



WASHINGTON STATE PATROL – FIRE PROTECTION BUREAU INSPECTION SECTION

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Smoking Safety in Nursing Homes

The Office of the State Fire Marshal is providing the following information to enable state licensed facilities under the jurisdiction of the State Fire Marshal to be in compliance with state and federal adopted codes and recognized safe practices with regards to smoking.

Smoking is among the leading causes of fire deaths and injuries nationwide.

- 72% of fire-related deaths in nursing homes result from smoking materials.(J. Am. Med. Dir. Assoc. 2008;9[3]:201-3)
- 1 out of 4 victims of smoking-material fires is not the smoker whose cigarette started the fire. (NFPA March 2012)

Although many licensed facilities no longer allow smoking within their buildings, most licensed facilities maintain out-door smoking areas that may present a hazard to the facility, residents and staff.

Smoking Policies (42 CFR, part 483.25(h), F323, Accidents and Supervision

- Smoking policies shall address residents, staff, and visitors and apply to each group.
- Smoking policies shall be readily available, periodically reviewed, updated as needed and posted at a conspicuous location.
- Smoking policies shall be presented periodically as a part of staff in-service training.

Resident Smoking (State Survey Agency Directors, page 2)

- Residents shall be assessed regularly to determine the degree of supervision needed.
- Resident smoking shall be supervised in accordance with the residents' care plan.
- Smoking material shall be secured and dispensed accordingly with the resident care plan.
- Smoking aprons shall be provided to residents as needed.

Designated Smoking Area

- A designated smoking area shall be established and maintained in a safe location that meets the requirements of state law.
- Tents and fabric covers including tents and fabrics that are labeled "fire retardant" are prohibited for use as shelters at smoking areas. (IFC 24.04.6)
- Designated smoking areas shall be free of combustible debris including refuse and dry vegetation. (IFC 310.7)
- Non-combustible ash receptacles shall be used to extinguish smoking material and metal containers with self-closing covers shall be provided to empty the ash receptacles into. (NFPA 101, 2000 ed., 18/19.7.4 (3))
- The use of medical oxygen is prohibited in smoking areas. Oxygen containers shall not be allowed in the smoking area even if the oxygen supply has been shut off. (NFPA 101, 2000 ed., 18/19.7.4 (1))
- A fire extinguisher rated for class A materials shall be located within 75 feet of the designated smoking area. (NFPA 101 2000 ed., 18/19.3.5.6 Fire Extinguishers)

Find these valuable resources on our website:

Resources for Licensed Care Facilities - http://www.wsp.wa.gov/fire/insp_resources.htm.

- Smoking Safety PowerPoint Slide Show – English
- Smoking Safety PowerPoint Slide Show - Spanish

Reference: S&C Letter 12-04-NH Smoking Safety in Long Term Care Facilities;