



BOBBY JINDAL
GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONS

Public Safety Services



H. BUTCH BROWNING
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

INTERPRETIVE MEMORANDUM 2010-03

To: Louisiana Nursing Home Association
LA Licensed Architects
LA Licensed Engineers
Chief Dan Wallis, Deputy Asst Fire Marshal Enforcement/Emergency Services
Felicia Cooper, Deputy Asst Secretary/Plan Review
Stephen Gogreve, Manager
Pat Aronstein, Manager
Traci Roberts, Supervisor of Health Care Inspections, OSFM

From: Don Zeringue, Chief Architect/Plan Review

Approved by: Chief Butch Browning, State Fire Marshal

Date: March 5, 2010

RE: TEMPORARY EMERGENCY EVACUATION SHELTERS for NURSING HOMES

Evacuation of nursing home occupants during times of a declared state of emergency is the subject of this document. The facility administration at every licensed nursing home shall have, in effect and available to all supervisory personnel, written copies of a plan for the protection of all persons in the event of fire, for their evacuation to areas of refuge, and for their evacuation from the building when necessary. This office recognizes that extreme circumstances will sometimes require extreme measures in order to cope with disastrous conditions.

LRS 40:1563.A mandates that, "The fire marshal shall take all steps necessary and proper to protect life and property from the hazards of fire and of panic which may arise from fire and from the threat of fire or explosion." A distinct, unnecessary potential for death and/or bodily injury exists whenever persons that are typically afforded a minimum level of safety in a permanent setting are placed in an environment where life safety features are reduced below that normally provided in the permanent occupancy setting.

Emergency evacuation shelters for nursing homes are expected to provide a reasonably safe environment for persons who rely on the assistance of others for their own safety, evacuation and relocation during times of emergency. The NFPA 101 Life Safety Code prescribes requirements to provide a minimum level of safety for occupants of various buildings.

Is Yours Working"??
Smoke Detectors Save Lives!!
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL
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All of the following elements, features and conditions, as contained in NFPA 101, provide a minimum level of safety for nursing home occupancies and nursing home owners/administrators are responsible for providing those required measures. Emergency shelters typically do not provide all of these elements.

- ? ACCESSIBILITY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, provide if possible
- ? **CONSTRUCTION TYPE**
- ? SEPARATION FROM OTHER TENANTS OCCUPANCIES/USES (in the same building)
- ? FUEL LOAD of furnishings and materials shall be kept to minimum
- ? **NUMBER OF EXITS** shall be sufficient for evacuation, shall be kept clear and unobstructed
- ? LOCKS on exit doors shall remain unlocked at all times the building is occupied.
- ? **EXIT & EGRESS ARRANGEMENT**
- ? ILLUMINATION
- ? EMERGENCY LIGHTING (staff shall be provided with adequate flashlights and batteries within shelter location in case of power failure.)
- ? COOKING OPERATION if provided, shall be operational
- ? **FIRE ALARM**, if provided, shall be operational
- ? **SMOKE DETECTION**, if provided, shall be operational
- ? **SPRINKLER PROTECTION**, if provided, shall be operational
- ? FIRE EXTINGUISHERS shall be provided, operational training will be provided during fire watch training.
- ? **SMOKE BARRIERS**
- ? UTILITIES
- ? HVAC
- ? EMERGENCY POWER
- ? PORTABLE SPACE-HEATING DEVICES shall be prohibited

This office determines that it is the responsibility of all nursing home owners/administrators to provide an approved fire watch during times these emergency shelters are occupied. Persons performing firewatch shall have no other duties while performing firewatch. The State Fire Marshal will provide fire watch training to person(s) interested in this training. The training is not limited to nursing home employees only, it may also apply to person(s) at your host site. It will be the responsibility of each nursing home to assure they have enough personnel trained and available only to conduct a fire watch 24 hours a day while occupying the temporary emergency evacuation shelter(s).

***NOTE:** Buildings that are compliant with the life safety code will not be required to have designated firewatch.