3 Ways to Manage Facilities Risk

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You might not think much about the level of risk your nonprofit's facilities present, or the ways good facility management can help mitigate risk.

But facilities can help or hinder your organization's ability to deliver on its mission. Your facilities might benefit the community you serve in unexpected ways, or they might present hazards to staff, volunteers, or community members.

Last week NRMC held a webinar for our affiliate members on facilities risk management. Here are some tools and resources we shared.

Risk Assessment Checklists

How do you know what to look for when sizing up risks at your facility? Here are some things to consider.

Try to look at your facility with the critical eye of an outside observer. What physical aspects of the space present a risk to people in it? Pay special attention to areas like:

- Entrances
- Exits
- Playgrounds
- Kitchens

What is your nonprofit doing now to address this risk? What additional actions might you need to take to address the risk? Who needs to take those actions? When do they need to take the actions?

Maintenance Schedules

A great preventive maintenance schedule will address a lot of risks before they become significant. Here's what yours should include.

- Detailed list of preventive maintenance tasks for each of your facilities (and each part of an individual facility)

- Frequency at which tasks need to be done (monthly, biannually, annually, etc.)
- Who needs to complete the tasks (staff or a vendor)
- A checkbox by month and date to note task completion

A Comprehensive Insurance Plan

If your nonprofit doesn't already have a relationship with a great insurance professional (agent or broker) who specializes in working with nonprofits, start there. They can answer your questions about what kinds of insurance you need to address facility risks.

Read and understand your insurance policies that offer coverage for property damage or loss and business interruption or extra expense. Extra expense might include costs for things like renting temporary space and notifying service recipients and the public about your temporary location.

What do your policies include and exclude? Work with your insurance broker or agent to determine gaps in coverage for:

- damage to or destruction of your facilities
- lost income and extra costs while restoring operations and facilities

If needed, consider extending your insurance coverage or developing a contingency plan to manage costs associated with such exposures.

One lesson we shared on our webinar: facility safety benefits everyone, including team and community members who never visit your facility. If you have robust discussions about facility safety, you'll build trust and increase the likelihood that people will share other types of risk concerns with you.

While making a preventive maintenance schedule may not fit your traditional idea of mission-critical work, everything we've discussed in this article goes right back to your mission. Well-maintained facilities where risks have been considered and addressed provide a great space for teams to collaborate and for community members to experience the best of what your nonprofit has to offer.

Want to learn more about what areas of your facilities to focus on and how to create a step-by-step facilities management approach? NRMC Affiliate Members who have created a profile on our website can check out our archived webinar in their Affiliate Dashboard. If your agency is not yet an Affiliate Member but is interested in registering for upcoming sessions, join today online or contact Whitney Thomey at whitney@nonprofitrisk.org or 571-307-4321 to learn more about our member benefits.

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