

Fact

Forty-four seniors have died in care occupancies in Ontario since 1980. If these occupancies had been equipped with automatic fire sprinklers lives would have been saved.

Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs

The Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs (O AFC) supports changes to the Ontario Building Code to require that automatic fire sprinklers be mandated in all care occupancies. The O AFC believes that the requirement for automatic fire sprinklers in care occupancies will save lives, reduce serious injuries to people and firefighters and decrease property damage.



The Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs



Call to Action

Here is how you can help to save lives:

If you have a loved one in a care occupancy, check that the building has automatic fire sprinklers. If it does not, send a letter to the owner/operator requesting that they be installed.

Send a letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, the Minister Responsible for Seniors and your MPP asking for automatic fire sprinklers to be mandated in all care occupancies.

Resources

1. Canadian Automatic Sprinkler Association
<http://www.casa-firesprinkler.org/>
2. Fire SAFE Ontario
<http://www.firesafeontario.com/>
3. Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition
<http://www.homefiresprinkler.org/FS/FSBrochures.html>
4. Home Fire Timeline Video
<http://www.homefiresprinkler.org/Consumer/ConsTimeline.html>
5. Stop the Fire
<http://www.stopthefire.org/resources>

**Automatic
Fire Sprinklers
In Care
Occupancies
Protect What
You Value
Most**



10 Important Facts about Automatic Fire Sprinklers in Care Occupancies

Fact 1

Residents of old age homes are 5.4 times more likely to die in fires than other Canadians. Many residents have restricted mobility that may be accompanied by cognitive impairments, conditions that can limit their ability to quickly escape if a fire should occur.

Fact 2

Studies confirm that seniors are slower to react to the sound of a fire alarm. It is important to get out of a burning building quickly. Seniors are slower to wake, slower to get moving, to get out of the chair or the bed, and slower to escape.

Fact 3

Most fatal retirement home fires in Ontario happen in the evening or early morning hours, when there is minimal staff on duty. There is no minimum staffing ratio in the Ontario Fire Code with respect to the number of supervisory staff, which means that when a fire breaks out there may not be enough staff on hand to evacuate all of the residents in time.

Fact 4

Three coroner inquests into fire deaths in Ontario care occupancies recommended that automatic fire sprinklers be installed in care occupancies. These inquests recommended successive governments change the building code to make the installation of automatic fire sprinklers in residents' rooms mandatory and retroactive in older facilities. They are already required in new ones and have been since 1997.

Fact 5

There are an estimated 4,300 "care and treatment" facilities in Ontario that don't have automatic fire sprinklers. Automatic fire sprinklers will protect vulnerable Ontario seniors from the ravages of fire.

Fact 6

Heat from the fire will activate the sprinkler closest to the fire in less than 2 minutes. The sprinkler will suppress or extinguish the fire before the room is engulfed in flames and prevent the fire from spreading. Automatic fire sprinklers can also prevent the production of lethal smoke. Most people who die in fires don't die from burns, they die from smoke and toxic fumes.

Fact 7

A combination of smoke alarms and automatic fire sprinklers can cut the risk of dying in a fire by 82%.

Fact 8

Damage per fire is reduced by 40-70% in properties equipped with automatic fire sprinklers. The one or two sprinkler heads that are triggered help to contain the fire to the room or origin, and prevent it from spreading. Overall there is less fire damage and less water damage.

Fact 9

There has never been a multiple-death fire in a fully sprinklered care occupancy. All the evidence shows that automatic fire sprinklers save lives when a fire breaks out in a care occupancy.

Fact 10

People are dying in non-sprinklered occupancies, not fire sprinklered occupancies. The young and the elderly are those greatest at risk.