

# **CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY**

**SUDBURY, ONTARIO**

**DIOCESE OF ALGOMA**

## **SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY (Screening in Faith)**

### **ALLERGY ALERT PROTOCOL**

#### **Background**

It is becoming increasingly common knowledge that the incidence of sensitivities or allergies to many environmental substances is increasing significantly over the last decade or so. This is especially true in the case of severe allergic reactions to peanut products, especially among children. While the evidence is not as compelling for various inhaled substances, such as tobacco smoke, perfumes, volatile solvents etc. there appears to be an increasing number of individuals who are significantly affected by various substances - often to the extent that feel they must avoid spaces that contain these various substances.

As a Christian community that seeks to be all-inclusive, it would seem appropriate for our congregation to take appropriate steps to ensure that the environment within our building be as free of environmental irritants, allergens and toxic substances as possible. It is for this reason that the following guidelines have been adopted.

#### **Environmental Tobacco Smoke**

We wish to reinforce that our church building is and will continue to be a totally smoke-free environment. Any individual not complying with this policy will be politely asked to leave the building. Any group using or renting the building that allows or condones smoking within the building by any of its members may forfeit their future right to use the building.

#### **Cleaning compounds etc.**

Janitorial staff or contracted maintenance personnel shall be encouraged to use low-odour or odour-free cleaning, floor-stripping and floor polishing compounds. These should be used early in any given week so as to dissipate odours well in advance of regular Sunday worship services and preferably later in the day so as to avoid exposing day-time users of the building to these compounds. (e.g. LINC program participants)

## **Scents, perfumes etc.**

While it is impractical to expect all who attend various functions within the building to abstain from the use of perfumes, hair sprays, after-shave lotions and various other scents. We should, however, make a strong effort to encourage regular attenders to avoid the use of these substances when they attend worship services or other functions. A notice to this effect should be prominently displayed near the church entrance and periodic reminders will be placed in the parish bulletin. Group leaders should from time to time advise members of this protocol.

## **Peanut Allergy**

Some children and young adults are extremely allergic to peanuts and peanut products, even in minute amounts. Deaths can result from exposure to these products. For this reason, the serving of any peanuts or peanut-containing foods is prohibited within the building. A reminder of this will be posted in the main kitchen and in the small kitchen in the Algoma Room. Parish Life coordinators and team leaders are expected to remind individuals of this when making request for food to be brought from home for social functions.

## **Incense in Divine Worship**

The use of incense to enhance public worship, especially at high festivals, is a long-standing Anglican tradition. Nonetheless, there is a minority of people that is very reactive to the volatile oils in incense. In order to make it possible for these individuals to join in worship services, it shall be our practice to limit the use of incense to high festival occasions and to restrict its use to the last service of the day. This will ensure that the odour will dissipate over a 12-24 hour period.

If incense is to be used, then advance notice to this effect should be included in the parish bulletin for the preceding two Sundays and preferably be included in the Epiphany Star.