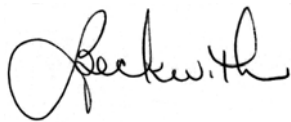




Policy and Procedure

C-2 Emergency Communications
Response
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ADMINISTRATION MANUAL

SUBJECT:	Emergency Communications Response	POLICY/ PROCEDURE #:	C-2
IMPLEMENTATION DATE:	May, 2006	APPROVED BY:	Senior Management Team/General Manager
REVISION DATE(S):	April, 2008	SIGNATURE:	
RELEVANT LEGISLATION:			

PURPOSE:

To maintain tenant and public confidence in Niagara Regional Housing during an emergency as defined in the Niagara Regional Housing Emergency Response Plan.

POLICY:

To provide tenants and other identified stakeholders with accurate, timely information and advice during a Niagara Regional Housing emergency as defined in the Emergency Response Plan.

DEFINITIONS:

Communications Channels: The way in which a message is sent (via tv, radio, face-to-face, etc.)

Communications Vehicles: Specific ways to deliver messages through the channels (Public Service Announcements, ads, presentations, etc.)

PROCEDURE

The Resource Unit Manager is a member of the Emergency Response Team to guide decision-making related to communications matters throughout the emergency, in the following manner:

1. To identify the level of communications response depending on the nature and scope of the emergency.
2. To identify and develop appropriate communications vehicles and channels (i.e.: letter to tenants and neighbours, memo to board members, media products, etc.)
3. To support the appropriate spokesperson(s).
4. To identify internal stakeholders, such as, but not limited to: NRH staff; NRH Board Chair and Directors; Regional Chair and Councillors; Niagara Region Commissioners and Emergency Response Coordinator; Corporate Communications staff and designated representatives of Niagara Region Community Services Department.

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5. To identify additional stakeholders, including:
 - Impacted tenants and/or building attendant
 - Emergency responders (fire, police, paramedics)
 - Housing providers (board and impacted residents/members)
 - Neighbours of impacted NRH community
 - Mayor(s) of affected municipality
 - City/Town councillors of affected municipality
 - City/Town CAO and senior staff
 - and other groups directly or indirectly impacted by situation.

6. To identify government officials, departments, ministries or agencies that may be notified:
 - MPPs and MPs
 - Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
 - Ministry of Environment
 - Ministry of Labour
 - Ministry of Public Safety

The following steps are taken:

1. Staff responding to in-coming phone calls from tenants and the public are provided with current information on a regular basis. They monitor the nature and volume of the calls and provide the NRH Emergency Response Management Team with this information.

If necessary, a second line with a pre-recorded message is set up for over-flow calls. The pre-recorded message is updated regularly. Two phone lines are available for this purpose: 905-682-2421 and 905-682-3101.

When the additional phone lines are activated, callers will be referred to these lines through the standard NRH phone number voice mail and staff.

2. The Central Communications Answering Service staff is notified of the emergency situation and is provided with information on an on-going basis.

3. Media products are prepared. Media, tenants and the public are provided with information about the situation as it exists at that time. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. what is known about the current situation (without releasing confidential information)
 - a. the name of the housing community/complex impacted
 - b. instructions on what tenants and neighbours should do
 - c. the phone number to call (during the day and after hours) for information.

4. If necessary, post information about the situation on the Niagara Regional Housing web site.

5. Tenant calls and media coverage are monitored to respond to ongoing information needs appropriately.

6. A debriefing meeting is held after the issue is resolved and a summary of communications activities is provided.

SUPPORTING FORMS

RELATED POLICIES

- G- 1 After-Hours Response to Tenants' Requests for Service
- G- 2 Emergency Response Notification of Senior Management Team