

Section:	Emergency Planning	Number:	13.12
Approved By:	Senior Leadership Team	Date:	February 2026
Date of Creation:	October 2013	Date of Review:	December 2025
SUBJECT:	Code Orange – External Disasters		Page: 1 of 3

PURPOSE

To ensure Woodingford Lodge is prepared to respond to external disaster events that may impact resident safety, health, staffing, operations, or essential services. This policy establishes a coordinated, scalable response to natural disasters, extreme weather events, and community-based infectious disease emergencies.

POLICY

Woodingford Lodge recognizes that external disasters may occur with little or no warning. The organization will take a proactive, risk-based, and coordinated approach to monitoring, preparedness, response, and recovery to protect residents, team members, and visitors while maintaining essential care and services.

DEFINITIONS

- External Disaster: An event originating outside the facility that poses a risk to residents, team members, or operations, including environmental, weather-related, or public health emergencies.
- Natural Disaster / Extreme Weather: Severe weather or environmental events that may cause injury, damage, or service disruption, including but not limited to severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, high winds, snowstorms, ice storms, flooding, and extreme heat or cold.
- Infectious Disease External Disaster: A communicable disease event declared by Public Health that impacts the surrounding community and may affect facility operations or resident safety.

GENERAL RESPONSE PRINCIPLES

- Monitor credible external sources (Environment Canada, Public Health, Emergency Services)
- Act early based on advisories, watches, and warnings
- Prioritize resident safety, dignity, and continuity of care
- Communicate clearly and consistently
- Escalate and coordinate with external authorities as required
- Document actions and decisions

NATURAL DISASTERS AND EXTREME WEATHER RESPONSE

1. Monitoring and Preparedness:

- a. Registered Team Member in Charge or Administration will monitor advisories from Environment Canada and other reliable sources.
 - i. **Watch:** Conditions are favourable, for severe weather. Prepare and increase monitoring.
 - ii. **Warning:** Severe weather is occurring or imminent. Protective actions required immediately.
- b. During advisories or watches, team members will:
 - i. Close windows, blinds and curtains
 - ii. Cancel or delay outdoor activities
 - iii. Secure outdoor objects
 - iv. Relocate resident property at risk of damage
 - v. Prepare for possible power or service outages
 - vi. Request team members remain on site as needed

2. Active External Disaster – Severe Weather:

- a. When severe weather poses an immediate risk, the Registered Team Member in Charge will activate an external disaster response via overhead announcement with clear instructions, repeated twice. “Code Orange – Move Residents Away from Windows to Designated Area”
- b. Protective actions may include:
 - i. Relocating residents and team members away from windows to interior corridors
 - ii. Closing bedroom and fire separation doors
 - iii. Discontinuing elevator use
 - iv. Using designated refuge areas:
 - **Woodstock:** Worship Centre and General Purpose Area
 - **Tillsonburg/Ingersoll:** Back Service Corridors
 - v. Protecting head and neck during risk of falling debris
- c. Resident movement priorities follow Code Green principles:
 - i. Ambulatory residents first
 - ii. Cooperative residents next
 - iii. Bedridden or uncooperative residents last

3. Post-Event Recovery:

- a. Once danger has passed, an **All-Clear** announcement will be made.
- b. Management or delegate will arrange to have the building assessed for damage, service disruptions, and resident needs, with the help of Oxford County Facilities Department.
- c. Emergency services (911) will be contacted if injury, structural damage, or medical emergencies occur.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE EXTERNAL DISASTER RESPONSE

1. Active Outbreak/Pandemic:

- a. Activation occurs upon declaration or direction from Public Health.

- b. The Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Team, Leadership Team, and Public Health will coordinate response measures.
 - c. Public Health directives regarding:
 - i. Screening
 - ii. PPE
 - iii. Isolation
 - iv. Visitation Restrictions
 - v. Recreation Programming Restrictions
 - d. Supplies required for outbreak management (PPE, hand hygiene products, cleaning agents) will be assessed and secured.
 - e. Staffing will be reviewed with the Scheduling Coordinator to ensure:
 - i. Cohorting to the outbreak neighbourhood or facility
 - ii. Extra housekeeping for high touch cleaning
 - iii. Extra staffing for the neighbourhood, if required
2. Communication:
- a. Team Members and volunteers will be notified using the Auto-Call system.
 - b. Families will be informed of operational impacts, restrictions, and expectations via Auto-Call system, signage, and posted notices.
 - c. Alternative communication methods could be used if electronic systems are disrupted.
3. Monitoring and Recovery:
- a. Compliance with outbreak protocols will be continuously monitored by Registered Team Members and the IPAC team.
 - b. Leadership, IPAC, and Public Health will maintain frequent communication regarding outbreak status.
 - c. Post-event debriefing will be conducted following resolution.

Pandemic response requirements are further detailed in the IPAC Manual, Outbreak Management Guide, and Pandemic Response Manual

STAFFING AND OPERATIONS CONTINUITY

- Staffing levels will be assessed and adjusted as required
- Extended shifts or emergency staffing protocols may be activated
- Team Members' safety and fatigue management must be considered

DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING

- Actions, decisions, and timelines documented
- Critical Incident Reports completed to Ministry of Long-Term Care, as required
- Public Health notified, as applicable