the main kitchen dishwasher at RVG have a hot sanitation rinse setting, which safely disinfects dishes. Dishes should be washed on 2 minute minimum cycle. Dish machine temperatures need to be taken at the beginning of the meal service and re-checked every 5 minutes to ensure rinse temperatures of over 180F are maintained.

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#### Ice - Do not use

Discard all ice made previously and disinfect the ice machines with a bleach solution before reusing. Mix  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (about 60ml) bleach into 1 gallon (4.5 litres) water for this purpose. For more details on the steps to take please refer to the Equipment Operation and Cleaning Manual found in the communication centre in the dietary department.

#### Disinfect counter tops, resident tables or cleaning of food service equipment

Counter tops, resident tables or cleaning of food service equipment should be washed with department neutral cleaner and warm water, then disinfected with a bleach solution stronger than that used for emergency hand disinfection. Mix  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup (about 60ml) bleach into 1 gallon (4.5 litres) water for this purpose. Do not reuse or store this solution, but make it fresh daily. Gloves must be worn.

After the boil water advisory is lifted it will be necessary to run the water for a minimum of one (1) minute until it is clear. Run water only through the coffee machines and cold beverage machines for at least one (1) minute until it is clear.

### Following Water Loss/Contamination

There are steps to take once the water has been restored or the boil water advisory has been rescinded. Take the steps necessary based on the water emergency.

- Flush and disinfect any toilet that was used during a water loss emergency;
- Run the water for a minimum of ten (10) minutes until it is clear will be necessary for all faucets (staff will be responsible for ensuring any sinks in their work area are allowed to run for the required time);
- There will be air in the line until it has been cleared, this will sound like sputtering and is normal;
- The drinking fountains will be run for a minimum of ten (10) minutes until it is clear before drinking any water by maintenance;
- The Maintenance department will drain, flush and refill hot water heaters;
- The filters on the combi ovens & ice machines will need to be drained, flushed, sanitized and refilled and changed by the maintenance department;
- Ice machines need to be drained, flushed, sanitized and refilled by dietary;
- Remove any signs that were posted alerting staff, residents and visitors of the water emergency.

Director, Seniors Services

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The Director, Seniors Services, or designate may decide at any time during a water emergency to open the Department Operations Center (DOC) and convene the Emergency control Group (ECG) in order to safely and effectively respond to the situation at hand.

#### Department Operations Center

The Department Operations Center (DOC) is the command center for the emergency. 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
<b>Director, Seniors Services</b>	1. Director of Nursing 2. Manager of Long Term Care
<b>Director of Nursing</b>	1. Nurse Manager
<b>Manager, Long Term Care, Emergency portfolio</b>	1. Manager, Long Term Care, HR
<b>Supervisor, Maintenance Services</b>	1. Supervisor, Environmental Services
<b>Supervisor, Environmental Services</b>	1. Supervisor, Maintenance
<b>Supervisor, Food Services</b>	1. Food Service Coordinators 2. Dietitian
<b>Supervisor, Therapeutic Recreation &amp; Volunteer Services</b>	1. Coordinator, Training and Safety 2. Volunteer Services Assistant
<b>Medical Director</b>	1. Alternate doctor 2. CKHA
<b>Social Worker**</b>	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.

Gathering of the ECG does not indicate that an emergency has been or will be declared or that the Department Operations Centre (DOC) will be established.

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Ministry of Long Term Care

For information about health services and resources:

[http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/watersafe/pdf/watersafe\\_boiled.pdf](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/watersafe/pdf/watersafe_boiled.pdf)

For consumer-friendly health tips and information:

[www.HealthyOntario.com](http://www.HealthyOntario.com)

INFOline is open during business hours and can provide general information on healthcare.

INFOline: 1-877-234-4343

TTY: 1-800-387-5559

Telehealth Ontario is a 24/7 service which uses nurse practitioners to answer your immediate health concerns.

Telehealth Ontario: 1-866-797-0000

TTY: 1-866-797-0007

# ATTENTION

Please be advised that due to a boil water advisory from the Public Health Unit, water from this tap is not safe for consumption.

Excluding dietary staff, proper hand washing for **visibly** soiled hands consists of using soap and water, followed by an alcohol based hand sanitizer.