



# Office of the Fire Commissioner

## Updates to the Manitoba Building and Fire Codes for Hospitals, Personal Care Homes and Residential Care Facilities



# Changes to the Manitoba Fire Code Affecting Hospitals and Personal Care Homes Take Effect

## April 1, 2016

- Manitoba Regulation 20/2016 amends the Manitoba Fire Code Regulation 31/2011 (MFC)

<http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/annual/2016/020.pdf>

- Requires existing hospitals and personal care homes to install automatic sprinkler systems in accordance with the Manitoba Building Code by January 1, 2026.



# Residential Care Changes to the Manitoba Building and Fire Code Regulations Take Effect April 1, 2016

- Manitoba Regulation 221/2015 amends the  
Manitoba Fire Code Regulation 155/2011(MFC)

<http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/annual/2015/221.pdf>

- Manitoba Regulation 222/2015 amends the  
Manitoba Building Code Regulation 31/2011(MBC)

<http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/annual/2015/222.pdf>

- Residential Care User Guide

Updates to Manitoba Building/Fire Code (2016/03/17)



# Building and Fire Code Amendments

- Amendments enhance fire and life safety requirements in new and existing residential care facilities operating under license or letter of approval
- Amendments to the MBC require new facilities to meet requirements when they are established
- Amendments to the MFC require existing facilities to meet requirements within specified time frames to allow for planning/implementation of retrofits



## Current Requirements

- Residential care facilities are currently treated as a residential occupancy with extra requirements under the MBC (new facilities) provided:
  - there are no more than 10 persons,
  - they have interconnected smoke alarms installed in each sleeping room,
  - they have emergency lighting, and
  - they are sprinklered if required by the licensing authority or authority having jurisdiction.



# Current Requirements

➤ All residential care facilities currently have to meet fire and life safety requirements found in Section 2.15 of the MFC which include:

- Egress Requirements
- Stairway Separations
- Emergency Lighting
- Flame Spread
- Fire Extinguishers
- Smoke Alarms



# Requirements

## Effective April 1, 2016

The MBC and MFC establish a new “Group B, Division 4, residential care occupancy” defined:

- a) as a residential care facility, other than a host family home operating under a license or letter of approval issued under *The Social Services Administration Act*; or
- b) as a child care facility operating under a license issued under the *Child Care Facilities (Other than Foster Homes) Licensing Regulation*, Manitoba Regulation 17/99

But does not include an *occupancy* or use that is a *treatment occupancy* or a *detention occupancy*.



# Requirements

## Effective April 1, 2016

Residential care occupancies provide care to “residential care clients” which is a resident of a facility as defined in:

- a) *The Residential Care Facilities Licensing Regulation, or*
- b) *The Child Care Facilities (Other than Foster Homes) Licensing Regulation*





# MBC Requirements Effective April 1, 2016

- New residential care occupancies will need to be sprinklered except those in
  - smaller existing buildings converted into a residential care occupancy (four or less residential care clients) where the licensing authority deems it unnecessary after a risk assessment, and
  - larger buildings with ten or less residential care clients where the licensing authority deems it unnecessary after a risk assessment.



# MBC Requirements

## Effective April 1, 2016

Smaller facilities with less than 10 residential care clients will also need to ensure they fulfill requirements for:

- emergency lighting, especially at exits and some exit routes,
- portable fire extinguishers in each floor area,
- exit signage (if more than four clients) at exit doors,
- egress requirements (see table in Guide),
- fire alarm or monitored water flow in some situations,
- one hour service room separations (in new construction).



# MFC/Retrofit Requirements

These requirements will apply to all residential care occupancies (new and existing). The timeline for changes becoming effective is:

April 16, 2016:

- fire safety planning, means of egress, exit signage, flame spread rating, fire extinguishers and smoke alarms

January 1, 2021:

- emergency lighting

January 1, 2026:

- automatic sprinkler system



# MFC/Retrofit Requirements Effective April 1, 2016

## Emergency Planning

Requirements remain the same. Residential care occupancies must:

- maintain a sufficient number of supervisory staff on duty to perform tasks outlined in the fire safety plan,
- post permanently mounted notice on each floor at the stairway location requesting that fire department be notified immediately of any fire with the fire department's phone number listed on the notice, and
- conduct fire drills at least once a month.



# MFC/Retrofit Requirements Effective April 1, 2016

## Means of Egress

Still require two means of egress from each floor area but now exception has been made if the floor area is only used for building services, laundry or storage.

Alternatives for the second means of egress are presented in the Guide.



# MFC/Retrofit Requirements Effective April 1, 2016

## Exit Signage (new requirement)

Now required above or adjacent to all building exit doors in all residential care occupancies with more than four residential care clients.



# MFC/Retrofit Requirements Effective April 1, 2016

## Flame Spread Rating

Requirement remains the same. The flame spread rating on walls and ceilings in a means of egress must not exceed 150 unless the building is equipped with an automatic sprinkler system.



# MFC/Retrofit Requirements Effective April 1, 2016

## Fire Extinguishers

Required in every floor area (ie. On each storey)





# MFC/Retrofit Requirements Effective April 1, 2016

## Smoke Alarms

Must be installed in accordance with the MBC. Still required in each sleeping room. May be required elsewhere. Still must to be hard wired and interconnected.

➤ However, allowed to be powered by a 10 year lithium battery until January 1, 2021.



# MFC/Retrofit Requirement Effective January 1, 2021

## Emergency Lighting

Must be installed in accordance with the MBC. Generally, this requires emergency lighting to be installed at exits and in principle escape routes.



# MFC/Retrofit Requirement Effective January 1, 2026

## Automatic Sprinkler System

- Required in all residential care occupancies with more than four residential care clients.
- In residential care occupancies with four or less residential care clients a sprinkler system must be installed if the licensing authority deems it necessary after conducting a risk assessment.
- If an automatic sprinkler system is installed in a building with no fire alarm, a monitored water flow alarm is to be installed.



# MFC/Retrofit Requirement Effective January 1, 2026

## Automatic Sprinkler System

- NFPA 13, “Installation of Sprinkler Systems” (complex system to protect persons and property)
- NFPA 13R, “Installation of Sprinkler Systems in Residential Occupancies up to and Including Four Stories in Height” (less complex system to protect persons)
- NFPA 13D, “Installation of Sprinkler Systems in One- and Two-Family Dwellings and Manufactured Homes” (less complex system to protect persons)



# MFC/Retrofit Requirement Effective January 1, 2026

- NFPA 13 is the default system for residential care occupancies
- NFPA 13R is permitted if building is 4 stories or less and has 10 or less residential care clients or the building is 3 stories or less with 11 to 25 residential care clients.
- NFPA 13D is permitted if the building contains no more than two dwelling units or suites, has no more than 4 residents and a 30 minute water supply can be met.



# Risk Assessment

- Residential care occupancies with 4 or less clients will require an automatic sprinkler system if deemed necessary by the Licensing Authority after conducting a risk assessment developed by the Office of the Fire Commissioner.
- Identifies information about facility and assesses the ability of residents to evacuate the building
- Must be updated to reflect the current circumstances of facility residents.



# Risk Assessment

The risk assessment compiles the following information:

- Location of facility
- Facility operator contact information
- Information about the facility and building
  - Type of building
  - Licensing information
  - Number of escape routes
  - Early warning system information (smoke alarms, alarm system, emergency lighting, travel distance to exits, areas of refuge)
  - Number of residents and the ability to evacuate
  - Staffing numbers
  - Fire drill and evacuation plan information
  - Fire department response time



# Licensing Authority and Authority Having Jurisdiction

- The Authority Having Jurisdiction, which is typically the municipality, is responsible for enforcing the building and fire code within its boundaries and should be contacted for specific questions relating to a facility and code compliance.
- The Licensing Authority is either:
  - Adult Disability Services Branch of Manitoba Family Services (204-945-3137 [csd@gov.mb.ca](mailto:csd@gov.mb.ca)), or
  - Child Protection Branch of Manitoba Family Services (204-945-6964 [cfsd@gov.mb.ca](mailto:cfsd@gov.mb.ca)). Please contact them for questions regarding licensing.





# Considerations for AHJs

- Permits required
- Water supply
- Alternate water supply



# Office of the Fire Commissioner

204-945-3322

1-800-282-8069

[firecomm@gov.mb.ca](mailto:firecomm@gov.mb.ca)

