

ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCIES:

PREVENTING, PREPARING

AND RESPONDING

Environmental Emergencies: Preventing, Preparing and Responding

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ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCIES: PREVENTING, PREPARING AND RESPONDING

Description

Emergency preparedness means planning so you and those in the community residential setting know how to prevent crisis situations and manage those that do arise. This training focuses on environmental hazards you must prepare for, and your responsibilities in maintaining a safe environment for people living in your community residential setting. Your role in teaching people how to prepare for emergencies is explored. This section will not cover emergencies related to personal injury covered in standard first aid. There may be times when the skills covered in first aid would be required in responding to an environmental emergency. You will receive this skills set at a different time in your training.

Assessment

Successful completion of this module is based on three factors:

1. A minimum score on a true-false and multiple choice test covering the general emergency preparedness information in this material.
2. Completion of an assignment specific to the home you work in.
3. Satisfactory participation in class.

Learning Objectives

► At the end of this section, you will:

- Describe the possible environmental emergencies and your responsibilities for preventing, preparing and responding to the emergencies outlined in this section;
- Demonstrate the ability to respond quickly, correctly, and calmly in the event of an emergency.
- Demonstrate your ability to teach people how to prevent, be prepared for, and respond in emergencies.
- Name the emergencies most likely to occur in your area.
- List the things you can do to be ready in case an emergency does happen.
- Name what you can do to prevent these emergencies.
- Demonstrate and name the correct things to do if an emergency does happen.
- Take action to stop these emergencies from happening when possible.
- Act appropriately and get others to do so if an emergency does occur.
- Recognize the three elements necessary for a fire.
- Identify ways to prevent fires from starting.
- Identify your role and responsibilities in the event of a fire.
- Describe the purpose of, and your role in:
Protection Plans, Fire Drills, Evacuation Plans and Training People to Evacuate.
- State how to properly use fire extinguishers.
- Identify common household fire hazards and staff actions that may prevent fires associated with those hazards.

BE PREPARED FOR EMERGENCIES

► **After reading this material, you will:**

- **Be able to describe the types of emergency situations you may face and how to respond appropriately;**
- **Demonstrate your role in teaching emergency preparedness to the individuals you work with.**

*** Planning for an emergency includes:**

Knowing the kinds of emergencies and disasters to be prepared for;

Doing what you can to help stop these emergencies from happening;

Knowing the procedures and policies to be followed for each situation **BEFORE** an emergency occurs;

Knowing your responsibilities **DURING** and **AFTER** emergency situations;

Keeping an **UPDATED** list of phone numbers and other information by each phone;

Being sure you know who is "on call" at all times;

Being sure you are aware of any unusual physical problems people might have and knowing what to do for them; and

Teaching people what to do for each situation **BEFORE** it occurs.

***All of the following can be sources of emergencies:**

Winter Storms	Power Outages
Heating Failure	Water Shortages
Thunderstorms	Floods
Tornadoes	Fire
Lightning	Poison

This material covers precautions and safety tips for these types of environmental hazards. It is drawn from a variety of safety pamphlets and brochures and gives general information. Some material has been modified to address the needs and circumstances of people living in community residential settings.

- Consider how the information applies to the home in which you work.
- Location may decide which emergencies are concerns for your home.

YOUR ROLE AS A TEACHER:

You and your supervisor should discuss emergency policies and procedures. You should know what to do. You should also learn how to teach people living in their home:

- How to prevent emergencies;
- How to prepare for them; and,
- What to do in case of an emergency.

You need to know what each person can do for himself/herself in the event of an emergency. This helps you decide what to teach him/her. The home may need to consult with the case manager or psychologist to develop a plan to teach emergency preparedness. You will have

different expectations for different people. For example, a person who can't move himself could not learn to follow a fire evacuation route. That individual could learn to stay calm, so you can assist him/her to safety easily.

- Teaching emergency preparedness to the people living in community residential settings may not only save their lives, but yours as well!

Severe Weather

Severe weather may cause an emergency. Strong winds can knock down power lines creating a power outage. Heavy rains may cause flooding, resulting in power outages. You may experience a lack of drinking water and isolation. There is little you can do to prevent weather-related emergencies, but you can be ready for them. The simplest way to prepare is to listen to the radio or watch television and remember two terms: Watch and Warning.

WATCH means that there **COULD** be severe weather because the conditions are right. Stay tuned to TV or radio weather reports!

WARNING means that a severe weather condition has been spotted in your area. **FIND SHELTER IMMEDIATELY!**

Thunderstorms

A few hours' advance warning of a coming storm can be the key to not being caught in the storm, and being better prepared to handle any emergency situations that may arise. When planning outdoor activities, check the latest weather forecast and keep an eye on the sky. If you see darkening clouds, graying skies, increasing winds, tune in your car or portable radio for weather information. When a thunderstorm threatens, get inside a home, large building, or an automobile. Do not use the telephone except for emergencies.

Lightning

Lightning often occurs during thunderstorms. To lessen the chance of being struck by lightning, take the steps on the following page:

- Do not stand underneath a tall isolated tree or telephone pole or on a hilltop or other high places. They act as natural lightning rods.
- In a forest, seek shelter under a thick growth of small trees. In open areas, go to a low place such as a ravine or valley.
- Seek shelter during a storm: get inside a home, building or automobile. If outdoors, avoid tall structures, open water, metal equipment or wires.
- Get away from open water, tractors, and metal equipment or small metal vehicles, such as bicycles, motorcycles, or golf carts.
- Stay away from wire fences, clotheslines, metal pipes and rails. Put down golf clubs. If you are a group, keep several yards apart.
- If you are caught on a level field and feel your hair stand on end, or a "tingling" sensation, lightning may be about to strike. Drop to your knees and bend forward, put your hands on your knees. Do not lie flat on the ground.
- Persons struck by lightning receive a severe electrical shock and may be burned, but they carry no electrical charge and can be handled safely. Immediate first aid treatment can help revive a person struck by lightning.

HOW TO REVIVE A VICTIM OF ELECTRICAL SHOCK

If a victim is not breathing:

- Start mouth-to-mouth resuscitation immediately to prevent damage to the brain.
- Breathe once every 5 seconds to adults, and once every 3 seconds to infants and small children until medical help arrives.

- If the victim is not breathing and has no pulse, start Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), a combination of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and external heart compressions immediately.
- Victims who appear stunned or otherwise unhurt may also need attention. Check for burns, especially at fingers and toes and next to buckles and jewelry.
- Persons struck by lightning, need immediate first aid treatment.
- CPR, and mouth-to-mouth resuscitation should be administered only by people who have received training in these techniques. A unit on CPR has been developed by the Department of Mental Health. Direct care workers may receive instruction from this unit, or from the American Red Cross or American Heart Association.

Tornadoes

Tornadoes are the most violent offspring of a severe thunderstorm. They are often seen as a funnel-shaped arm or leg to a thunderstorm. When a tornado warning is given, your immediate actions can save your life and the lives of those with you! Do this:

- Take cover immediately! Follow the community residential setting's Tornado Evacuation Procedures.
- Stay away from doors windows, and outside walls.
- Know where the shelter location in a public building is and be ready to move there quickly.
- Get out of a car or mobile home and seek shelter in a large building. If there is none, lie down in a ditch or ravine. DO NOT try to outrun a tornado!
- Protect your head.
- Keep tuned to weather information.

Floods

Severe thunderstorms may cause flash floods. To lessen their dangers:

- Avoid low places.
- Seek shelter in large, sturdy building: Don't stay outdoors!
- If your home is flooded, use canned or bottled liquids until water safety can be assured.

Winter Weather Hazards

Winter Storms and Heating Failures

Winter storms: blizzards, heavy snows, ice storms, freezing rain or sleet can be a serious danger. Keep posted on weather conditions in your area through television and radio. Be prepared for isolation at home. If you live in a rural area, make sure you could survive for a week or two in case a storm made it impossible for you to leave. The following are some other precautions to take:

- Store an emergency supply of food, water, and cooking equipment. Keep a battery-powered radio and flashlights with extra batteries handy.
- Keep an adequate supply of heating fuel and use it sparingly. Conserve heat by "closing off" some rooms.
- Stock an emergency supply of food and water, and cooking equipment, such as a camp stove. Some food should not require refrigeration or cooking.
- Make sure you have a battery-powered radio, flashlights or lanterns, and extra batteries.

- Keep simple tools on hand to fight a fire (blankets, baking powder, buckets close to a water supply). Be certain all persons know precautions to prevent fires until the fire department arrives. Know the location of all fire extinguishers and how to operate them.
- If your furnace is controlled by a thermostat and a storm cuts off electricity, the furnace probably will not operate and emergency heat will be needed. This is a problem, since portable heaters are not permitted for use in community residential settings. Know how to use your emergency heating and lightning equipment safely. Have blankets easily available. Use only safety-listed equipment. Proper ventilation is essential. Never use charcoal fires indoors for cooking. Burning charcoal gives off deadly amounts of carbon monoxide.
- Winter stand-by gear should include extra bedding and plenty of warm clothing. You may want to substitute sleeping bags for added warmth.
- Dress in layers adding sweaters and warm outer clothes as needed.
- The more you move, the warmer you'll be.

Frostbite and Hypothermia

Be careful with the winter cold. Limit the time individuals are exposed to extreme cold.

Other precautions to take:

- Wear protective clothing, such as thermal underclothing, a face helmet, head and ear coverings (an uncovered head accounts for over 50% of lost body heat), extra socks, warm boots, and gloves or mittens of wind and water-repellent material.
- Keep clothing loose and dry. Take special precautions for persons with known circulatory problems. Early signs that someone has been out in the cold too long include: shivering, numbness, low body temperature, drowsiness, and muscle weakness.

- Frostbite results from freezing a part of the body. The body's blood circulation decreases to the fingers, toes, nose, cheeks, and ears to protect the vital organs in the body's trunk from cold. The affected areas may first become flushed. If exposure continues, the body part affected turns gray and "frosted", and the individual will feel intensely numb and cold. The body part has actually become frozen.

- When a person is exposed to the cold for a long time, the body temperature falls. This drastic reduction in temperature is called **hypothermia**. The person loses so much body heat he/she may:
 - * lose awareness of the cold;
 - * become drowsy and confused;
 - * have difficulty moving; and
 - * finally, become unconscious.

Death can result. Hypothermia can occur when swimming in very cold water, or when swimming for a very long time. For both hypothermia and frostbite, **prompt medical attention is necessary**. Frostbite and hypothermia, their causes and emergency treatment, are discussed in more detail in the section on first aid.

Overexertion - Getting Too Tired

Every winter, many unnecessary deaths occur because people - especially older people - do more strenuous physical activity than their bodies can stand. Cold weather, without any physical exertion, puts an extra strain on the heart. Add unaccustomed physical exercise, such as shoveling snow, pushing an automobile, or even walking fast or far, and a person is at risk for heart attack, stroke, or other ailments. In winter weather and storms, avoid overexertion.

SAFE DRIVING TECHNIQUES

- ▶ **After reading this material, you will be able to:**
- **Describe the importance of safe driving habits, particularly in transporting individuals you work with;**
- **Describe how to control skids, drive in winter weather, and actions to take when stranded.**

Sound, sensible driving habits are important to anyone transporting people. Many suggested techniques for staying alive on roads and highways result from the experiences of experts: traffic engineers, police officers, and safety researchers who have witnessed mistakes. This section helps us match our driving habits with driving conditions.

Suggestions for Safer Driving

- Fasten your seat belt. Make sure all passengers buckle up.
- Before driving a strange car or van, reset the seat and mirror. Check the "feel" of the brakes and steering.
- While driving, look for an "out" - a place to steer if you get in a difficult traffic situation.
- Before changing lanes, glance back to check the blind spot that your mirror doesn't show.

- Keep the car moving at a reasonable speed. If something happens that requires your attention, get completely off the road and stop.
- Anticipate stops and slowdowns: don't wait until you're out of space.
- In slowing in fast traffic, tap brakes to flash taillights.
- When passing, make sure the car passed is in your mirror before cutting back.
- Clean windshield and headlights when you stop for gas.
- The peak of your driving efficiency is between your fifth and sixth hours at the wheel. Slow down and take it easy, or take rest breaks during the day.
- Never let your guard down. It's easy to drift up to 70 plus miles per hour. The faster you travel, the less reaction time you have.
- Yield the right-of-way, especially if the other driver is at fault. The best place for a faulty driver is out of your way.
- Be courteous to other vehicles: cars, trucks, motorcycles, emergency vehicles, bicycles, mopeds and other slow moving vehicles.
- Use your turn signals!
- **DON'T TAILGATE !! and DON'T BE TAILGATED!!**
- **DEER CROSSING** signs are installed after several accidents in a stretch of road where deer are known to cross. Check the sides of the road. Remember: deer travel in groups.

- If you see someone stranded in the road, DON'T STOP. Notify the police.
- If you know what can happen....and drive as if it will happen....chances are greater that it won't happen.

Skid Control

According to AAA Michigan, in 1990, 13% of the 387,180 vehicle crashes in Michigan occurred on snow and ice-covered roads. Skid control becomes a winter driving skill that all Michigan drivers must master. But skids occur at other times, too. To avoid skids, remember:

- Wear and oil spatter often make the right lane of a multi-lane road more slippery than the passing lane.
- In winter, heavy use of the right lane of a multi-lane road may make it less slippery than the snow-covered passing lane. This makes passing more dangerous.
- If it's "just sprinkling", roads are more slippery than in a heavy rain. A few raindrops make roads more slippery because of oil buildup, a heavy rain washes away oil film.
- Front-wheel drive provides a feeling of good traction, but some people drive faster and sudden spinouts can result.
- Rear-wheel drive vehicles tend to slide to one side or the other.
- If you lock the brakes of either type of vehicle, you lose steering control. Be gentle.
- Know the brake system of your vehicle. Standard brakes can be pumped to slow down and avoid a spin. Anti-locking brakes need firm, steady pressure - no pumping. Pumping anti-locking brakes eliminates their safety factor.

Use these techniques to get a skidding vehicle back in control:

- * Remain calm: **DO NOT PANIC.**
- * Let up on the gas pedal (accelerator).
- * Shift into neutral or depress the clutch to remove power from the drive wheels.
- * Steer gently in the direction you want the car to go. Keep your foot off the brakes, or gently pump them to slow the car if you feel some traction. If using anti-lock brakes, use firm, steady pressure on the brakes to slow car.
- * Be ready in case you oversteer. Oversteering can cause the car to skid in the opposite direction.
- * When you get traction, shift into drive and continue.

Travel During Severe Weather

Avoid unnecessary trips. If you must travel, use public transportation when possible. However, if you must use an automobile, take these precautions:

- * Make sure the car is in good condition, properly serviced, and equipped with chains or snow tires.
- * Take another person with you, if possible.
- * Keep the gas tank full.

- * Have emergency "winter storm supplies" in the car, such as a container of sand, shovel, windshield scraper, tow chain or rope, flashlight, blankets or sleeping bags, and a jug of water.
- * Carry extra heavy gloves or mittens, overshoes, woolen socks, and winter headgear to cover your head and face.
- * Always carry an emergency first aid kit.
- * Travel by daylight and use major highways when possible. Keep the car radio turned on for weather information and advice.
- * Drive with all possible caution. Don't "save time" by traveling faster than road and weather conditions permit.
- * Don't be foolhardy. Stop, turn back, or seek help if conditions threaten that may test your ability or endurance. Don't risk being stalled, lost or isolated.
- * In whiteouts, use your hazard lights and your headlights. People see hazard light better than headlights.
- * If you are caught in a blizzard, seek refuge immediately.

****KEEP CALM IF YOU GET IN TROUBLE!**

If You are Stranded

If your car breaks down during a storm, or if you become stalled or lost, don't panic. Think through the problem, and decide the safest and best course of action. Act slowly and carefully. If you are on a well-traveled road -

- * Show a trouble signal: Raise your hood, or hang a cloth from the radio aerial or a car window.
- * Set your directional lights to flash.
- * Stay in your car and wait for help to arrive. Do not leave your car to search for assistance, as you may become confused and get lost.
- * If you run the engine to keep warm, make sure exhaust pipes are not blocked by snow. Open a window enough to provide ventilation and protection from carbon monoxide poisoning.

If you are stalled: set 4-way flashers, raise engine hood, hang a cloth from aerial or window, and stay in your car. If you run the engine to keep warm, make sure exhaust pipes are not blocked by snow and open a window.

Severe weather isn't the only reason we get stranded. Getting a flat and running out of gas can happen to anyone. Most of us see these problems as inconvenient, but they can cause freeway accidents. Today's roads are designed to keep traffic moving fast, smoothly and without stopping. You may have a number of individuals under your care in the car, and it's important you take every precaution to avoid being stranded. On the next page are some additional tips to keep in mind:

*** Before you leave on a trip to a new place, map a route to follow.**

*** Check your gas and tires before you go out on the road.**

- If you must stop -

*** Get completely off the road and stop.**

*** Immediately turn on your 4-way flashers.**

*** If there is no shoulder and you must stop in the road, get passengers out of the car on the side away from traffic as quickly as possible. Sunken or narrow freeways in larger cities make this very difficult. Plan with other staff what to do if you have no place to take people in an emergency.**

Emergencies in the Home

POWER OUTAGES

Communications

Power outages make people feel alone and helpless. Televisions, clocks and radios and most furnaces with electric thermostats won't work without power. Telephone service can also be interrupted. Prolonged power outages usually occur with, or as a result of some other emergency, such as a thunderstorm or tornado. In those cases, multiple problems often need to be dealt with.

A battery-powered radio or television for emergency use keeps you in touch with your community. Store extra batteries in the same place you store the radio. For two-way communication, walkie talkies or battery-powered citizen band (CB) radios work well. Cellular telephones with their own battery packs are becoming affordable. They can be used almost anywhere in the state. Car radios, cellular phones, and CB radios work well as "standbys". Your car's battery provides the power. Your car engine is always available for a quick recharge.

Use battery-powered radios, TVs and cellular phones to keep in touch when electric service is interrupted. Keep spare batteries with this equipment.

Air Conditioning

If it's hot outside, an emergency that includes power failure can be miserable for people used to air conditioning. Some people in community residential settings have conditions that make heat hard to take. To keep cool, remember the tips listed on the next page:

- * Shut all draperies.
- * Don't open windows without checking. Open windows may let more heat blow in.
- * Go to an interior room out of the sun.
- * If your home has more than one floor, the lowest level will be the coolest.
- * If the air conditioner is off, but the power is on, some furnace fans can be turned on to circulate unheated air.

Foods That Spoil

If the power failure lasts a long time, food may begin to spoil. Food will remain frozen between 36 and 48 hours in a loaded freezer if the door is kept shut. If the freezer is half full, food should remain unspoiled for about 24 hours. Frozen meat keeps longer than packaged foods. Frequent opening of the refrigerator speeds up thawing.

To avoid opening refrigerator and freezer doors more than necessary, transfer foods you will use soon into an insulated chest-type cooler. If you are unable to obtain ice nearby, transport as much as possible in coolers.

What to Do When the Lights Go Out

"Don't Panic". Darkness is inconvenient and scary, but most households have a light source. The two safest sources of alternate light are flashlights and battery-powered lanterns.

Keep flashlights and spare batteries handy for emergency use. They provide a convenient and portable light source inside and outside your home. When storing flashlights for long periods, remove the batteries and keep those batteries and spares easily accessible with other emergency supplies. Periodically recharge rechargeable models according to directions, so one or more light sources are always available.

Lanterns used for recreational purposes are another source of "standby" light. Rechargeable

battery-powered lanterns are easily stored and operated. Many models have sealed batteries which require no filling. They light as soon as they're taken off the shelf, and operate 10 to 15 hours before they need recharging. Recharge them once in a while during storage to keep batteries at full charge.

Some community residential settings have fixed emergency lighting in halls and stairways that comes on automatically during power failures. Carefully follow directions that call for testing these lights and fully discharging their batteries. If the battery "exercise program" is not followed, these lights may not work as long as they should.

WATER SHORTAGES

Power outages generally don't affect the flow of water in cities. However, in rural community residential settings that rely on wells, even a short-term loss of power can be a big problem when trying to feed and care for individuals and staff. Floods, earthquakes and other disasters can contaminate or completely interrupt normal water supply even in large cities.

A few simple precautions can give your home an adequate emergency water supply:

- * Store a supply of water in clean dated containers. Picnic jugs, normally stored empty, can be filled with an emergency water supply and kept for up to six months.
- * If you have room in your freezer, freeze containers of water and melt water for use, as needed.
- * Keep a supply of bottled water.
- * Cook with canned or frozen foods that contain lots of liquids.
- * If you expect your water supply to be cut off, fill bathtubs. Use this supply for personal care, bathing, filling toilets, and washing dishes.
- * After turning the hot water heated off, drain from the faucet at the bottom of the tank. Take only what you need and use the tank as clean storage.

If water becomes contaminated or the source is "questionable" -

- * Treat water with "potable" water tablets (tablets which make water safe for drinking). The tablets are available at any drug or hardware store. Keep these with other emergency supplies.
- * Purify water with household bleach. Use bleach that contains hypochlorite as its only active ingredient. The ratio is eight drops of bleach per gallon of water. Double the drops of bleach if water is cloudy. Stir and shake the water thoroughly and allow it to stand one-half hour before drinking. The taste or smell of chlorine will tell you the water is safe to drink.

Poisoning

COMMON HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS

The average home is loaded with potentially hazardous substances. By increasing your awareness of what is in the community residential setting, you can prevent many accidental poisonings by labeling containers accordingly, and teaching consumers what products are dangerous. Some places have used colored labels (e.g., orange) and taught people that these items are not to be ingested or touched. Whatever system your home uses, make sure everyone is aware of the system and what to look for.

AMONG THE POISONOUS PRODUCTS FOUND IN HOME (note: not an all-inclusive list):

aspirin	drain cleaner-lye
furniture polish	powder detergent
cleanser	oven cleaner
windshield washer	rubbing alcohol
hand lotion	shaving lotion
cosmetics	room deodorizer

DISCUSS OTHER HOUSEHOLD ITEMS THAT MAY BE POISONOUS.

POISON PREVENTION TIPS

- * Obtain one ounce of ipecac syrup from your pharmacist and keep in the community residential setting.
- * Lock up all medications. Keep in child-resistant packaging.
- * Clean out old medicines regularly and dispose of them according to house procedures.
- * Read and heed directions and caution labels.
- * Avoid bringing unnecessary toxic substances into your home.
- * Store cleaning supplies out of sight and out of reach of the wrong hands.
- * Keep all products in their original containers.
- * Rinse out containers thoroughly before disposing of them.
- * Don't store medicines, cleaning agents or pesticides near food.

FIRST AID FOR POISONING

What should you do if you suspect someone has suffered some type of poisoning?

**** Keep the following information handy for reference, or call your regional poison control center and ask for assistance - (313) 745-5711.**

- If someone is exposed to poisonous gases, take them to fresh air. Maintain respiration until victim begins breathing or help arrives.
- If someone gets something poisonous in their eye, **RINSE EYE IMMEDIATELY WITH WATER.** Remove contact lenses, if necessary. Hold eyes open and flush eyes with water for 10-15 minutes. Do not re-insert contacts until you have approval from an ophthalmologist.
- If someone comes into skin contact with a poisonous substance, **FLUSH SKIN THOROUGHLY WITH WATER.**

CALL FOR HELP PROMPTLY IN ALL POISONING SITUATIONS.

- If someone has swallowed a substance you suspect is poisonous, or is showing symptoms of poisoning:

- * Transport to medical facility (if you drive, have someone else attend to the person).
- * Bring container(s) of the substance(s) involved with you.
- * If vomiting has occurred, bring vomitus with you. Bring a basin to catch vomit while transporting victim to medical facility.

INDUCE VOMITING ONLY WHEN INSTRUCTED TO DO SO BY THE POISON CONTROL CENTER!! Why? If the poisonous substance was caustic (i.e., drain cleaner, cleanser), it burns on its way down and would burn on its way back up the throat. If consumer is unconscious or having convulsions, you could create a situation where the person swallows their own vomitus and chokes, making matters worse. The Poison Control Center staff have been trained to handle worst case scenarios. Use them as a resource.

REMEMBER: THE WRONG TREATMENT IS OFTEN MORE DANGEROUS THAN NO TREATMENT!!

Careful use and safe storage of poisons, and being aware of what materials are poisonous can prevent poison incidents from happening. The following procedures should be followed if you suspect an individual has swallowed or become exposed to poison:

- * **If you think a person has swallowed a poison of any type CALL YOUR LOCAL POISON CONTROL CENTER immediately.** Have this number posted along with other emergency phone numbers. This number will put you in touch with trained personnel at a local hospital who can instruct you on the steps to take in case of poisoning. This will save you precious minutes!

Remember: The wrong treatment is often more dangerous than no treatment!!

POISONOUS PLANTS

Some common household plants are also potentially hazardous if ingested. Please be sure you know what type of plants you have in the community residential setting, and teach people that these plants are not food - even if they don't make the LIST. If in doubt about a certain plant, either ask a florist, or don't buy the plant.

A list of toxic and non-toxic plants is also available from the Poison Control Center. It would be impossible to list all poisonous plants here - and they often change in category. That doesn't mean a community residential setting cannot be decorated with plants. Just be aware of the types of plant you are bringing into the home, and teach consumers to enjoy the plants without touching.

Test Your Poison Prevention Knowledge

Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper. Then check your answers with those on the next page. If you miss any, re-read those parts of this manual.

1. What is the first thing you should do if you believe someone has taken a poisonous substance?
2. List 5 common household items which are also poisonous.
3. When taking someone to be treated for poisoning, name two things (besides the person) you need to bring with you?
4. Identify three precautions you can take to prevent a poisoning accident.
5. Why shouldn't you make a person who has swallowed a poison vomit unless directed to by Poison Control or the doctor?

"Poison Prevention" Answers

- 1. Call your local poison control center immediately!**

- 2. See the checklist of poisonous products.**

- 3. Any two of the following -**
 - Bring another person to attend to the victim,
 - the poison (if any is left),
 - the container the poison was in,
 - vomit, if any, from the poisoned person.

- 4. Any three of the following -**
 - Lock up all medicines; use child-proof packaging.
 - Don't call medicine "candy".
 - Clean out all medicines regularly.
 - Read and follow directions and caution labels.
 - Avoid bringing unnecessary poisonous products into the community residential setting.
 - Store cleaning supplies out of sight and out of reach.
 - Don't store medicines, cleaning products, or pesticides near food.
 - Keep all products in their original containers.
 - Rinse out containers thoroughly before disposing of them.

- 5. Vomiting the poison may cause additional injury to the mouth, throat, esophagus (wind pipe) and lungs if the person has swallowed a caustic or petroleum product.**

FIRE SAFETY AND TRAINING

► **After reading this material, you will:**

- **Know the main causes of fire;**
- **Know what you can do to prevent and prepare for fire emergencies;**
- **Identify the three elements of the fire triangle;**
- **How to handle smoke during a fire;**
- **Know immediate steps to take in event of a fire; and**
- **Be aware of certain situations that can lead to a fire.**

The potential for FIRE exists 24 hours a day in every setting in which an individual may live, work or attend programs. Every fire is potentially life-threatening. Your job is to assure the safety of individuals living in your community residential setting. That task and the problem of fire are so great that the remainder of this program addresses fire safety issues in detail.

DID YOU KNOW:

- Over 2 million people are burned in the United States each year. 200,000 require medical treatment. Of these, 75,000 require hospitalization.
- Fires and burns are the third most common cause of accidental death in this country.
- The average burn patient stays in the hospital for three weeks. People with severe cases stay six months or more.

- Each year there are more than 700,000 home fires nationally.
- Of every 1,000 home fires, 7.2 people die. Of every 1,000 fires in community residential settings, 27 people die.

Causes of fire:

■ Careless smoking	39%
■ Heating/cooking equipment	26%
■ Hot objects (burning trash, open flames, sparks)	19%
■ Matches/open flame	14%
■ Misuse of electricity	13%
■ Other sources	2%

***** THESE ADD UP TO 113%!!! OPEN FLAME IS LISTED TWICE!!**

Most deaths and accidents from fire are unnecessary. Fire marshals agree that most people caught in a fire could escape without injury if they knew a few facts about fire and knew what to do in case of fire. Fire can be avoided and injuries prevented by safety inspections, maintaining a safe environment, and by regular practice of fire evacuation drills and evacuation training for staff and individuals in the community residential setting.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SAVE LIVES

Prevent and Prepare for a Fire

* Knowledge, prevention measures, fire drills, evacuation training and early detection are the best protection from a fire.

Practice prevention, drill, and train.

Your absolute FIRST PRIORITY in a fire is to evacuate all people from the home. NO attempt should be made to fight a fire except to evacuate or rescue someone. Get out now! Use fire extinguishers only to fight your way out of a fire or to rescue someone.

TIME is the most important factor. Any delay in evacuation increases the danger. Waste no time.

Closing doors helps contain smoke and fire. It gives more time to evacuate people. Close doors on your way out.

Smoke inhalation is the most common cause of injury and death. Smoke rises to the ceiling. Cover mouths and noses with a wet cloth if possible and stay low. Smoke rises, so keep low.

Get everyone outside to a pre-planned location. Once everyone is out, count heads. When a fire occurs, do not re-enter the house, even to call the fire department Do not re-enter the house. Call the fire department from a neighbor's house or use a cordless phone from outside the house.

Take everyone to a place of safety and attend to the needs of the individuals. A place of safety is a pre-planned area away from the house and out of the way of fire trucks and other rescue equipment.

The Fire Triangle

■ A fire requires three elements:

- Fuel -- something to burn
- Heat -- from something hot
- Air -- to supply oxygen

These three factors have been diagrammed as the three sides of a triangle. When the three sides of this "Fire Triangle" come together, a fire will occur. To stop or prevent a fire, at least one of the elements must be removed. **Only one side of the fire triangle needs to be removed to put out the fire.**

Smoke Kills

Smoke, not flames, is the real killer in a fire. Very few persons burn to death. Most fire victims are poisoned by toxic fumes. Many bodies are brought out with no burns. Smoke is a mixture of poisonous gases. The most dangerous is carbon monoxide -- a killer you cannot see, smell or taste. As little as just 1.26% in the air can knock you unconscious after two or three breaths and can kill you in two or three minutes. Other gases deaden your sense of smell so you cannot even smell the smoke. Smoke is deceptive. Thin gray smoke can be as dangerous as thick, dark, soupy smoke.

Where there is smoke, there is danger: get low and get out....fast!

Stay close, within 1 to 2 feet, to the floor. The lower you are, the better you will see and breathe. The safest way to get out is to crawl. Do not stand to get people out of bed. Reach up and pull the person or the bedding with the person on it down to the floor. If you must help someone who can't get out on his or her own, drag the person on the floor with you.

OTHER POTENTIAL CAUSES OF FIRE

Fire does not have to come into contact with an object for it to catch on fire. Just as a cigarette can be lit by holding a match flame an inch below the cigarette, all combustible material can catch on fire if the surrounding air becomes hot enough. This is why it is common in a fire for books, curtains, towels, bedclothes, furniture and walls, even in different parts of the house, to suddenly explode into flames. When this happens, the chance to escape is not good. Combustion of materials may take only a few minutes. That is why you have no time to fight the fire, but must help everyone evacuate as soon fire or smoke is detected.

Smoke and heat are hot, and they rise. People above the ground floor need to make special preparations to get out of a fire alive. Even if the fire begins on the first floor, they may have less time to escape because fire, heat and smoke rise to its highest point.

The most likely fire victims are the most helpless, particularly at night and when sleeping. Remember - YOU can't count on the smell of smoke to wake those who are sleeping, or to alert you. Even if you are awakened or notice smoke, you may have breathed so much smoke that you can only stumble around before falling down unconscious.

Thus, people should sleep with their bedroom door closed. The more closed doors between a person and the fire, the safer they are. Most bedroom doors hold back the heat and gases for 5 to 11 minutes. This gives everyone extra time to escape and for you to help others escape. Some community residential settings have installed additional smoke detectors in bedrooms, particularly where individuals are known to smoke or have access to flammable materials.

When people smell smoke, they often make the terrible mistake of flinging open doors to find where the smoke is coming from. They may be instantly overcome by a blast of hot air and fumes. **NEVER** open a door without first checking to see if it is warm. If you touch a door and it is warm, try to escape through the window. If you can't escape by window, stuff a rug, sheet or other fabric around the cracks of the door.

If possible, hold a wet washcloth over your nose and mouth to help you breathe. Keep low, open the window from both the top and the bottom, breathe from the bottom. Break the window if you must. Wave a cloth to attract attention and yell for help. Wait to be rescued. Do not jump unless there is no choice.

If you are on an upper floor, lower individuals by a sheet rope, or ease them over the window ledge by holding on to their shoulders before letting them go. This should be used only as a last resort. Many people have been hurt jumping from a burning building when help is on the way.

Your first thought during a fire in a community residential setting should be to help everyone escape. This does not come automatically. Many people become frightened and make no attempt to escape at all. Some hide in their closets or under beds. Even adults have to be dragged to safety. **Routine and effective fire drills and evacuation training will increase everybody's chance to survive a fire.**

There is never time to waste in a fire. A fire is never too small to begin evacuation procedures. **No matter how insignificant the fire may seem, evacuate immediately.** Then call the fire department from a neighbor's house, or a cordless phone. After you are safely out of the house, do not go back in unless to rescue someone else.

Life is more precious (it cannot be replaced) than property. Better that the house and all the belongings burn, than to risk your safety or the safety of other individuals in the community residential setting. Count heads - keep the group together.

When you call the fire department, be sure to stay on the line until they tell you to hang up.

The fire department will want to know:

- * your name;**
- * the name, house number, street, and nearest cross streets of the community residential setting;**
- * the residence's telephone number;**
- * type of fire, if known;**
- * cause of fire, if known;**
- * number of individuals who may still be inside the burning building.**

After you are finished providing this information, do not hang up. Wait and see if your information was understood and if the fire department has any additional questions.

The best way to survive a fire is to hear the fire before you see it. This is why your community residential setting has battery-operated fire alarms and smoke detectors. Be sure they are cleaned regularly, checked monthly, and that the batteries are replaced at least every 12 months. Some group homes select one day a week as the designated day to test fire alarms and smoke detectors.

**YOUR CHANCES OF SURVIVING A FIRE ARE
TWICE AS GOOD WITH SMOKE
DETECTORS**

Seventy-five percent (75%) of all U.S. community residential settings (and all Michigan community residential settings) now have smoke detectors. Another one third to one half are not inspected on a regular basis. For the safety of individuals and staff in the community residential setting, take responsibility to make sure alarms and smoke detectors are regularly checked and cleaned and batteries replaced on a regular basis.

It's As Simple As 1, 2, 3:

- 1. TEST all of your smoke detectors often; at least once a month.**
- 2. CLEAN your smoke detectors once a year.**
- 3. REPLACE batteries once a year.**

Report any false alarms to the residential supervisor so equipment may be tested.

DANGERS and PREVENTION

Do people in the house smoke? Do people in the house cook? Does your house have a furnace, dryer, water heater? Is there a gasoline powered lawnmower? Do you have cleaning supplies or paint? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, then your community residential setting has the potential for a fire.

Individuals are dependent on you to provide a safe environment, and should never be left alone in a house, or with staff who not trained in evacuation procedures and fire protection plans.

SMOKING HAZARDS

Smokers are careless. Some 200,00 fires are caused each year by cigarettes, and over 1,200 people die from these fires. These fires can be avoided. Use proper ashtrays (a large circular ashtray with a notched cigarette holder across the diameter), so a cigarette knocked in either direction is contained in the ashtray. Properly dispose of cigarette butts. When emptying ashtrays, make sure all cigarette butts are completely out. Empty cigarette butts into a covered tin can, instead of dumping them in the trash. Seventy percent of all fire victims die because smokers doze off in beds or in chairs. Strictly enforce community residential setting rules about smoking in designated areas. Apply those rules equally to staff and to the individuals in the community residential setting.

ELECTRICAL HAZARDS

Electrical wires can overheat at any time. This usually happens when outlets or extension cords are forced to carry too much electricity. Therefore, **EXTENSION CORDS ARE NOT TO BE USED IN COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL SETTINGS.** Fire behind a wall can smolder for several hours, even days, before it bursts into flames.

Never take out or tamper with a fuse. These are the best safeguards against electrical fires. Fuses cut off the flow of electricity when there is threat of a fire - **NEVER** use a penny in a fuse box. Have your supervisor call an electrician if the fuse keeps going out.

Do not run appliance cords (lamps, toasters, etc.) under rugs, or over radiators, pipes, or rough edges. Never let cords become frayed, and never splice cords. Do not use too many appliances from the same outlet - if necessary, suggest additional outlets be installed.

HAZARDS OF FLAMMABLE MATERIALS

Gasoline, some paints, thinners and many cleaning fluids are flammable. They should be used and stored with extreme caution. Store these materials outside the community residential setting in a locked area. Vapors can explode into flame if exposed to any ignition source. Never keep or use gasoline in the house. Store gasoline in a specially designed safety can, and store in the tool shed, away from the house and garage. Never put gasoline in open containers or in a glass jar. Be sure the lawnmower is not running when you are filling it with gas.

Storing gasoline is asking for trouble. Gasoline expands, causing fumes to escape and spread along the floor. These fumes travel along lower than the pilot light of a water heater, furnace or oven. By the time the accumulation reaches the level of the pilot light, you have the potential for explosion over a large area. The same holds true for flammable liquids and some cleaning fluids.

A FEW HELPFUL PREVENTION TIPS

KEEP MATCHES OUT OF REACH

Matches are very dangerous. If matches are kept out of a person's easy reach, the possibility of accidental fire and injury is reduced.

MOVE THOSE COOKIES

Some people will climb kitchen cabinets to reach a cookie jar or get to the snack cabinet. Some may also climb up on stove and range tops for salt and pepper if stored on the stove or in a rack above the stove. To play it safe, all tempting food items should be kept away from cooking surfaces. Cooking supplies and food items should not be stored above the stove. Cooks should wear tight-fitting sleeves. Staff must teach individuals how to behave safely in the kitchen.

WATER AND OIL DO NOT MIX

Hot grease splatters when water is thrown on top in a pan or pot. The safest way to put out a grease fire is to smother it. Cover the burning area with a tight-fitting pan lid, so oxygen cannot feed the fire. Turn off the burner or unplug the heat source. Don't try to carry smoking/burning pans of grease outside. There is the risk of spilling and spreading the fire, or burning your hands and arms. Remember - your job is to help everyone evacuate - not to fight the fire, unless it is to get out or to rescue someone.

STORE IT OUTSIDE

Gasoline and kerosene burn quickly and easily. Vapors escaping from these fuels can also cause fires and explosions when brought in contact with lit cigarettes, match flames or other combustible materials. Store all combustible items in a garage or storage shed where they're less accessible and lives are less endangered. Store out-of-season clothing in a safe area away from heat sources. Never store or use combustible materials near a furnace.

SMOKERS ARE NOT ALWAYS CAREFUL

Cigarettes can start fires as easily as lit matches if left unattended or not properly extinguished. After smokers leave an area, check under sofa and chair cushions to make sure cigarettes have not fallen behind or inside these pieces of furniture. Cigarettes can smolder unnoticed for hours before a fire breaks out. It's a good habit to make this check every night after individuals go to bed for the night. Some community residential settings have implemented a designated "smoking area" for all people living, working or visiting in the community.

List on a separate piece of paper those hazards that you want to be aware of in or outside the community residential setting. List other hazards you can think of associated with transportation, recreational outings, at a gas station, and with common household cleaning. Turn the page and compare your items with those suggested below.

HAZARDS IN THE HOME: Look for These Hazards

1. Improperly stored matches or lighters. Keep in fire-safe container and out of easy reach.
2. Improper storage or use of any flammable materials, including activity supplies.
3. Improper use of fuses. Always replace blown fuses with the same size. Report blown fuses to supervisor.
4. Improper disposal of spray cans. Never discard spray cans in a furnace, incinerator, trash burner, or other fire-burning receptacle.
5. Overloaded electrical outlets.
6. Frayed, worn, or otherwise exposed wiring on electrical cords of any kind.
7. Accumulation of trash and other burnables.
8. Careless storage of papers and other inflammable materials that can ignite by spontaneous combustion. Keep attics, basements, garages, and homes neat and tidy. Some community residential setting regulations do not allow storage in basements. Check with your supervisor before storing anything.
9. Combustible materials stored in rooms where the furnace or water heater are located.
10. Do not use space heaters.

OUTSIDE THE HOME: Look for these hazards -

1. Improper burning of trash. Always use a covered metal container.
2. Improper storage of matches. Mice, rats, and squirrels have been known to start fires by gnawing on matches.
3. Careless use of fire starters for barbecue grills. Never use gasoline or other dangerous fuels to start outdoor campfires.
4. Careless burning of leaves and grass.
5. Bad smoking habits. Never discard burning cigarettes or matches. Keep a "Butt Can" for freshly disposed butts.
6. Playing around or fooling with fire in any way. Warn and correct people about playing with lighters, matches, cigarettes, candles, bonfires, fireworks, or cooking fires. Report incidents to supervisor.
7. Using a match or candle for a flashlight is a hazard of the worst kind.
8. Using candles near flammable materials at holidays or birthdays.
9. Failing to supervise people who are dependent upon you at all times.
10. Wearing loose, flimsy clothing too near flames of any kind.

EVERYDAY FIRE HAZARDS

IN A CAR OR THE VAN

Empty ashtrays before they are full. A cigarette put out in a full ashtray can cause a fire. Never throw cigarettes or matches out of a car window. Lit cigarettes can fly back into the vehicle and cause a fire, or start forest or grass fires. If you carry extra gasoline, use only regulation containers, and be sure no one has access to them. Make sure gasoline cans are closed tight, including the container's small air vent.

ON A BOAT

Flammable fluids, such as fuel and oil, should be kept safely away from heat and flames. Do not smoke while fueling the engine. It would be best if no one smoked while in a canoe, on a raft, or in a rowboat.

IN A TENT

While camping, all smoking and cooking should be done outside the tent. Never take a charcoal fire inside the tent. People could suffocate as the fire uses up oxygen and gives off carbon monoxide. Avoid smoking when attending a circus or other tent events.

IN A SERVICE STATION

Cigarettes and matches should never be thrown out of the car, especially near gasoline pumps. Such acts can cause an explosion or fire. Avoid smoking in repair areas, where there is oil and gasoline.

HOUSEHOLD CLEANING

Never use gas, lighter fluid, kerosene or other flammable materials to clean tar, paint, or grease off clothing, wheelchairs, or vehicles.

10 QUESTIONS CONCERNING FIRE DANGERS THAT CAN BE AVOIDED

1. Is the television set, microwave or refrigerator suffocating? Make sure it is away from the wall by at least 3 inches.
2. Has the dryer been checked for lint recently? Make sure that after each load of clothes, the lint trap is cleaned.
3. Is the dryer vent hose made of aluminum, and is it cleaned and properly connected? At least once a month, the vent hose should be cleaned of lint and checked for any "leaks" that may allow lint to collect behind the dryer. The hose must be connected to force the air from the dryer outside the house.
4. Are the hallway doors clear of obstacles such as wheelchairs or chairs? Are the fire doors propped open? The hallway must be free of any obstacles, and should never be used temporarily for a "storage area". Fire doors should never be propped open and must be maintained properly.
5. Does the community residential setting have an artificial Christmas tree? The tree should be rated for fires. Christmas lights should be rated for use on an artificial tree with a careful check of cords to be sure no wires are frayed.
6. Ask the community residential setting supervisor if the furnace has been checked before the heating season. A yearly check should be made by service personnel for plugged up or worn outlets and malfunctioning controls.
7. Are staff and individuals living in the community residential setting "firebug" housekeepers? Do not allow combustibles (clothing, rubbish, paints, and other materials) near heating equipment. Bring this, or any other safety concern to staff meetings.

8. Do newspapers stack up or oily rags lie around? These can generate their own heat and become hot enough to produce flame. Keep oily rags in closed, metal containers, and don't allow rubbish to collect.
9. Could the clothes iron melt? Never leave an iron plugged in unattended for even a few minutes. Never leave an operating curling iron or hair dryer unattended.
10. Do you put foam rubber items in the dryer? Rubber in brassieres, shoulder pads, pillows, sheets, or stuffed toys can start a fire inside the dryer.

PREPARING FOR FIRE EMERGENCIES

- **After reading this material, you will:**
- **Be able to describe and implement an action plan for evacuation of persons during a fire emergency;**
 - **Be able to describe the need for action steps to take during fire drills;**
 - **Define that in a fire emergency, your first responsibility is to help get everyone out alive from the community residential setting.**

In the event of a fire, the safety of individuals and staff come first. Knowing what to do and where to go can save lives. With the threat of fire, total panic can result if individuals and staff don't know the fire evacuation plan. Here are some helpful guidelines:

1. Decide which method of escape to use. Going through a door is the easiest and most natural route, but a window may be the best alternative route. Staff should be prepared to use all fire emergency routes, and individuals in the community residential setting should be taught at least two escape routes from each area of the home. Practice these routes during fire drills. Remember - do not go through fire doors!

2. If you drills consume a lot of time, keep practicing until you are efficient to the point of three minutes for evacuation. It may be necessary to create a "reward" methodology as an incentive to cooperate or improve. Professional firefighters recommend that evacuation take no longer than 3 minutes.

3. Before opening any doors, feel the door with the palm of your hand. If you feel no heat from the door, go through the doorway to the most readily available exist from the home. Close all doors behind you to slow the spread of fire. Stay low to the ground (between 1 or 2 feet) when making your escape because heat and gases rise. This may mean getting down on all fours for some people.

4. If the door feels warm or hot to the touch, don't open it. The smoke and fire may be right outside the door. If the door is opened, the fire will explode into the room and will immediately fill the room with smoke, heat and toxic gases. Use the window as an alternative escape route.
5. A window escape from the second story is less risky if you hang from the window sill by your fingertips before dropping to the ground. Falling in this manner will reduce impact. You may assist an individual over the window ledge and ease them as close as possible to the ground before letting go.
6. Once the staff know all individuals are out of the house, go to the pre-arranged meeting place and stay there. Don't allow anyone to go back into the house to recover a pet toy or valuables. Use emergency kit supplies to help calm the group and meet emergency needs. While this takes place, one designated staff person should call the fire department to report the fire and provide pertinent information about the fire and its location.
7. At the meeting place, do a head count and let firefighters know if everyone is present, or if someone is missing. Wait for the firefighters' "all clear" sign before re-entering the house.

PROTECTION PLANS

Every home must have a written fire protection plan. The plan may be developed by the manager, a person charged with fire safety coordination and/or the case manager. Input should be obtained from the direct care staff. The protection plan must be reviewed and approved by the professional team assigned to the home. This plan is your guideline for preventing, preparing and responding to fires.

The protection plan will include written directions on the best method to act quickly and safely evacuate each individual in the home. These guidelines will address characteristics of individuals (i.e., hearing or vision impairment, handling resistance, ambulation [walking]

problems) who may reside in the home.

New staff, immediately upon hire, should review the protection plan and "walk through" the plan with their supervisor. Supervisor, staff and individuals should practice the fire protection plan at least monthly, and if necessary, revise the plan. During fire drills, individuals will be required to be evacuated from their home, as staff follow the fire protection plan.

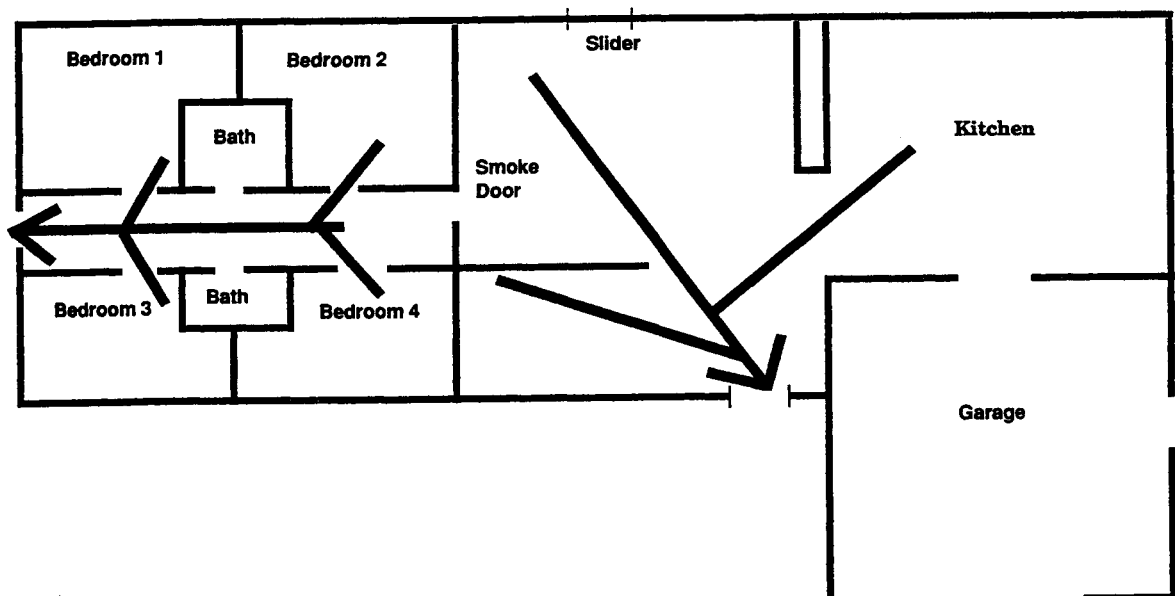
The plan should be revised whenever the needs of individuals or staff skill change. It is recommended that all staff review the plan at least twice a year during staff meetings. This give staff the opportunity to role play "what ifs" with co-workers and individuals, and to identify changes required for protecting all individuals against fire.

EVACUATION PLANS

An Evacuation Plan is a SIMPLE diagram of each floor of the home that includes:

- 1) PRIMARY exit routes should by a solid heavy line from each room to the best exit door. For example -

Primary Fire Evacuation Routes and Exits



2) On a separate diagram, ALTERNATE routes are shown by a thin (or dashed) line to be used only if the primary route is blocked.

FIRE DRILLS

The purpose of fire drills is for staff to practice what they would do to evacuate everyone in the event of a real fire emergency. All staff who work in the community residential setting must participate in enough fire drills to be efficient and well-practiced in using the home's evacuation plan.

Fire drills are to be conducted with the normal number of staff on duty for that shift. Extra staff may be present to observe and record, but may not help evacuate individuals.

At least once a year on each shift, supervisors and other management personnel should conduct unannounced (surprise) fire drills with no advance notice to staff. This drill helps everyone assess their preparedness for a real fire. Individuals living in the community residential setting are never alerted in advance or told there will be a fire drill.

Priority is given to hold fire drills during the most difficult conditions and times:

- During mealtimes, bathing activities and recreation periods. If a person is bathing, be considerate of their right to privacy and dignity, and do not violate these rights by taking them outside for "practice" when they are only partially clothed.
- When individuals are experiencing temporary behavioral or physical problems. Staff should carefully plan what actions are necessary for evacuating someone who is experiencing a temporary behavioral or physical problem.

The MINIMUM number of fire drills is one per shift per quarter (12). Once a year, as one of the 12 drills, staff should practice going to a place of safety (an area away from the house and away from the operation of fire trucks and fire personnel). At all other times, fire drills

should have individuals going to a pre-planned meeting place (i.e., lamp-post or fence-post) just outside the primary exit.

TRAINING PEOPLE TO EVACUATE

Just as staff need time to practice the evacuation/protection plan, individuals living in the home need the same opportunity to learn how to evacuate from their home and go to a designated location.

The goal of evacuation training is for the individual to calmly and safely exit the group home and report to a designated location without any assistance. This is to be done from any place in the home within two and one-half minutes after the alarm sounds. Even though the fire safety standard is three minutes, our goal is 2 1/2 minutes.

When determining the capabilities of the individual to evacuate, it may become necessary to define "independence." This takes into account a person's limitations that are non-temporary (e.g., need for assistance into a wheelchair - then allowing the person to take himself/herself to the best exit).

THE EMERGENCY KIT

In a fire emergency, staff and individuals living in the community residential setting who have successfully evacuated may be exposed to unfavorable conditions outside the home.

Preparation for these conditions may include an emergency kit which staff bring with them, if possible, during evacuation. The Emergency Kit Bag's contents should take into consideration what would make the situation safer and less stressful for all individuals and their specific needs.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

The FIRST RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL SETTING STAFF IS TO GET EVERYONE OUT OF THE HOME ALIVE. Fire extinguishers last only a few seconds. Use them only to fight your way out of a fire or to rescue someone.

Fire extinguishers are required by various standards governing the home's operation. Staff must be trained and able to use fire extinguishers.

Community residential settings should have at least two fire extinguishers - one in the kitchen and one in the bedroom hall. Two-story homes may need more fire extinguishers. Fire extinguishers should be checked periodically (at least monthly) to ensure they are properly charged and functional. Some have "expiration dates" and the extinguisher's contents should be renewed before that date. Alert your supervisor at least a month in advance to fire extinguisher expiration dates.

You have not been trained how to fight a fire. You have been trained how to evacuate individuals from the home. Therefore, if fire breaks out, the first rule is to help everyone escape.

Once you are all outside the home, use a cordless phone or a neighbor's phone to call the fire department. In a panic, you may waste valuable seconds or minutes trying to use the phone in the house, while your efforts should be in helping everyone escape. Once everyone is evacuated, don't go into the house to use the phone or to get anyone's belongings. Stay out of the house until you have the "all clear" from the fire department.

For Further Reading:

1. Chapter 21, Life Safety Code of the National Fire Protection Association (Residential Board and Care Occupancies). 1985 ed., National Fire Protection Association (Residential Board and Care).
2. Group Home Fire Safety Program (1994) - Training Program Specialists.
3. The Fire Safety Workshop: Fire Safety for Special Populations (1990), Bonnie Walker & Associates.

Resource Materials:

A. Resource Agencies

American Red Cross
County Office of Emergency Preparedness
Electric Company
Gas Company
Local Fire Department
Local Police Department
Michigan State Police - Emergency Services
National Weather Service/NOAA
Poison Control Center
Training Program Specialists/Brighton, MI

B. Pamphlets, Booklets and Guides

"Don't Lock Yourself to Death," Michigan Fire Chiefs Association.

"Facts About Fire," 500M-FP-5-77-FPW4, 1975, National Fire Protection Association, 470 Atlantic Ave., Boston, MA 02210

Resources (cont.):

"Fire Escape from Apartments," National Fire Protection Association, 60 Batterymarch St., Boston, MA 02110.

"Fire Prevention All Over Your Home," 500M7-79-FP (500M) G-88, 1975, National Fire Protection Association, 470 Atlantic Ave., Boston, MA 02210.

"Guide To Poison Prevention," Poison Control Center, Michigan Department of Public Health.

"Handbook for Emergencies," Office of Civil Defense, Department of Civil Defense, H-3 March, 1966-0-213-220, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

"Home Fire Detection," 500M-4-78FP (1.9mm) G-105A, 1975, National Fire Protection Association, 470 Atlantic Ave., Boston, MA 02210.

"Home Safety Check List," American Insurance Association, Engineering and Safety Service, 85 John St., New York, NY 10038.

"Skywarn," NOAA/PA 76019, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

"Standby: A Guide on How To Be Ready For Emergencies," The Coleman Company, Inc., Wichita, KS.

"Take Time for Home Prevention," National Fire Protection Association, 60 Batterymarch St., Boston, MA 02110.

"To Avoid Plant Problems," Poison Control Center, 3901 Beaubian, Detroit, MI 48201.

Resources (cont.):

"Thunderstorms," National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA), 1981, 0-335-658:QL 3, NOAA/PA 75009, 1977, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

"Tornado," NOAA/PA 77027, 1/78, Stock #003-018-00085-7, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.c. 20402.

"Tornado Safety," Michigan Department of State Police, Emergency Services Division.

"Tornado, What Do You Know?" NOAA/PA 75015, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.c. 20402.

"Winter Fires," 330-459, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Fire Administration, Washington, D.C. 20472.

"Winter Storms," 330-4581, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Fire Administration, Washington, D.C. 20402

"Your Guide To Natural Gas Safety," Consumers Power Company.

CREDITS AND RESOURCES

AAA - "Put the Lid on Skids"

Many pamphlets available through your local Secretary of State Office, plus copies of the booklet mentioned below - "What Every Driver Should Know."

Poison Control Center, Children's Hospital of Michigan, 3901 Beaubian Blvd., Detroit, MI 48201-2196.

Credits and Resources (cont.)

Reader's Digest Family Safety and First Aid, selected and edited by the editors of *Reader's Digest*, June 1984.

Video: "Plan to Get Out Alive," presented by McDonald's and First Alert, developed and presented by Dr. Frank Field, WCBS News, 1988.

"What Every Driver Must Know," 1992, Official Driver Manual, Michigan Department of State, Lansing, MI 8-91.

