



# COMMUNIQUÉ

OFFICE OF THE FIRE MARSHAL  
BUREAU DU COMMISSAIRE DES INCENDIES

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## **Sprinkler Installations in Long-Term Care Homes and Homes for Special Care: Compliance Deadline and Options for Achieving Compliance**

In May 2013, [Ontario Regulation 150/13](#) was filed to amend the [Fire Code](#) with new requirements that apply to care occupancies, care and treatment occupancies, and retirement homes regulated under the [Retirement Homes Act, 2010](#).

These requirements include provisions for enhanced fire safety planning, compulsory training, and mandatory upgrades to existing buildings including the installation of sprinklers and other building retrofits. To facilitate implementation by building owners and operators, compliance deadlines for these requirements have been phased in since January 1, 2014.

The final compliance deadline of **January 1, 2025** relates to sprinkler installation requirements under Article 9.4.5.5. of Division B of the Fire Code that apply to:

- buildings containing long-term care homes, or
- homes for special care that are classified as either a care occupancy or care and treatment occupancy where sleeping accommodation is provided for more than ten residents.

Compliance with sprinkler installation, and other requirements in Part 9 of the Fire Code, is generally achieved through implementation of the prescriptive code requirement, however, other options are available for achieving compliance, including the following:

- implementation of an approved Life Safety Study in accordance with Subsection 9.1.4. of Division B of the Fire Code; or
- implementation of an approved Alternative Solution under Subsection 1.3.2. of Division C of the Fire Code.

While substituting either a Life Safety Study or an Alternative Solution for a code requirement may not always be feasible, these approaches to achieving compliance may

be effective in select situations as either interim or permanent solutions. For instance, for a long-term care home undergoing redevelopment where the project completion date is anticipated to extend past January 1, 2025, achieving Fire Code compliance in the existing home via one of these options may be an effective approach until redevelopment is completed.

Fire departments are encouraged to review these two compliance options with owners/operators of long-term care homes or homes for special care that may be experiencing challenges with meeting sprinkler requirements.

It is important to note that Life Safety Studies and Alternative Solutions must be developed by either a professional engineer or architect and must be submitted to the Chief Fire Official (CFO) for approval. When a proposal is not accepted by the CFO, building owners/operators may appeal the decision in the same manner as they would for an order. The first stage of appeal involves making a request to the Fire Marshal for a review. A Fire Marshal review of a Life Safety Study or Alternative Solution is directed at evaluating the adequacy of proposed alternative measures.

For buildings not in compliance on January 1, 2025, enforcement options available to fire departments are outlined in the [\*Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997\*](#) (FPPA). A case-by-case assessment of risk factors, progress being made towards compliance, as well as local policies and procedures will inform the selection of enforcement action in these instances. When the option to issue an inspection order under subsection 21.(1) is exercised, the right to request a Fire Marshal review should be reviewed with the owner/operator as he or she may be unfamiliar with the appeal process established under the FPPA. For limited cases involving serious, multiple fire safety risk factors, enforcement options may include orders to close or authorizations to close under subsection 21.(2) of the FPPA, both requiring Fire Marshal approval.

The process for sprinkler implementation is complex as it involves a number of steps, including securing funds, applying for building permits, and undertaking construction. As these steps may introduce delays, it is important that, during this process, fire departments continue working with owners/operators to ensure active progress towards compliance is being made.

For assistance with questions on the compliance deadline for sprinkler installations, please contact your local Fire Protection Adviser.