POLICY	Policy Name: **Codes: Standardized Emergency**	Policy Number 50.00.010	Level: 1	Page 1 of 3
	Approval Signature: *Original signed: B. Postl*	Section: Disaster Management		
	Date: February 19, 2003 (Reviewed June 2005)	Supercedes: June 1, 2001		

(Header block also includes: Winnipeg Regional Health Authority / Office régional de la santé de Winnipeg — Caring for Health / À l'écoute de notre santé)

1.0 **PURPOSE:**

1.1 To establish a standard set of colour coded calls for emergency communications of information in WRHA facilities and sites to be used via Public Address System, 2-way Radio systems and other communications means.

1.2 Colour codes have been in use in health care facilities for some time. They provide a concise means of ensuring staff receive a common message, signaling the need for an urgent response without unnecessarily alerting or alarming patients, residents, visitors etc.

1.3 The use of a uniform colour coded system also makes it easier for staff who are reassigned to a new facility or site or who must practice in more than one facility or site to remember the coded meaning and its attached response – it is the same from one to the other.

2.0 **DEFINITIONS: N/A**

3.0 **POLICY:**

3.1 Standardized Emergency Codes approved for use in WRHA facilities/sites are shown in the attached table. The codes shown have been approved, as noted, by the Canadian Healthcare Association, the Ontario Hospital Association, the Healthcare Insurance Reciprocal of Canada, Manitoba Health Disaster Management services and other Manitoba health organizations.

3.2 The standardized Emergency Codes relate to the type of emergency, but can be suffixed where necessary with such terms as "alert", "stat", "confirmed" and "cancelled".

3.3 WRHA facilities and sites will adopt standardized Emergency Codes (see attached table) by June 1, 2001 and this policy will be included in WRHA facility orientation programs.

Codes: Standardized Emergency

Incident	Code	Rationale
Fire	Code Red	Color of fire
Cardiopulmonary Arrest	Code Blue	Individual in arrest will be cyanotic (blue tinged skin)
Disaster (external influx of patients)	Code Orange	Most individuals brought by ambulance; orange (with white) is international color for ambulances
Evacuation	Code Green	Green (light) the color for go ahead, i.e., leave present location.
Missing patient/resident	Code Yellow	Not commonly used for other disaster codes
Bomb Threat/Search	Code Black	Color of material charred from explosion
Violent Incident	Code White	Color of many restraint devices
Internal Chemical Spill	Code Brown	Stereotypical color of noxious substance
External Air Contamination (exclusion)	Code Grey	Stereotypical color of gaseous toxic cloud
Abduction (Infant, Child, dependent Adult)	Code Pink	Code commonly in use at several WRHA facilities
Medical Emergency	"25"	Code commonly in use at several WRHA facilities to request immediate medical response

4.0   PROCEDURE: N/A

5.0   REFERENCES:

Canadian Healthcare Association Policy Statement "Uniform Emergency Codes for Canadian Health Care Facilities and Agencies", March 1993; policy currently under review.

CHA recommends 2 evacuation codes, "Code Green" for a precautionary evacuation and a "Code Green Stat" to announce <u>immediate</u> evacuation; WRHA facilities/sites will use "Code Green" only.

Approved by member organizations of the Ontario Hospital Association (1993)

"Code Pink" is approved by member organizations of the Ontario Hospital Association (1993) for Pediatric Cardiac Arrest

Policy Developer: Guy Corriveau, Director, Disaster Management