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Title 44@ Department of Health

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Article 44:73@ Nursing facilities

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Chapter 44:73:02@ Physical environment

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Section 44:73:02:09@ Linen

44_73_02_09 Linen

The supply of bed linen and towels shall equal three times the licensed capacity.

The facility shall have written procedures for the storage and handling of soiled and clean linens. The facility shall contract with a commercial laundry service or the laundry service of another licensed health care facility for all common use linens if laundry services are not provided on the premises. A facility providing laundry services shall have adequate space and equipment for the safe and effective operation of the laundry service. Commingled residents' personal clothing, common-use linen, any isolation clothing, and housekeeping items shall be processed by methods that assure disinfection. The facility shall process laundry following the laundry equipment and cleaning agent recommendations. If hot water is used for disinfection, minimum water temperatures supplied for laundry purposes shall be 160 degrees Fahrenheit (71 degrees centigrade). If chlorine bleach is added to the laundry process to provide 100 parts per million or more of free chlorine, the minimum hot water temperatures supplied for laundry purposes may be reduced to 120 degrees Fahrenheit (48.8 degrees centigrade). The facility may choose to wash commingled residents' personal clothing, common-use linen, and any isolation clothing in water temperatures less than 120 ° F. if the following conditions are met:

(1)

The supplier of the chemical specifies low-temperature wash formulas in writing for

the machines used in the facility;

(2)

Charts providing specific information concerning the formulas to be used for each machine are posted in an area accessible to staff;

(3)

The facility ensures that laundry staff receives in-service training by the chemical supplier on a routine basis, regarding chemical usage and monitoring of wash operations; and

(4)

The facility ensures that staff monitors chemical usage and wash water temperatures at least monthly to ensure conformance with the chemical supplier's instructions. Any resident's personal clothing that is not commingled may be processed according to manufacturer's recommendations using water temperatures and detergent in quantity as recommended by the garment or detergent manufacturer. The facility shall have distinct areas for the storage and handling of clean and soiled linens. Those areas used for the storage and handling of soiled linens shall be negatively pressurized. The facility shall establish special procedures for the handling and processing of contaminated linens. Soiled linen shall be placed in closed containers prior to transportation. To safeguard clean linens from cross contamination, the linens shall be transported in containers used exclusively for clean linens, shall be kept covered with dust covers at all times while in transit or in hallways, and shall be stored in areas designated exclusively for this purpose. A written request for any modification of the requirements of this section shall be reviewed and approved by the department before any changes are made.