



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH & WELFARE

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November 22, 2013

Bryan K. Lindsay, Administrator
Life Care Center of Coeur d'Alene
500 West Aqua Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815-7764

Provider #: 135122

Dear Mr. Lindsay:

On **November 14, 2013**, a Complaint Investigation survey was conducted at Life Care Center of Coeur d'Alene. Mark Grimes, Life Safety Code Inspector conducted the complaint investigation.

The complaint allegations, findings and conclusions are as follows:

Complaint #ID00006266

ALLEGATION #1:

The complainant stated that on November 6, 2013, sometime between 2:30 and 3:15 p.m., the wall heater in an identified resident's room came on. When it did, it sent out a strong odor of natural gas. The complainant identified a Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) and a hospice nurse who noted the smelled as well. The strong odor continued for at least five minutes. The complainant did not know the resident's room number.

FINDINGS:

On November 7, 2013, this office contacted the Ombudsman's office and left a message, notifying them of the concern. Later that day, the Ombudsman notified our office of a visit to the facility. The Ombudsman reported that the facility had identified an issue with their heating system that required some repairs.

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On November 14, 2013, at 1:45 p.m., Mark Grimes, the Supervisor for FFS&C met with the facility's administrator and maintenance engineer and reviewed the corrective actions made with regard to a reported gas leak that was identified as having been noted in room #301.

The exterior of the heating unit showed no sign of disrepair or damage. The maintenance engineer took the cover off and showed that the igniter had been replaced in response to the report of an odor of gas. He stated that when igniters begin to fail and require a second (or third) cycle to ignite the fuel in the ignition chamber, a small amount of gas is exhausted (purged) to the exterior of the unit. A period must elapse and then the unit refills the ignition chamber with gas before the igniter tries a second time to ignite. During this waiting period, the exhausted gas can back flow back into the room through the PTAC outside air vent. This small amount of gas is too diluted to be ignitable.

This is the proper igniter cycle process and would not be a hazard to anyone in the room or in the building. The ignition chamber is a sealed chamber to the room. The mercaptan odorant that is added to natural gas is purposefully designed to allow human detection of even the smallest amount of gas, even below a safe (too lean to ignite) mixture of air and fuel.

Maintenance staff responded and repaired the unit properly when notified.

The event most likely occurred nearly as described; however, no fire hazard was present and system safeties were all present. There was no violation of rules or code.

CONCLUSIONS:
Unsubstantiated.

As none of the complaint's allegations were substantiated, no response is necessary. Thank you for the courtesies and assistance extended to us during our visit.

Sincerely,



LORENE KAYSER, L.S.W., Q.M.R.P., Supervisor
Long Term Care

LKK/dmj