

BQC - 86 - 015

Date: March 20, 1986

To: All Wisconsin Nursing Homes

From: Larry Tainter, Director  
Bureau of Quality Compliance

Subject: Ventilation of Ceramic Kilns

In the interest of maintaining a safe environment for residents and staff in all licensed nursing homes in the State of Wisconsin, the Bureau of Quality Compliance is distributing this informational memorandum so that action can be initiated to alleviate a potential health hazard which may be resulting from the use of ceramic kilns.

Engineers from the Bureau have recently had discussions with the Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations (DILHR) about ceramic kilns, both gas and electric. As a result of these discussions, it is our belief that without proper exhaust ventilation, these kilns may be a hazard likely to cause serious physical harm to residents and staff.

These beliefs are based on tests which have indicated that carbon monoxide concentrations ranging from 400 to 1000 parts per million (PPM) may be expected. Also, sulfur dioxide concentrations far in excess of the permissible level (2 ppm) have been found during bisque firing in the kilns.

Standards for ventilation of kilns are already included in the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards for privately owned facilities under Section 29 CFR 1910.000. In addition, it appears that DILHR will be promulgating requirements for ventilation of kilns in publicly-owned facilities in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes 101.055(6). These standards will be promulgated under Wisconsin Administrative Code IHLR Chapter 32.

Homes desiring assistance in assessing ventilation needs should contact their facility engineer or S. D. Schlough, Chief, Facilities Needs Analysis Section, (608) 266-3878.

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cc: Nursing home associations  
Board on Aging & Long Term Care