

# Managing Facility Risk

10 STEPS  
TO SAFETY





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## 10 Steps to Safety

by Barbara B. Oliver

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ISBN 1-893210-16-2



## About the Nonprofit Risk Management Center

The Nonprofit Risk Management Center is dedicated to helping community-serving nonprofits conserve assets, prevent harm, and free up resources for mission-critical activities. The Center provides technical assistance on risk management, liability, and insurance matters; offers interactive risk assessment programs online; publishes easy-to-use written resources; designs and delivers workshops and conferences; and offers competitively priced consulting services.

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## Acknowledgements

The Nonprofit Risk Management Center is grateful for the support of the Public Entity Risk Institute (PERI), which provided a generous grant to support the cost of publishing this book. PERI is a tax-exempt nonprofit whose mission is to serve public, private and nonprofit organizations as a dynamic, forward thinking resource for the practical enhancement of risk management. For more information on PERI, visit the organization's Web site, [www.riskinstitute.org](http://www.riskinstitute.org).

The Center is grateful to the following persons for their thoughtful comments and helpful suggestions on the draft of this publication.

Jeanette Aston, Mt. Graham Safe House, Inc., Safford, AZ

William G. Chapin, Diocese of Rockville Centre, Rockville Centre, NY

George L. Head, Insurance Institutes of America, Malvern, PA

Les Nichols, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, Atlanta, GA

Glenda Sizer, Triangle 2 Partners, Rockville, MD

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# Introduction

**N**onprofits that own their own facilities are responsible for the inspection, maintenance and repair of those facilities to prevent property damage and accidents or injury to clients, staff, visitors and vendors. Facilities are built, installed or established to serve a particular purpose: camp grounds, playgrounds, natatoriums, day care centers, and nursing homes.

Nonprofit organizations that lease facilities for providing goods and services or that rent facilities for special events, fund-raising or field trips are also responsible for inspecting and maintaining safe and secure premises.

Organizations that operate out of a residence also need to assess liability and finance potential loss. A visitor to such a residence who is injured could file a claim against the nonprofit, the homeowner or the renter, and the landlord.

A nonprofit organization's facility presents myriad possibilities for causing injuries or accidents to employees, clients, volunteers, visitors and vendors. The risk of a facility-based claim exists within the buildings and on the grounds. The specific issues that need to be addressed in managing facility risk depend on the kind of equipment, function and special uses related to the facility, as well as local and state codes and state and federal legislation. Operational risks include physical damage to its property and the property of others, which can

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interfere with the provision of services and can be costly. The organization's property-related assets include grounds, buildings and equipment.

To protect itself, the organization needs to appoint someone in charge of monitoring safety, maintenance and repair. Whether the appointee is a single point person, a risk management committee or a full-time professional risk manager, someone needs to be in charge of the process or it won't happen. Checklists help streamline the process and ensure that the same points will be monitored no matter who does the actual evaluation. Manufacturer's recommendations, legal requirements, safety Web sites, historical claims data and your own experience all come into play. Remember that special-purpose facilities, such as day care, residential care, playgrounds, camps and open bodies of water, require specialized checks and maintenance to meet local, state and federal requirements. As you use your checklists, evaluate and update them to make them constantly work for you.

Each of the 10 steps represents important opportunities to protect employees, volunteers, clients, visitors and vendors from harm, while on your premises. Your efforts to protect these people will, in turn, lessen the possibility that your nonprofit will have a claim or lawsuit filed against it.



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# Chapter 1

## How Risk Management Applies to Your Facility

### What Is Risk?

**R**isk is the potential deviation from what you expect. You don't expect the tenant above your nonprofit to leave the water running in the sink all night, the ceiling to collapse, or the water to damage all your equipment making the site unavailable to provide your services. Sorting out who did what to whom and who will pay for the damages is only one concern. In addition to the ruined facility, your nonprofit needs to find another place to operate while the damage is assessed and repaired.

You don't expect that a stalled car will ignite gas seeping from a broken line in the construction site across from your building, causing explosion, fire and smoke damage to your facility.

You don't expect that the newly renovated older building that was a gift to your organization will spring major roof leaks, and be rejected by the city fire inspector the week before you're scheduled to move in and hold the grand opening.

But these things, and events much less dramatic do happen, and that's why there's risk management.

### What Is Risk Management?

Risk management is an approach to problem solving. To many people, risk management sounds very technical and

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complicated. However, its principles are simple and straightforward.

*Risk management*, therefore, is:

- ❑ a discipline for dealing with uncertainty.
- ❑ a system for making choices with respect to the clients you serve, the procedures and policies you adopt and the overall way in which you conduct the “business” of your organization.
- ❑ a framework for understanding and predicting the potential liability of a nonprofit in the event something goes wrong.
- ❑ a strategic approach for understanding and predicting the potential accidents and other losses, before they happen.
- ❑ a model for responding to unexpected events and outcomes to minimize the adverse effects of these events.

## A Risk Management Process

The goal of risk management is to improve performance by acknowledging and controlling risks. It puts you, not the risk, in charge. It’s about protecting and conserving your organization’s resources and providing goods and services sensibly. Risk management frees your organization to pursue its mission by enabling your organization to accept more—not less—risk.

Ideally risk management creates an environment where a nonprofit can take informed risks. The Nonprofit Risk Management Center uses the following Risk Management Process.

### Step 1 Establish the Context

What role does risk play within the organization? Does the leadership live on the edge and feel comfortable taking chances,

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or is it unwilling to move outside known parameters that it considers safe? Score your organization on the following scale.

Risk averse < \_\_-9\_\_-6\_\_-3\_\_0\_\_+3\_\_+6\_\_+9\_\_> Extreme risk taker

How important is the practice of risk management to the organization? Is the risk management function defined, does a committee or point person oversee the fulfillment of risk management goals, or is risk managed on an as-needed basis (when the insurance claim or lawsuit is filed, or the negative news airs) because the organization believes there isn't time, money or personnel to devote to managing risk on an ongoing basis? Rank your organization on the following scale.

Poorly financed and staffed to meet goals < \_\_-9\_\_-6\_\_-3\_\_0\_\_+3\_\_+6\_\_+9\_\_> Well financed and staffed to meet goals

What is the relationship of the organization to its environment?

What community needs does it meet? \_\_\_\_\_

What legal and regulatory parameters must it operate within? \_\_\_\_\_

Other considerations (language, cultural, political)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Identify the organization's overall strengths and weaknesses, the opportunities it has and threats it faces.

**Strengths** \_\_\_\_\_

**Weaknesses** \_\_\_\_\_

**Opportunities** \_\_\_\_\_

**Threats** \_\_\_\_\_

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## Step 2 Acknowledge and Identify Risk

In most small to mid-size nonprofits, a committee comprising staff and volunteers brainstorms:

- What can happen that will put our mission at risk?
- Why would this happen?
- How would it affect the mission?

You can organize the brainstorming around resource categories (people, property, income and reputation) or by departments or operational units (administration, finance, governance, development/fundraising, conference/events, communications, client services and information technology).

## Step 3 Evaluate and Prioritize Risk

Not every risk you've identified is likely to materialize. For instance, if you're located in the Midwest the likelihood that your building will be swept away by a tsunami is infinitesimal. Other risks may be likely, but their consequences not as severe. For example, the same building might suffer some damage from sewer backup or basement flooding following a downpour but the building is still standing and can be cleaned up and repaired. For each potential risk, ask:

- How likely is this risk to occur?
- What damage would it likely inflict?

## Step 4 Implement risk management techniques (manage risk)

Decide how to manage your risks and implement the risk management program using available tools. Have the committee develop strategies to minimize the likelihood of a risk materializing, and develop responses that it could activate should that incident occur. The tools in the risk management process are:

- *Avoidance* (don't purchase or accept a gift of property in a flood plain)

- 
- **Modification** (install a sump pump in the basement and have the ground sloped away from the building's foundation)
  - **Sharing** (purchase flood insurance to share the cost of damage should it occur)
  - **Retention** (plan to pay for claims at a certain level or claims for which insurance is not available)

Then test the strategies: Low-priority risks should be accepted and monitored, and high-priority risks should be evaluated against the organization's mission before being rejected or accepted. Some organizations couldn't exist without accepting high priority risks.

Consider residential treatment programs for juvenile offenders (boot camps), or mentoring programs for physically or mentally challenged children or adults, or operating a sports program on a city playground.



This is where facility risk management comes into play. By analyzing what is needed to protect the service recipients, employees, volunteers, vendors and the organization, you can reduce the chance the risk will occur and/or cause extensive damage to your organization's finances, reputation and existence.

### Step 5 Monitor and Update the Program

Risk management is a circular process. Each stage of the process is connected to the one before and the one after. At least once a year, the risk management committee members should review and revise the techniques it has implemented, as well as identify new areas that need its attention.



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# Chapter 2

## Ten Steps to Safety

### Step 1 Select a Mission-Appropriate Facility

**W**hen searching for a location to purchase, rent or borrow, consider who receives your services and what kinds of programs you offer. Individually and, more importantly, together, these requirements will affect the type of buildings and grounds you choose. In real estate, the three most important considerations are location, location, location. In risk management, the three most important considerations are safety, safety, safety. If your nonprofit already has a facility, use the following advice to evaluate and upgrade the premises as risk priority, money and time allow.

#### ***Service Recipients***

Service recipients demand different levels of protection depending on their age, mental ability, physical ability, skill level and the types of activities in which they will be engaged. For instance, if your clientele comprises young children who will be at your facility during the work day, you will want to make certain that they are safe from traffic; from people who might do them harm; from toxic substances; from electrical outlets; from unsecured large, heavy furniture that can topple onto them; from loose floor coverings; and from open windows and doors. You also want to modify your space to provide appropriate bathroom stalls with low partitions, doors that don't lock from the inside and equipment proportioned to meet their heights

and sizes. You want a locked closet or room to store cleaning supplies and equipment. You want windows with grills that can be unlocked if needed to provide an escape route, or you want to restrict the window from opening more than 2-3 inches so a child can't fall through the opening. You want wide-open interior and exterior spaces so that children and adults are always in view of another adult. Yet, you want to separate children by age groupings to protect the younger ones from the older ones who are more advanced physically and mentally and are generally larger people.

Outdoors, you want fences with gates that latch, and play areas free from cracked pavement, hard surfaces, debris, trash and sharp edges. Again, you want wide-open spaces that allow supervision of the child-child and adult-child interaction.

### ***Types of Programs***

Once you've considered the type(s) of client(s) you are servicing and accommodated their needs, you need to add precautions that arise out of the programs that you offer to the group(s). Many programs require activity-specific facilities in which to operate. Think about swimming and other water-related sports activities, camping, recreation or sports, mentoring, service to the elderly or shut-ins, and meal service.

Each of these programs requires additional considerations to protect your service recipients, employees, volunteers and vendors from harm, while on your premises. Here's an example of a simple chart you can use to begin identifying facility-related needs. A sample version of a completed checklist follows.

S A M P L E Facility Needs Checklist	
<i>Service Recipients</i>	
Who will be served in your facility? Check all that apply:	What facility-related issues must be considered?
<input type="checkbox"/> Infants	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Toddlers	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Children	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Teenagers	_____



- Adults
- Seniors
- Persons with disabilities

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Activities*

List each activity that will be conducted at the facility.

What facility-related issues must be considered?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

E X A M P L E  
Facility Needs Checklist

*Service Recipients*

Who will be served in your facility?  
Check all that apply:

What facility-related issues must be considered?

- Children
- Teenagers
- Adults
- Seniors

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1. Signage throughout facility should be oversized to accommodate poor eyesight.
2. All restrooms should be handicap-accessible, with grab bars.
3. The main entrance should have ramp.
4. AED (automated external defibrillator)s should be available.

- Persons with disabilities

\_\_\_\_\_

*Activities*

List each activity that will be conducted at the facility.

What facility-related issues must be considered?

Yoga \_\_\_\_\_

Field trips \_\_\_\_\_

Lecture series \_\_\_\_\_

Monthly book discussion \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## Step 2 Know Your Responsibilities

Both the owner and the tenant have liability exposures.

### ***Owner or Landlord***

A nonprofit that is a property owner has legal obligations and liabilities much broader than a nonprofit that leases space or operates out of someone's home or apartment. For instance, an owner is responsible for the soundness of the entire building: code requirements are met, repairs are made, equipment (water heater, heating, ventilation and air conditioning system) is run according to manufacturers' instructions and serviced on a regular schedule, and that security is provided and maintained.

As an owner or landlord, your nonprofit owes a general duty of care to visitors to your site(s), whether they are guests, campers, or outside rental group members. These persons enjoy the legal status of *invitee*. An owner must use ordinary care to maintain the premises in a reasonably safe condition for invitees. The duty of ordinary care requires an owner to look for unsafe or dangerous conditions on the premises and either remedy the problem or issue an appropriate warning. This duty applies to both regular invitees and outside rental groups, unless specific affirmative steps are taken to limit that duty. (Refer to Step 8 Limit Liability.)

Most property owners and landlords appreciate fully the risks and potential liabilities that exist when they operate campgrounds, conference centers, and other facilities open to the public on their property. These same owners and landlords, however, often fail to understand that these risks and potential liabilities still exist when they rent or loan these facilities to outside groups.

### ***Renter or Borrower***

Perhaps your nonprofit rents or borrows a facility for your operations. As a renter, it's important to know that you have facility exposures. You are liable for injuries or accidents that occur within your rented space, and some, but not all, damages to the space you rent. Thus, as soon as a person sets foot onto

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the space your nonprofit is leasing, the person's injury or accident has the potential to become your nonprofit's liability and expense. And if someone leaves the water running in your rented space and the sink overflows ruining the flooring in your space and that of the units below, your nonprofit is responsible for the damage. However, if the roof of the building is damaged allowing storm water to run into your rented space, which then damages the floors below, the landlord is responsible. By leasing your organization's space, you limit—but don't eliminate—your nonprofit's exposure.

### Rents Additional Space Occasionally

Many nonprofits rent additional space for special events, meetings or field trips. Renting space when needed can be an economical way to manage your nonprofit's assets and fulfill its mission. You might rent a bowling alley for an outing, a room at the town library for a board meeting, a historic mansion for a fund raiser or a campground for an overnight field trip. No matter what the use, it's always wise to put the agreement in writing (even if—and maybe especially if—the property is owned by a “friend” of the nonprofit). The rental agreement spells out expectations and limits of both parties, thus defusing many disputes before they occur.

### Rental Agreement

Under the letter of the law, property borrowed for a fee or for free is considered *rented*. Rental agreements written by the owner/landlord serve the purpose of protecting the landlord. They are contracts and should be reviewed by the nonprofit's attorney before being signed. The attorney can advise you whether or not you are getting the deal you discussed and whether you might protect yourself in other ways.

A rental agreement should establish, in clear terms, the duties and responsibilities of the owner/landlord and the rental group. The following items should be considered for inclusion in the standard rental agreement, depending on the circumstances:

- 
- ❑ Maintenance and Upkeep: While the owner typically remains responsible for any hazardous condition on the property in existence at the time of the lease, the rental agreement can establish who will be responsible for general upkeep, such as trash pickup, repairing broken steps, and clearing snow and ice.
  - ❑ Indemnification Clause: The agreement should include a provision holding the owner/landlord harmless from any negligent acts or omissions by the rental group during the term of the lease.
  - ❑ Instructions on Use of Property and Facilities: The owner/landlord should provide detailed instructions on how any special features of the facility operates or what to do if problems arise.
  - ❑ Limits on Accessible Areas: If the rental group is only using a portion of the premises, or if certain areas are off-limits, those boundaries should be clearly established in the lease. Then, if a renter strays beyond this area, his status will change from an *invitee* to a *trespasser*. Once that occurs, the renter takes the risk of the place as he finds it and the duty of the landowner is greatly reduced.
  - ❑ Potential Hazards: Specific warnings about dangerous or hazardous conditions on the premises should be provided.
  - ❑ Delegation of Supervision: Depending on the situation, the owner/landlord may need to provide his or her own staff members to assist with supervision. For example, if swimming is available on the premises, additional lifeguards may be required, and the owner/landlord may want to establish his right and duty to provide them.
  - ❑ Alcohol Consumption: If alcohol is part of the rental group's activities, it may be necessary to obtain a temporary liquor license. The lease or rental agreement should require the rental group to obtain both the license and, if available, liquor liability insurance, adding the owner/landlord as an *additional*

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*insured*. Finally, the contract should include an acknowledgment by the rental group that no one under the legal age will be served alcohol.

## Samples of Rental Agreements

To see sample rental agreements, conditions or request forms, consider visiting the following Web sites. You'll note that they offer different benefits and limitations depending on the facility. Your nonprofit's rental agreement will, too, depending on what you require and can negotiate.

- Bingo Hall Rental Agreement — [www.michigan.gov/documents/BSL-CG-SampleBingoHallRentalAgreement\\_1402\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/BSL-CG-SampleBingoHallRentalAgreement_1402_7.pdf)
- Cultural Center Rental conditions — [www.morgan.public.lib.ga.us/madmorg/rentals.htm](http://www.morgan.public.lib.ga.us/madmorg/rentals.htm)
- Cultural Center Rental request — [www.morgan.public.lib.ga.us/madmorg/Rentbook.htm](http://www.morgan.public.lib.ga.us/madmorg/Rentbook.htm)
- Renting Newberry [Library] Facilities — [www.newberry.org/nl/general/rentafterhours.html](http://www.newberry.org/nl/general/rentafterhours.html)
- Use & Lease by Non-University Groups (University of Minnesota) — [www.fpd.finop.umn.edu/groups/ppd/documents/procedure/Use\\_Lease.cfm](http://www.fpd.finop.umn.edu/groups/ppd/documents/procedure/Use_Lease.cfm)

### **Home-Based**

Many a successful nonprofit organization begins on someone's kitchen table and as the organization prospers moves to the home office or recreation room before locating elsewhere. But just because the board of directors meets around the ping-pong table, it doesn't mean that the nonprofit doesn't have facility exposures. The organization still needs to be concerned about these exposures.

Some of the questions you'll want to ask the owner or renter of the house or apartment where the nonprofit is housed:

- Do you have homeowner's or apartment renter's insurance?

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- Does the insurance cover injury or accidents to visitors to your residence?
  - If visitor accident/injury coverage isn't in force, can it be purchased?
  - Is the nonprofit's business conducted in a dedicated workspace (no personal business is done there)?
  - Do you have property coverage for equipment used to produce materials for the nonprofit?

### Borrowing a home-based facility

Nonprofits also borrow homes or apartments on occasion. For instance, one volunteer at the nonprofit day-care center lives in a complex with a swimming pool. She wants to provide a treat for the children under the nonprofit's care by hosting a pool party. Before accepting this generous offer and providing a special day for the children under its care, the nonprofit needs to consider:

- Is there a certified lifeguard on duty?
- Does the complex have adequate insurance to cover injuries to guests at the pool?
- What coverage does the nonprofit have to protect itself from claims should a volunteer, employee or service recipient have an injury or accident, or drown?
- Have the parents of the children signed a waiver that is specific about the dangers of swimming?
- Is the nonprofit a *named insured* or *additional insured* on the relevant insurance policy?
- Is there an alternative public site (such as a community, YMCA or municipal pool) that might be better equipped as a site for the outing?
- Is adequate supervision provided for pool parties in addition to a lifeguard?
- Have the children been swim-tested?

- 
- ❑ Are nonswimmers clearly identified and restricted to shallow water?
  - ❑ Have parents been informed of the party and have signed permission slips been obtained from all invitees?

It's very important that nonprofit organizations look carefully at a gift to see if the present is really the generous offering it appears to be. Many accidents occur when organizations have good intentions but poor planning.

### Guidelines for Establishing Rental/Lease Policy\*

It is essential to establish policies, procedures and conditions for the rental, lease and use of your facilities. A policy is set by the board and carried out by the staff. An established policy will help the executive director explain the conditions for permission to use your facilities and, when necessary, the reasons for refusal. Such explanations should be in written form and made available to groups making application. Members of your board of directors and the staff must understand the policy.

A policy should establish whether or not your facilities may be used on the Sabbath and/or holidays. You can choose to make your facility available under special or emergency conditions to municipal, county or state officials for governmental purposes.

**Outside groups** should be allowed to use your facilities only when:

- ❑ the facilities are not being used by service recipients
- ❑ proper care is assured
- ❑ staff supervision is available
- ❑ behavior can be controlled and discipline exerted
- ❑ adequate liability is assured
- ❑ satisfactory information consistent with the philosophy of your organization and the needs of the community is provided by the applying group

The organization should include a step-by-step method for processing each request. If there is to be a limit on the number of hours a group can use an area in your facility, this should be stated. (This would depend upon available staff, scheduled use of the facility, etc.)

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Each room of a building has a maximum capacity of persons established by city and fire officials. This capacity should be known by the staff, and the requesting group should agree to abide by such limits.

If fees are to be charged, the amount should be stated in writing. The following should help to determine the amount of the fee:

- ❑ **Type of Facility.** The fee for the use of a gymnasium, auditorium or indoor swimming pool may be higher than the fee charged for a meeting room. Larger areas will accommodate more people and will require more light, heat, maintenance and staff.
- ❑ **Time of Use.** Use during normal, nonprogram working hours often will necessitate hiring extra staff.
- ❑ **Use of Staff.** It may be necessary to impose a special charge if a staff member is asked to work extra hours or is assigned special duties. In most instances, outside groups should be responsible for providing their own qualified leadership. Boys and Girls Clubs restricts swimming pool area supervision to their staff.
- ❑ **Nonprofit Versus For-Profit Use.** To protect your tax-exempt status, facilities should not be made available to profit-making groups.

*Staffing*—The necessary number and qualifications of supervisory and security staff should be clearly defined. For example, where youngsters are to use the swimming pool, an adequate number of instructors with life-saving certificates are required. Swimming classes or sessions may vary in size, depending on the ages of the class members and the size of the facility. One adult supervisor for every 15 to 25 children is considered adequate, a lower ratio should be forbidden. If programs require judges, referees or other officials, providing them is the responsibility of the applicant.

*Inspection*—Equipment and facilities should be checked after use by outside groups. All reportable conditions are to be brought to the attention of the organization's officer-in-charge. Responsibility for breakage or damage lies with the outside group, and repairs are to be completed to the satisfaction of your organization.

- ❑ The orderly replacement of borrowed equipment and supplies shall be expected of the outside group. Major maintenance, such as mopping and waxing the floor, shall be done by your organization.



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*Equipment*—Outside groups have the responsibility of caring for their own equipment, as well as for any equipment borrowed from your organization. Their failure to properly care for equipment and facilities should bring prompt action by your organization. It may be necessary for your organization to give instruction on the use of certain equipment. These instructions will prevent misunderstandings, accidents and damage. Outside groups should be discouraged from storing equipment at your facility. However, in a situation when a group makes regular use of your facility, a separate storage area may be provided. Clean premises are normally expected by outside groups, and, in turn, they are expected to leave the facilities in the same clean condition.

*Safety*—Outside groups should be made aware of fire regulations, exits and the procedures for the protection of patrons. Although your organization is covered by liability insurance, the group making application may be asked to obtain a one-day certificate of insurance coverage. In the event of accident or loss, your organization will not suffer loss, jeopardize its benefits or risk incurring higher premium charges. Have the group coordinator sign a written form stating they have read and will comply with all stated policy items.

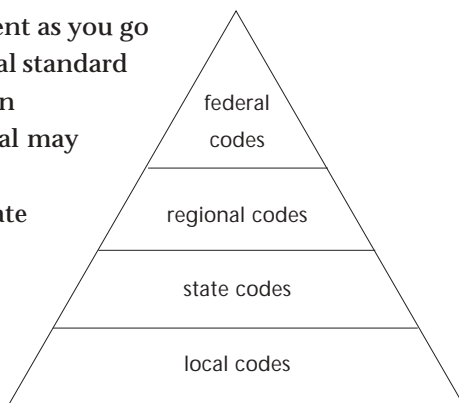
*\*Adapted from Guide to Property Management, courtesy of the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.*

### Step 3 Meet Codes/Requirements

There are building codes and licensing requirements to be met no matter what services your nonprofit provides. In addition, there are codes and requirements that arise out of the nature of your clients and services. You want to make certain that you follow all the current federal, state and local regulations and laws that apply to your nonprofit. You also need a mechanism in place for being updated when these change. Some Web sites offer a sign-up for automatic announcements of pending changes. Some nonprofits assign a staff member to monitor Web sites and local newspapers for information. Choose the mechanism that is the easiest and most reliable for you. *Not knowing* isn't a defense.

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Codes never get less stringent as you go down the pyramid. The national standard may be National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the regional may be Building Officials and Code Administrators (BOCA), the state code for the state where your facility is located, and the local may be the Chandler Fire Department. NFPA code may say 2 exits, 2 extinguishers; the state code may say 2 exits and 3 extinguishers, and the local fire marshal may want 3 exits and 6 extinguishers.



## Building Up to Code

To make certain your facility is up to code, appoint a person or persons (if you have a large enough staff and can divide the process) to monitor these three areas:

- building codes,
- licensing, and
- federal and state standards.

Requirements will vary based on the type of services your nonprofit provides. However, if you own the facility, you will have more rules and regulations to track than a nonprofit that rents or borrows space from you. Make certain that the person monitoring the situation seeks not only changes in the current status, but also researches new laws and standards that affect the nonprofit's future.

Double check:

- Is the person just in charge of keeping up with new interpretations of the law, including state laws that may impose additional requirements on your nonprofit?

- 
- ❑ Is the person assigned to compare the changes to the current status?
  - ❑ Is that person also responsible for remedying the situation if something is amiss?
  - ❑ If not, what instructions does that person have for proceeding? Does he or she pass the information to a superior...delegate to department heads...or call a committee meeting?
  - ❑ Do senior management and the person understand what authority this person possesses?

Professional organizations; local, state and federal Web sites; state associations of nonprofits; the Nonprofit Risk Management Center and people at other nonprofits who have the same task are all sources of information to stay on top of things and make certain your nonprofit is in compliance.

### Consumer Product Safety Commission

#### *Warnings and Recalls*

CPSC provides an e-mail service to alert subscribers to media releases describing new recalls. Logon to the agency's homepage at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov) and click on Recalls/News, then on Join CPSC's Recall Subscription List and sign up online.

You can also search the Web site by current media releases, product type, company, product description, chronologically, general recall category or products not under CPSC's jurisdiction (cars, drugs).

### Toxic building materials

You'll want to have toxic building materials (lead-based paint, lead pipes and solder, and asbestos) replaced with nontoxic substances or eliminated. Lead-based paint is prevalent in facilities built before 1980. Test water for lead, bacteria and other contaminants. If unhealthy levels appear, bottled water can be used until the pipes can be replaced.

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## Lead

Children are at risk for lead poisoning when they eat lead paint dust through direct hand-to-mouth contact and from toys and pacifiers; when they chew lead-painted surfaces: window sills, doors, baseboards, paint chips or flakes; or when they play in lead-contaminated soil.

The only way to accurately measure the amount of lead present in older paint is to have it analyzed. The purpose of a risk assessment is to decide where hazards from lead warrant remedial action. Specialists can test paint, soil or lead dust on site or in a lab. The assessments can be fairly low cost and can also test water. Check with your public health office for the names of certified risk assessors, paint inspectors and testing laboratories. If you provide housing, run a day-care center or plan extensive renovation of a facility built before 1980, you would be wise to have a lead assessment.

The hazards will be identified and should be removed, mitigated or managed in order of the greatest risk to health:

1. peeling, chipping, flaking and chewed interior lead-based painted surfaces.
2. lead dust on interior surfaces.
3. high lead in soil levels surrounding the building and in play areas (check state requirements).
4. chipped or scaling exterior painted surfaces.
5. friction surfaces subject to rubbing and scraping (windows, doors painted floors).
6. accessible, chewable surfaces (sills and rails) if there are small children.
7. impact surfaces (baseboards and door jambs).
8. other interior surfaces showing age or deterioration (walls and ceilings).

Once lead hazards have been identified, you can provide short-term interim controls or long-term hazard abatement.

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## Regulations

Refer to *Guidelines for the Evaluation and Control of Lead-Paint Hazards in Housing* published by the Department of Housing and Urban Development [Title X Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992, part of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992 (P.L. 102-550)].

State laws affect removal, transportation and disposal of lead-based paint. Refer to state environmental and public health agencies for regulations.

Local laws mostly deal with safety of building occupants. Check with community health departments, poison control centers and offices of housing and community development.

If your nonprofit owns the building(s) where abatement is being done, check with the state office to see if the project requires a certified contractor. Make certain that the contractor takes legal responsibility for the crew's safety, for following all applicable laws, for requiring that those who transport and dispose of hazardous waste have liability insurance as a protection for the nonprofit.

Alert any contractor hired to provide interim treatment to reduce lead hazards that lead-based paint is present and it's his responsibility to follow worker safety standards (OSHA 29CFR 1926) to protect workers and to thoroughly clean-up all lead-laden dust upon completion of the project. The regulation is available from Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).

## Maintenance and Re-Evaluation

Following treatment, especially when using short-term solutions, it's critical to provide ongoing maintenance and re-evaluation.

## Asbestos

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's advice on asbestos is neither to rip it all out in a panic nor to ignore the problem under a false presumption that asbestos is "risk free."

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Rather, EPA recommends a practical approach that protects public health by emphasizing that asbestos material in buildings should be located, appropriately managed, and workers who may disturb it should be properly trained and protected.

The EPA has stated in congressional testimony that:

1. “Although asbestos is hazardous, human risk of asbestos disease depends upon exposure.
2. Prevailing asbestos levels in buildings—those faced by school children and others as building occupants—seem to be very low, based upon available data. Accordingly, the health risk we face as building occupants also appears to be low.
3. Removal is often not a school district’s or other building owner’s best course of action to reduce asbestos exposure. In fact, an improper removal can create a dangerous situation where none previously existed.
4. EPA only requires asbestos removal in order to prevent significant public exposure to asbestos, such as during building renovation or demolition.
5. EPA does recommend in-place management whenever asbestos is discovered. Instead of removal, a conscientious in-place management program will usually control fiber releases, particularly when the materials aren’t significantly damaged and aren’t likely to be disturbed.”

### ***Technical Assistance Program***

Check the Toxic Substance Control Act’s asbestos technical assistance program (begun in 1979) for building owners, environmental groups, contractors and industry. Also check the Asbestos School Hazard Abatement Act, loans and grants have been given each year since 1985 to aid local education agencies ([www.epa.gov/region08/compliance/tscaasbestos.html](http://www.epa.gov/region08/compliance/tscaasbestos.html)).

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## Accessibility

Public areas of your nonprofit organization's facility must be accessible for people with varying degrees of mobility. ADA Title III covers nonprofit service providers (among others) that are public accommodations. According to the ADA Q&A ([www.eeoc.gov/facts/adaqa2.html](http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/adaqa2.html)), "A public accommodation is a private entity that owns, operates, leases, or leases to, a place of public accommodation. Places of public accommodation include a wide range of entities, such as restaurants, hotels, theaters, doctors' offices, pharmacies, retail stores, museums, libraries, parks, private schools, and day-care centers. Private clubs and religious organizations are exempt from the ADA's Title III requirements for public accommodations." Transportation services provided by private entities are also covered by Title III.

Public accommodations must comply with specific requirements related to architectural standards for new and altered buildings, and must remove barriers in existing buildings where it's easy to do without much difficulty or expense given the public accommodation's resources.

- Are walkways wide, slip-resistant and free of debris?
- Are parking spaces at least 96 inches wide?
- Are there inclined ramps instead of or as well as stairs?
- Are floors nonslippery?
- Are turnaround spaces in restrooms and elevators at least 51 inches wide?
- Are doors at least 32 inches wide?
- Are door handles and light switches within reach and easily operated?
- Are bathrooms, ramps and stairs equipped with handrails?

If you have 15 or fewer employees, you aren't legally bound to comply; however, public perception of noncompliance could land your nonprofit organization very negative media attention.

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## Americans with Disabilities Act

Adhering to Americans with Disabilities Act reduces the risk of legal claims alleging violation of the ADA and makes it easier for your nonprofit to serve and employ folks with mental or physical challenges. All nonprofits need to be attuned to ADA compliance. Both building owners and those nonprofits that rent or borrow space for their programs need to monitor ADA changes. Renters and borrowers are universally responsible within the area they occupy and need to check if they are at all liable for the rest of the facility whose parking, entry, walkways, halls, stairs aren't ADA compliant.

### *Compliance*

The ADA applies to private employers with 15 or more employees.

### *Requirements*

According to the ADA Web site ([www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm))—Myths and Facts...

“The ADA is based on common sense. It recognizes that altering existing structures is more costly than making new construction accessible. The law only requires that public accommodations remove architectural barriers in an existing facility when it is ‘readily achievable,’ i.e., it can be done ‘without much difficulty or expense.’ Inexpensive, easy steps to take include ramping one step; installing a bathroom grab bar; lowering a paper towel dispenser; rearranging furniture; installing offset hinges to widen a doorway; or painting new lines to create an accessible parking space.”

### *Design Standards*

The ADA Web site offers the ADA Design Standard, which is available in a downloadable format.

## ADA Quick Review

For a quick review of the finer points of ADA compliance, logon to *American School and Hospital Maintenance Magazine* ([www.facilitymanagement.com](http://www.facilitymanagement.com)), click on Articles and select “Fine-tuning Your ADA Knowledge.”



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## ADA Resources

For more information, logon to the ADA Web site ([www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm)) for downloadable information:

- A Guide to Disability Rights Laws*
- ADA Standards for Accessible Designs*
- Readily Achievable Barrier Removal and Van-accessible Parking*

### ***Violations***

Complaints of Title III violations of the ADA may be referred to a mediation program of the Department of Justice. The DOJ is authorized to bring a lawsuit where there is a pattern of practice of discrimination in violation of Title III, or where an act of discrimination raises an issue of general public importance. Title III may also be enforced through private lawsuits.

### ***Architectural Standards***

Public accommodations must comply with specific requirements related to architectural standards for new and altered buildings, and must remove barriers in existing buildings where it's easy to do so without much difficulty or expense given the public accommodation's resources. Some of the areas addressed are:

- signage
- sinks
- handrails and grab bars
- ground and floor surfaces
- parking spaces
- stairs
- entrances

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## Special Facilities

There are many special facilities, such as swimming pools with diving boards, day care programs, ball fields, playgrounds and food preparation areas that require additional compliance to rules and regulations by the nonprofit. Food preparation is a good example because it is a highly regulated activity. Whether your nonprofit has a staff break room, or a complete commercial kitchen where full meals are prepared for community distribution, the area comes with its own set of codes and laws that must be adhered to and monitored for change.

### ***Staff Break Room***

If you have a staff break room with refrigerator, microwave oven, sink or dishwasher, you'll want to make certain:

- the wiring matches the capacity (220 volts, three-pronged grounded outlet),
- ventilation is appropriate for the room size and equipment needs,
- equipment operation and maintenance is done in accordance with manufacturers' directions,
- fire extinguisher is of the appropriate type and is serviced regularly by a professional,
- refrigerator/freezer temperatures are maintained at 41° F or less/0° F or less,
- hot water temperature is 120° F to minimize scalding burns; a device on the automatic dishwasher to boost hot water temperature to 140° F will kill salmonella bacteria,
- surfaces that touch food are cleaned with bleach or commercial kitchen-cleaning agent diluted according to manufacturer's directions, and
- everything meets code.

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## Fire Extinguisher Safety

Does your facility meet local and state laws? Have you asked your insurance broker or agent if your fire insurance premium would be less if the facility had appropriate fire extinguishers?

Here are some suggestions:

- install fire extinguishers at logical sites (near kitchens, hot water heaters, boilers and other sources of heat or flames);
- make certain the extinguisher is the correct type for the specific class of fire. For instance there is a new extinguisher class (K)—for fires in cooking appliances that involve combustible cooking media such as vegetable or animal fats and oils.
- inspect and replace extinguishers according to manufacturer's instructions;
- train staff to use them and
- only* allow people who are trained to use extinguishers use them on a fire.

### ***Commercial Kitchen***

Food preparation areas require special attention from a facility risk management perspective. Commercial kitchens have stringent requirements for cleaning, servicing, and replacement of equipment and parts. They also demand detailed record keeping and, in some instances, a certificate of inspection. Check your state's mechanical and fire codes for specifics. Also run a search for "commercial kitchen" through Google and other Internet search engines.

### Fire Suppression

The National Fire Protection Association ([www.nfpa.org/Codes/index.asp](http://www.nfpa.org/Codes/index.asp)) and state codes spell out what is required. Suppression systems vary depending on the source of the fire. There are automatic sprinkler systems, dry-chemical systems, carbon dioxide extinguishing systems, and wet-chemical systems. NFPA Standard 10 provides guidance on the selection, location and maintenance of portable fire extinguishers.

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## Fire Extinguisher Selection

Many types of special fire hazards—electrical equipment, pressurized gasses, combustible liquids and use of solvents—exist. To determine the type of fire extinguisher your nonprofit requires, log on to the National Fire Protection Association Web site ([www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)). NFPA Standard 10 provides guidance on the selection, location and maintenance of portable fire extinguishers. You can also seek advice from your community fire department.

### Ventilation and Hoods

Check state code for specifications for ventilation and hoods. Grease-laden vapors are created by foods cooked in upright broilers, deep fat fryers, grills, griddles and range tops. The grease coats the insides of ventilation hoods, fans and filters (along with chimneys and flues and associated equipment in commercial kitchens) and is the cause of most commercial kitchen fires.

### Electrical Wiring

Make certain your nonprofit's wiring is adequate to accommodate the capacity needs of regular or commercial kitchen equipment and prevent short-circuiting and/or electrical fires. Consider whether there are enough separate circuits, grounded outlets, and dedicated lines for computers and large appliances.

### Operation and Maintenance

Equipment should be operated in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Hoods, grease-removal devices, fans, ducts and other accessory objects should be cleaned at intervals necessary to prevent the accumulation of grease. Record the time, date and extent of cleaning and keep records on the premises.

Fire extinguishing systems should be serviced at regular intervals (check code). Inspection should be by qualified people; a certificate of inspection may be required by your state.

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Fusible links and automatic sprinkler heads should be replaced annually (check code) and other protection devices should be serviced or replaced according to manufacturer's directions.

Place a thermometer in the refrigerator and freezer to make certain proper temperatures are maintained. A refrigerator temperature of 41° F or less is important because it keeps existing bacteria from multiplying. A freezer temperature of 0° F or less stops bacterial growth. Oven temperatures should be checked and calibrated so that the temperature in the oven matches the recipe cooking temperature.

Hot water must be hot enough, but not too hot. For example, water heater temperature should be set at 120° F to minimize scalding burns. This is doubly important if you work with the elderly or young children. If your nonprofit has an automatic dishwasher, attach a mechanism to boost the hot water temperature to 140° F, which kills salmonella bacteria.

### Sanitary Rules for Preparers and Servers

If your nonprofit serves food as part of your programs, you'll have to take some basic precautions to ensure the health and well being of those that eat it.

- All food preparers and servers *must* wash their hands before handling food.
- All food preparers and servers *must* wash their hands after using the rest room.
- Food *must* be maintained at a proper temperature; hot foods kept at 140° F or warmer and cold food at 40° F or colder. This can be done in insulated packs to keep food hot (read instructions) or in ice chests with ice or frozen gel packs for up to 4 hours. Or choose foods that don't require they be maintained at a certain temperature to remain safe for consumption, such as juice boxes and dry snacks.
- Food should be protected from insects and other animals by covering it with a lid, plastic wrap or aluminum foil.

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- ❑ Food prepared with mayonnaise should be refrigerated until just before eating.

## Quantity Cooking

Check out “Cooking for Groups: A Volunteer’s Guide to Food Safety” at [www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov). This can be downloaded as a pdf or html, or you can request that a copy of the four-page brochure be mailed to you.

## Hazardous and Toxic Substances

OSHA defines hazardous and toxic substances as “those chemicals present in the workplace which are capable of causing harm. In this definition, the term ‘chemicals’ includes dusts, mixtures, and common materials, such as paints, fuels and solvents. OSHA currently regulates exposure to approximately 400 substances. The OSHA Chemical Sampling Information file contains listing for approximately 1500 substances; the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s TSCA Chemical Substances Inventory lists information on more than 62,000 chemicals or chemical substances; some libraries maintain files of Material Safety Data Sheets for more than 100,000 substances.” Log onto [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov) and click on “H” for more information about hazard regulations.

The Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) of 1976 was enacted by Congress to give EPA the ability to track the 75,000 industrial chemicals currently produced or imported into the United States. Logon to [www.epa.gov/region5/defs/html/tsc.htm](http://www.epa.gov/region5/defs/html/tsc.htm) to read about the act and link to the Inventory.

## Toxic Materials

Your nonprofit might be storing toxic materials, such as paint, solvents, and cleaning solutions, without knowing that it is, and not knowing doesn’t provide a safe and secure area that will protect clients from harm. To be certain, ask the nonprofit staff:

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- ❑ if all your art supplies are the nontoxic variety.
  - ❑ if they have read the labels on the items used for interior, exterior and landscaping maintenance to make certain they aren't toxic.
  - ❑ if they have checked with the local Poison Control Center for a recent list of toxic materials.
  - ❑ if the organization's cleaning service or landscaping service ever leave products on the premises when they depart. How do they dispose of empty containers?
  - ❑ if they keep supplies to sanitize their phone or work surface in their office area.

When storing toxic materials such as paint, solvents, and cleaning solutions.

- ❑ Never leave chemicals in unmarked containers.
- ❑ Always store the MSDS copies in a safe and easily accessible central area.
- ❑ In addition, flammables must be stored separately, preferably outside the building in a secured area.

Harsh chemicals should be locked in a cabinet with a Material Safety Data Sheet kept on file. (MSDS are included in any chemical shipment and made available for end users. They are also available on line. Or you can request a specific MSDS from the manufacturer, who can send it by fax.) The MSDS contain important information about chemicals, specifically proper handling and spill clean up instructions. They also include chemical compatibilities, storage information, recommended personal protection and, if a chemical can kill, how it can kill and what to use to keep it from killing.

### Flammable Liquids

Flammable liquids include gasoline, acetone, turpentine, alcohol, benzene, charcoal lighter fluids, painting and lacquer thinner and contact cement. Flammable liquids should be properly labeled and stored in tightly closed safety cans that are

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outside the building, out of reach of children, and far away from ignition sources (pilot lights on gas water heaters, furnaces, dryers or ranges).

If you don't adhere to this warning, the results can be very dangerous for your nonprofit. You run the risk of a fire or explosion that can damage your facility and the buildings nearby. You also run the risk of accidental injury to or death of your nonprofit's employees, volunteers, clients and visitors, as well as other occupants of your building and nearby buildings and passersby. You need to remedy this situation immediately. If you need assistance, contact your local fire department for advice. Also check Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations and your state's Hazard Communication Act.

## Step 4 Schedule Maintenance and Repair

Nonprofits that establish and follow an equipment-maintenance schedule and maintain a detailed repair log will find their buildings and equipment are more economical and safer to run in both the short and long term. The log also can be used to prove that the nonprofit fulfilled its duty of care by keeping equipment fine-tuned and running according to manufacturer's directions, meeting code requirements and acting responsibly.

### ***Maintenance Schedule***

Regular maintenance of equipment (heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, water heaters, kitchen ranges, ovens and vent hoods) make the equipment run more efficiently and fulfill their functions. The procedures also go a long way toward reducing accidents, injuries or illnesses from fire, poor indoor-air quality, heat stroke, or scalds, to name a few.

1. Check the manufacturer's instructions. Follow the recommendations for frequency and type of inspection, replacement, lubrication and cleaning.



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2. Review building codes and safety regulations and make certain these fall within the manufacturer's guidelines. If not, change your maintenance procedure to encompass these requirements.
  3. Find a reliable service contractor and schedule annual or seasonal inspection and maintenance visits. Look into available contracts with them and compare services, benefits and prices. Many times a service contract will save your nonprofit money in the long run, streamline the scheduling process and provide preference for emergency service when required. Check under the classified section of the phone book for furnace, air conditioning, appliances...service and repair. Or use an Internet search engine to locate the manufacturer's Web site and search for local service suppliers.

### Customize Maintenance Schedules

Different pieces of equipment require different maintenance schedules. For example, look at HVAC systems and water heaters.

**HVAC Systems**—HVAC systems, which include the heating, ventilation and air conditioning for the building, require seasonal inspections. It's traditional in cold climates to have the boiler, air handler or heat pump inspected in the fall prior to switching over from cooling to heating function. At this time, ducts can be cleaned and inspected for leaks, thermostats tested for response and filters replaced. And the air conditioning system can be winterized. The same is true for the air conditioning system in the spring. Prior to switching from heating to cooling, the chillers of individual window units or a central system should be checked for level of refrigerant and leaks, and the thermostats should be tested for response.

**Water Heaters**—Water heaters should be inspected annually for rust spots and leaks (water on the floor). The thermostat should be tested to make certain it is accurate. You want to maintain hot water at 120 °F, which is not enough to sanitize, but cool enough to avoid scald burns.

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## ***Indoor Air Quality***

Americans spend more time indoors than outdoors. Unfortunately, according to a U.S. Environmental Protection study, air pollutants are two to five times higher indoors than outdoors. With the exception of environmental tobacco smoke, most regulations concerning air quality apply to outdoor air only. The trend of designing office buildings without windows that open and placing parking structures next door to offices contribute to poor indoor air quality. According to investigations by the National Institute on Occupational Safety and Health (a division of the Centers for Disease Control), complaints about feeling sick indoors are attributable as follows:

- 52 percent—ventilation systems (including improperly maintained systems, intentional closing of discharge vents)
- 15 percent—inside sources (e.g. from chemicals or other materials used by the business)
- 10 percent—outside sources (e.g. from neighboring businesses or other activities)
- 5 percent—microbial (mold)
- 3 percent—off-gassing of building materials
- 13 percent—unknown sources

Examples of equipment design, placement and use issues and maintenance-related mistakes that worsen indoor air quality include:

- Dirty air ducts
- Improperly maintained or dirty flex duct supply and return air plenum
- Placement of fresh air intake on flat roof adjacent to area where water pools
- Failure to repair roof leaks

- Allowing building materials, such as drywall, to sit on ground (drywall acts as a wick for moisture)
- Absence of fans in bathrooms
- Misapplication of cleaning solutions by contract housekeeping staff
- Misuse of cleaning equipment, such as vacuum bags not attached properly.

## Roof Inspections and Maintenance

Roofs—Having your roof inspected can keep minor problems from turning into major remediation. The cost to inspect a roof is measured in pennies per square foot per year versus dollars per square foot to repair a roof.

A comprehensive inspection should include the roofing materials (slate, wood or asphalt shingles, rolled asphalt or rubber roofing, slate, standing seam tin or copper, gravel and tar) for holes, broken or cracked surfaces, and flaking paint. Examine flashing around chimneys, skylights, vents, pipes, drains, HVAC units and near the walls. Also have previous repairs/patches checked to make certain they are holding.

You also want the roof drained of any standing water: unplug drainage systems and fill low spots. The gutters and downspouts should be cleared of debris and well attached to the building and ground. Look at caulking around planned openings (ducts, pipes, conduit, etc.); clean out dry caulking and replace with fresh. Clean skylights. Remove any debris from the roof: tree limbs and twigs, leaves, nails, glass, etc.

Your facility's engineer or custodian, if aware of what to look for, can do the maintenance check and repair. Here's where a checklist can come in handy. It can be customized to the type of roofing your facility has. Once the inspection is complete, a professional roofer can be contracted with to make repairs.

You will want to do an interior check as well. Look in the attic for water stains on the roof sheathing, rafters and walls. Interior water damage indicates roof leaks at some time. If there is mold in the attic, you may want to invest in a turbine (a nonmotorized unit that runs by the hot air exhausting from the attic), vents in the eaves or a motorized attic fan. You will also want to check the ceiling on the top floor of the building for water damage and cracks.

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To prevent unnecessary poor air quality in your nonprofit's facilities, consider the following checklist:

- Do not allow delivery trucks parked at your loading dock to park with engines idling.
- Carefully supervise housekeeping staff in your facilities to make certain they are properly using cleaning chemicals and equipment. Do not assume that contractors understand the health-related consequences of improper use.
- Do schedule periodic, thorough cleaning of all ventilation system components and conduct regular inspections of the system.
- Do carefully plan renovation projects to insure that workers are separate from construction space and that renovations are not conducted during working hours. Make certain that contractors take appropriate precautions, such as installing plastic barriers and blowing construction dust outside.
- Do clean or repair all materials that become wet from a flood, sprinkler malfunction, or other event within 48 hours. Non-porous surfaces can be cleaned effectively with a bleach and water solution.
- Do conduct thorough inspections following flooding incidents to make certain that the cleaning process is complete and effective.
- Do monitor relative humidity in your facilities, keeping relative humidity between 20 to 60 percent most of the time.
- Do inspect ductwork in offices and facilities located in urban areas every two years.
- Do discuss indoor air quality with an architect working on any new facilities for your nonprofit, consider short-

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and long-term use and occupancy issues and investigate the use of low emission building materials which reduce mold growth.

- Do prevent access to your facilities' outdoor air intakes.
- Do prevent public access to mechanical areas in your buildings and your building roofs.
- Do secure return air grilles (they should be very hard to remove).

To effectively address complaints about indoor air quality in your nonprofit's facilities:

- Be transparent—do not keep complaints a secret.
- Be compassionate and communicate openly with employees who complain about indoor air quality.
- Maintain detailed records concerning complaints, including details and where and when complaints occur and whether any special activities were being conducted or there were unusual circumstances.
- Establish an air quality policy/procedure.
- Involve the person making the complaint in the process of investigating the complaint.

In some cases, it may become necessary to retain an indoor air quality expert. The following Web site offers guidelines for selecting an IAQ consultant: [www.aiha.org/Consultantsconsumers/htmlOOiaq.htm](http://www.aiha.org/Consultantsconsumers/htmlOOiaq.htm).

Additional resources on indoor air quality include:

- [www.epa.gov/iaq](http://www.epa.gov/iaq)
- [www.nsc.org/ehc/indoor/iaq](http://www.nsc.org/ehc/indoor/iaq)
- [www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/iaq](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/iaq)
- [www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org)
- [www.epa.gov.iaq/molds/index](http://www.epa.gov.iaq/molds/index)

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## ***Elevators***

- Does each elevator comply with local, state and federal safety codes?
- Is each elevator door's interlocking equipment in good condition?
- Is the current inspection certificate on display in the elevator?
- Is each elevator inspected and serviced on a regular schedule?
- Is each elevator's capacity posted in the elevator?
- Is there an emergency phone in good operating condition in each elevator?
- Are turnaround spaces in each elevator at least 51 inches wide to conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act?

## ***Escalators***

- Is the escalator inspected, maintained and repaired on a regular basis?
- Is there an emergency stop button at the top or bottom of each escalator?
- Is there a brush or other edging to deter small fingers and feet from finding their way into the space between the step and the side of the escalator?

## ***Stairways***

- Are interior and exterior stairways and ramps and handrails inspected, evaluated and repaired regularly by competent service personnel?
- Do interior stairways have safety edges or rubber treads?
- Are stairways kept free of debris and clutter?

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- Are stairway surfaces cleaned regularly to remove sticky substances that could cause trips and falls?
  - Are spills cleaned up immediately to prevent slips and falls?
  - Is there adequate lighting?

Also, remember to check the ADA standards for landing width, railing height and steepness. ADA Standards for Accessible Design is available in PDF format and HTML format at [www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/stdspdf.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/stdspdf.htm). In the Table of Contents scroll down to 4.9 Stairs.

## ***Floors***

Keep floors free from slipping or tripping hazards. This means that wall-to-wall carpets are tacked down securely; door thresholds are nailed down; there are no scatter rugs on which to slide; large area rugs are stuck to the floor with double-sided tape; and spills are cleaned up immediately.

Appoint someone in your nonprofit to do a scheduled walk through the facility to identify areas that need maintenance, repair or replacement to protect against slip, trip and fall accidents.

Post warning signs when the floors are being maintained at your nonprofit. Signs are available in several languages. Some frequently used signs warn:

- Caution Wet Floor,
- Restroom Closed,
- Wet Floor-Caution or
- Closed for Cleaning.

Search the Web under janitorial supplies, caution sign for suppliers.

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## Record Keeping

Routine inspections will help avert accidents and injuries. But, if you are sued, you'll want to be able to provide proof that you actually fulfilled your *duty of care*. This is where service logs, checklists or repair follow-up sheets are invaluable. Think of the log as a diary or history of each activity and piece of equipment. Record the date of purchase, manufacturer and serial number. Note who services the equipment (boiler, fire extinguisher, alarm system, air conditioning condenser, etc.), whether the person is an employee or contractor, the date of service, advice given, and what was maintained, repaired or replaced. A central heating system record might say, fall service; filter replaced.

Provide a permanent place to store the service log so it can be referred to when determining when to replace a piece of equipment or to prove that the nonprofit provided reasonable care when providing for the safe and efficient use of the equipment.

S A M P L E Service Log	
Name of Equipment _____	
Serial No. _____ Model No. _____ Manufacturer _____ Date of purchase _____	
Purchased from [name of store or supplier] _____	
Address _____	Phone No. _____
Service Contractor [name] _____	
Address _____	Phone No. _____
Date of Contract _____ Length of Contract _____ Date of Service _____	
Detailed list of what was found and what was done _____	
_____	
_____ Name of service person _____	

### Point person

Appoint someone to be responsible for conducting regularly scheduled inspections of your premises. Making it one person's responsibility to inspect equipment, floors, food preparation areas, restrooms, and security measures on a schedule is basic risk management and can often be accomplished at little



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expense. Depending on the size of your facility and the variety of services, the point person may have to work with others to accomplish the needed work. The time devoted to insuring the health and safety of your employees, volunteers, clients and visitors will pay off many times over in claims that aren't filed against the nonprofit for injury and accidents.

## Checklist

Create checklists for the point person to use to insure consistency of inspection and reporting. The checklist serves as a paper trail, documenting what was checked, when, by whom, and what was found. Once filled out these checklists should be filed in chronological order. The paper trail will work to your advantage if someone claims compensation for an injury or accident that occurred while they were on the nonprofit's premises. It will serve as part of your defense that the nonprofit provided an appropriate level of care to visitors or participants.

You will need to customize the checklist for specific areas, such as:

- Equipment
- Security
- Food preparation area
- Floors
- Toxic materials
- Restrooms

## ***Repair Priority***

It's best to prioritize safety problems ahead of other maintenance and repair assignments. This might mean that you schedule maintenance and repairs on:

- a regular basis (It's the first Monday of the month, time to wax the floors.)

- 
- ❑ in order of discovery (Joe happened to notice today that there are only 3 inches of mulch under the swings and we need 12 inches),
  - ❑ when the budget allows (This last donation will let us replace the chain and padlock on the back door with a working deadbolt lock).

If your nonprofit is facing several repair needs simultaneously, it usually is best to:

- ❑ give first priority to the situations that may bring the most severe losses, adverse publicity or liability claims,
- ❑ then repair the situations that violate code requirements, and
- ❑ finally repair conditions that are likely to cause more frequent but smaller losses or claims, for example:
  - While the chain and padlock on the back door will secure the premises, your nonprofit risks damage to its reputation, its people, the building and the contents by not having a working exit in case of fire. A working security system that allows easy and immediate exit is a priority that your nonprofit can't afford to put off. Something else should be put on hold so that this repair work can be completed immediately.
  - The additional mulch under the swings could be delayed...if...the swings are cordoned off and children aren't allowed to play there until the situation is remedied. Otherwise, your nonprofit would increase the odds that a child could be injured, severely impaired or killed by a fall from the swings onto unprotected ground. The nonprofit would have no protection under the law or in the media.

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Remember that it's always best to schedule maintenance and repair work relative to its importance to the health and safety of the nonprofit's human resources.

S A M P L E

Safety Checklist

Yes

- Lighting in stairways, entrances, emergency exits, parking areas and individual work areas is fully functional. (Switches work and "bulbs" are live.)
- Exits are easily accessible and clearly marked. (Nothing piled in front of doors or in hallways).
- HVAC (heating, ventilation and air-conditioning) system has been vacuumed and checked for leaks.
- Hazardous materials such as paint, gasoline and toner, and cleaning supplies, such as bleach and ammonia, are clearly marked and properly stored in locked cabinets or closets.
- Smoke detectors comply with building code, are properly placed and do actually work.
- Fire extinguishers comply with building code and are appropriate type (chemical fire, open flame) for the area.
- All exterior doors may be easily opened from the inside without a key, but aren't left propped open.
- Windows are closed and locked when the building is closed.
- Exterior doors are closed and locked when the building is closed.
- Equipment is turned off (photocopiers, kitchen ranges and coffeepots) when the building is closed.

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## Step 5 Monitor Visitors

Many people have a narrow view of who constitutes a “visitor” to their facility. For security purposes, anyone who isn’t an employee—temporary employees, VIPs, consultants, contractors, volunteers and clients—should sign in upon entering the facility and sign out when exiting. When in doubt, you might ask an unknown visitor for photo identification to verify the person is who he or she claims. Record the driver’s permit number or other traceable number in case you need to follow up later.

Your nonprofit’s entrance might be the same as the entrance to the entire facility or it might be to a specific floor or suite. When you lease space, you can work with the facility manager to improve total building security, but should have total control over security in your occupied space.

### ***Check Point***

After the visitor signs the visitor log at the reception desk, the receptionist or guard issues the visitor a badge and instructs the visitor to wear it and turn it in at the desk when leaving the premises. In very small nonprofits, the person closest to the main entrance can serve in the capacity of a receptionist and monitor who enters and leaves.

### ***Visitor Log***

Record all visits in a visitor log. The log should include:

- signature
- name
- date
- arrival time
- name of the employee visited
- departure time
- purpose of visit

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You might also wish to record:

- the department/area visited
- visitor ID type and number
- company phone number
- vehicle license number
- escort

TEMPbadge's "The Guide to Visitor Control," [www.tempbadge.com](http://www.tempbadge.com), lists other helpful tips for visitor control.

### ***Identification***

A visitor badge program helps quickly legitimize people in the building who aren't staff. The badge says the visitor has signed in at the reception desk, guard station or the like and provided information about who they are and what their business is. The visitor should be instructed to turn in the badge when signing out of the building.

#### Visitor badges

Badges may be all alike or color-coded to quickly identify various types of visitors and their business with the organization:

- temporary employees,
- VIPs,
- consultants,
- contractors,
- volunteers,
- family or friends of clients, and
- clients.

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The word “Visitor” and the date should be large and bold. You can add the nonprofit’s logo. You can add the building or department authorized to be visited. (Some nonprofits provide photo IDs for regular volunteers in lieu of daily “Visitor” passes.)

The badges can be purchased from an office supply store or produced by the nonprofit’s computer. They can be purchased from badge and identification manufacturers. Choices range from simple (standard ID) to the most technologically sublime (automatically expiring and/or time sensitive).

No matter how simple or fancy, the purpose is to monitor and record the entrance and exit of people who are not employees of your nonprofit.

### Visitor Badges

If visitors aren’t required to wear identification badges while in your facility how do you tell the people who have legitimate business with your nonprofit from someone who just wanders in off the street? How do you know if someone in the hazardous chemical storage area has legitimate business there? How do you know who the person is on the playground? Perhaps your staff is small enough that they all know each other, but do they know by sight all the parents and guardians of the clients under your care? And even if they do, how would you prove to a court of law that the person was or was not there on a date and time several months or years in the past?

### ***Escorts***

Requiring staff members to escort visitors to your facility, along with visitor logs and visitor badges, provides a level of protection for employees and clients of your nonprofit. Consider instigating this practice if you serve a vulnerable population, or if it would be easy for visitors to get lost or “lose themselves” while navigating your facility. This would be the case if you have many floors or a low building that spreads over a lot of ground or has many wings or corridors, or a camp ground, or horseback-riding trail. You get the idea.

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The receptionist or guard at the building entrance would phone or page the person being visited and ask the visitor to be seated until the escort arrives. The visitor log could have a space to indicate who the escort is for each visitor.

## Step 6 Prevent Crime Through Design

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is based on a theory that the proper design and effective use of a facility can increase a feeling of safety and improve the quality of life for the staff and service recipients, and reduce the opportunity for crimes to occur. In other words, if a site is laid out well, the likelihood of it being targeted for a crime is reduced.

CPTED takes crime prevention one step further than the anticipation, recognition and appraisal of a crime risk and the initiation of some action to remove or reduce it. Architects, city planners, and landscape and interior designers working together create safer designs in new and existing facilities. Senior managers can create CPTED inspired facilities through an awareness of its strategies.

### ***Good Design Can Be Safe Design***

CPTED concepts and strategies take into account how people behave in an environment, how that environment lends itself to a productive and safe use by those using the space, and how crime prevention may be applied. Issues such as the building orientation, entrances/exits, parking lot location, landscaping, lighting, fences, sidewalks and signage are just a few examples of what is considered when a site plan is reviewed for being laid out well and/or being safe. Interior colors, lighting, ceiling heights, reception area design, hallway size, width of counters make environments feel safe, yet pleasing, to staff and service recipients, while deterring would-be criminals.

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CPTED is much more far-reaching than dead bolts on doors and locks on windows. The principles can be applied easily and inexpensively to building or remodeling, and have been implemented in communities across the nation.

For example, rather than overt security devices, such as cameras, guards and metal detectors, one youth-serving nonprofit designed a single point of entry into the building, which leads to a reception area visible through glass from the administrative offices. These offices and parent conference rooms are accessible to visitors without entering the main service-provision area. Service recipients are separated by age into pods that radiate off a central atrium located down a hallway from reception. Should an incident occur in one pod, it can be isolated from the rest of the building by closing discreet steel doors. All secondary exits are accessible only in emergencies.

Many nonprofits are not designing their buildings from scratch, but they can help reduce crime. For example, lowered ceilings, softer and lower-wattage lighting, and calming paint colors reduce anxiety that can lead to shouting, acting out and other violence. Narrowing the hallway as it leads from the main entry doors to the reception area naturally slows people down and directs them. Customer-service counters constructed wider than the comfortable reach of a tall person's arm, protect employees and volunteers without caging them behind steel bars and bulletproof plastic. Not only do these solutions tend to de-escalate situations for those with larceny on their minds, they make the site welcoming for the majority of people coming to your facility.

CPTED applies three key concepts, all of which are interrelated.

1. Natural surveillance: the placement of physical features, activities and people in such a way as to maximize visibility:



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- ❑ raised entrances
  - ❑ low-level landscaping
  - ❑ windows facing rear parking lots
  - ❑ well-lit building exteriors

2. Natural access control: the physical guidance of people coming and going from a space by the judicious placement of entrances, exits, fencing, landscaping and lighting that deny access and challenge unwanted visitors.

3. Territorial reinforcement: Territorial reinforcement is the use of physical attributes that express ownership—fencing, signage, landscaping and pavement treatments—make intruders feel unsafe and unwelcome.

The way people react to an environment is more often than not determined by the cues they are picking up from that environment. Those things which make normal or legitimate users of a space feel safe (such as good lighting), make abnormal or illegitimate users of the same space feel unsafe in pursuing undesirable behaviors (such as stealing from motor vehicles).

The following are some specific things you can do to prevent crime through design without rebuilding, remodeling or moving your facility.

## ***Exterior***

Request that the police do a security assessment of your nonprofit's facility. This is especially helpful in a high-crime neighborhood. The assessment helps determine if you've done everything you can to secure the premises and provide for the safety of your personnel, clients and visitors. If not, you'll have a list of improvements that can become a strategy. Presenting a neat, cared-for appearance makes your site less of a target. Strategies might include:

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- regularly removing graffiti from walkways, walls and pavement.
  - picking up litter and debris from the grounds.
  - cutting back foliage from windows, entrances, and exits.
  - using a buddy system to walk employees to their cars.
  - providing extra strong locks, grills or grates, or alarm systems on entries to the building.
  - offering classes in “street smarts” to employees and volunteers.

The next steps are:

- Develop an action plan based on police recommendations.
- Assign tasks in order of priority.
- Prepare a budget for improved security and present it to your board of directors.
- Speak with your insurance agent or broker to discuss how implementing these suggestions would affect your insurance premiums.
- Monitor security improvements and inform your insurance broker when they are complete.
- Prepare paperwork for your next insurance renewal proposal.

## Lighting

Parking lot owners or operators and business owners have a duty to protect the area. Personal injury suits do name these people in lawsuits for negligence. Entrances to your nonprofit’s parking lot should be well lit to avoid shadows where people can hide. Lighting must be adequate for motorists to see the back seats of their vehicles before unlocking the door. You can increase light levels by painting walls white. Walkways to and from the building should be lighted well enough to be able to

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see a person 50 feet in the distance. Perimeter walls and shrubbery should be kept lower than 3 feet and all tree branches lower than 6 feet should be trimmed.

Movement-activated exterior lights will expose actions of people approaching your premises. (Set the detection level high enough that every squirrel doesn't activate the lights.)

In addition to having a proper lighting design, you want to make certain that the burned out or broken lights are replaced promptly. Post a phone number where patrons can quickly report nonworking lights. This is a responsible way to protect your people from accident and injury and the nonprofit from a negligence claim in a personal injury lawsuit.

### Install fencing

Fences provide boundaries to keep some people in and to keep other people out. It helps provide limits for clients who aren't able to create them for themselves because they are too young, too old or have mental challenges. In deciding on appropriate fencing, if any, consider:

- Do your clients include children?
- How are they kept safe if the property isn't fenced?
- Are there attractive nuisances on the property—swimming pools, decorative ponds or fountains, water retention ponds or other bodies of water? These should be fenced to keep children from wandering into the water and drowning. Remember that small children can drown in the amount of water in a pail.
- Does your nonprofit have a playground? This should be fenced or surrounded with low shrubs or hedges to provide a safe boundary for children and control access.
- Does your nonprofit follow a fencing inspection, maintenance and repair schedule?
- Is the distance between openings in the fence less than 3.5 inches to protect children from being trapped?

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- ❑ Does the fence have a self-closing gate?
  - ❑ Does the gate latch to keep children safely within the property?

### Trim greenery

Untrimmed or tall greenery at the edge of the property provides a place where people can hide. This is a liability. Trim shrubs, hedges and plants to 3 feet or lower. Remove tree branches lower than 6 feet to keep them from providing a hiding place or creating a natural ladder to the upper stories of your facility.

Having landscaping maintenance on a regular schedule or someone assigned to alert the grounds-keeping company when the greenery needs to be trimmed is an easy way to manage this risk.

### Control roof access

Any external opening offers the potential for break-ins, which can result in vandalism, burglary or injury.

Internal hatches or doors to the roof should be locked from the inside. Your nonprofit should maintain a log tracking access to the roof. The log should record the date and time, the names of people who went on the roof, their purpose, any repairs made and the time they came off the roof. The log can be kept with the receptionist or building engineer or near the roof hatch or door.

## ***Interior***

Dividing the interior into separate zones to restrict access to some areas helps control movement of employees, visitors and vendors within the facility. Unrestricted areas offering free access might include lobbies, reception areas, food service areas and certain personnel and administrative offices and public meeting rooms. Restricted areas accessible to staff only might include service-provider areas and loading docks. Restricted zones might

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include supply cabinets containing cleaning solvents, chemicals, drugs, mechanical areas, kitchens, telephone and electrical equipment rooms, laundry rooms and other sensitive areas.

Some rules to live by:

- Don't prop open fire doors.
- Don't chain and padlock fire doors to keep this from happening.
- Do educate staff to keep exterior doors closed and locked.
- Do have push-bar opening devices attached to an alarm system on exit doors; post a sign warning "Emergency Exit—Alarm Will Sound When Opened."
- Do install a proximity switch on the main exits to open door for persons exiting the building after hours. Or install a push-pad that must be used to unlock the door to exit after hours. Door will be locked to anyone wanting to enter.
- Do assign someone to conduct a walk through of all areas of the building at least twice a day.

## Step 7 Supply Emergency Plans

Emergency evacuation plans, emergency drills, and a risk management mindset can save your most precious assets: the humans working for your mission and the humans you serve. A well-crafted evacuation route, an official rallying point and method of counting noses to see that everyone is present and accounted for, and a tidy facility (no storage of extra cots or files or supplies in hallways, stairwells or in front of emergency exits) can reduce accidents, injuries and casualties.

### ***Fire Evacuation Plan***

All nonprofits should have fire evacuation plans. If you don't have one, your nonprofit needs to set aside time to create a plan. Your local fire department should be able to help you make a

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start. Call them and schedule a walk through of your facility to get advice on the best possible evacuation routes and where to place evacuation plans on the walls of your facility. The plan should contain information about the evacuation list and who is in charge of the evacuation. The plan should outline primary and secondary escape routes from every part of the building.

Stairways are the primary escape route from multi-level buildings and should be kept clear. Elevators should never be used in fire emergencies. Electrical shorts could cause them to stall between floors impeding evacuation, or could cause them to plunge to the bottom of the shaft, causing injury or death to people in the car.

The plan should designate a person or people per floor (the number depends on the square footage and number of floors in the premises) to ensure that everyone is out of the area.

Disabled people and people with known medical problems (heart or respiratory conditions, or epilepsy) should each be assigned a person to guide them to safety.

Once the plan is complete, schedule fire drills to test the plan. Correct any identified problems and adjust the written plan.

OSHA standards require employers to provide proper exits, fire-fighting equipment, and employee training to prevent fire deaths and injuries in the workplace ([www.osha.gov/](http://www.osha.gov/)).

### Building Fire Exits

- ❑ Each workplace building must have at least two means of escape remote from each other to be used in a fire emergency.
- ❑ Fire doors must not be blocked or locked to prevent emergency use when employees are within the buildings. Delayed opening of fire doors is permitted when an approved alarm system is integrated into the fire door design.

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- ❑ Exit routes from buildings must be clear and free of obstructions and properly marked with signs designating exits from the building.

### Fire Response Plan

Actions to take:

- A. When alarm sounds, everyone leaves the building
  - ❑ Use stairways unless smoke-filled. Don't use elevators or escalators.
  - ❑ Close doors and windows as you leave. Don't lock.
  - ❑ Move beyond the sidewalk or cross the street at the light and gather in front of the EFG building for personal safety and report in to monitor.
- B. When the alarm is false; it stops, which tells everyone to re-enter the building. If the alarm continues to ring, everyone remains outside the building and waits for the fire trucks to arrive.
- C. If there is a fire and the fire department hasn't arrived, call the fire department from outside the building (wireless phone, pay phone, phone in a neighborhood building) and report the location of the fire. Everyone remains outside the building.
- D. Only use a fire extinguisher if you're trained to use it and the fire is small (contained in a wastebasket). Do this only after fire alarm is sounding.
- E. Fire department personnel decide how to manage utilities (gas, electric shut off).
- F. Fire department gives OK before anyone re-enters the building.

### ***Emergency Evacuation Planning***

- ❑ Emergency action plans are required and describe the routes to use and procedures to be followed by employees. Also procedures for accounting for all evacuated employees must be part of the plan. The written plan must be available for employee review.

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- ❑ Where needed, special procedures for helping physically impaired employees must be addressed in the plan; also, the plan must include procedures for those employees who must remain behind temporarily to shut down critical plant equipment before they evacuate.
  - ❑ The preferred means of alerting employees to a fire emergency must be part of the plan and an employee alarm system must be available throughout the workplace complex and must be used for emergency alerting for evacuation. The alarm system may be voice communication or sound signals such as bells, whistles or horns. Employees must know the evacuation signal.
  - ❑ Training of all employees in what is to be done in an emergency is required. Employers must review the plan with newly assigned employees so they know correct actions in an emergency and with all employees when the plan is changed.

### Personal Evacuation Checklist

- ❑ Shut down computer.
- ❑ Turn off lights.
- ❑ Close windows.
- ❑ Assist clients and other staff, as needed or assigned.
- ❑ Close doors behind you as you leave (do not lock).
- ❑ Follow escape route.
- ❑ Meet at predetermined assembly point.
- ❑ Make certain everyone is accounted for (on vacation, at meeting outside building, home sick, present). Do NOT go back into the building. DO report where the person usually would have been when the alarm rang to a person with authority, who will tell the firefighter.



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## Step 8 Limit Liability

There are a number of ways that a nonprofit owner/landlord can limit its liability when negotiating with rental groups. First, many states have “Recreational Use” statutes that limit a landlord’s liability for any injuries that may arise if rental groups aren’t charged for use of the property. *See*, VA. CODE. ANN. § 29.1-509 (Repl. Vol. 1997). Most of these statutes are directed to outdoor activities such as hunting, fishing, hiking, boating, etc. Under these statutes, a landowner that doesn’t accept a fee for the use of its land owes no duty of care to keep the land or premises safe for use by others. These statutes also eliminate the need to warn of hazardous conditions. Assuming the statute applies, a landowner will be found liable only for gross negligence or a willful or malicious failure to warn about a dangerous condition. Gross negligence and willful and wanton conduct are different from ordinary negligence and proof of such generally requires a showing of aggravated or reckless conduct by an owner/landlord. Check with your legal counsel to see if your state has a “Recreational Use” statute and if it would apply to your situation.

### ***Fee for Use***

Many nonprofits find it necessary to charge a fee to groups who wish to use their facilities. An owner/landlord can limit, and even eliminate, its responsibility (i.e., liability) towards renters through a well-drafted lease or rental agreement. Likewise, a rental group can protect itself by reading the rental agreement and negotiating changes to its advantage. It’s important to consult with an attorney who is familiar with the law of the relevant jurisdiction when drafting or signing a lease or rental agreement. An attorney can assist in preparing a contract and, in the case of the rental group, advise where the rental group’s interests need to be better protected, that will clearly delineate each party’s responsibilities.

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## Rental Agreement

A rental agreement should establish, in clear terms, the duties and responsibilities of the owner/landlord and the rental group. Before being signed, any agreement should be reviewed by your attorney. Consider the following items for inclusion in the standard rental agreement, depending on the circumstances:

- ❑ Maintenance and Upkeep: While the owner typically remains responsible for any hazardous condition on the property in existence at the time of the lease, the rental agreement can establish who will be responsible for general upkeep such as trash pickup, repairing broken steps, clearing snow and ice, etc.
- ❑ Indemnification Clause: The agreement should include a provision holding the owner/landlord harmless for any negligent acts or omissions by the rental group during the term of the lease.
- ❑ Instructions on Use of Property and Facilities: The owner/landlord should provide detailed instructions on how its facility operates or what to do if problems arise.
- ❑ Limits on Accessible Areas: If the rental group is only using a portion of the premises, or if certain areas are off-limits, those boundaries should be clearly established in the lease. Then, if a renter strays beyond this area, his status will change from an *invitee* to a *trespasser*. Once that occurs, the renter takes the risk of the place as he finds it and the duty of the landowner is greatly reduced.
- ❑ Potential Hazards: Specific warnings about dangerous or hazardous conditions on the premises should be provided.
- ❑ Delegation of Supervision: Depending on the situation, the owner/landlord may need to provide its own staff members to assist with supervision. For example, if swimming is available on the premises, additional lifeguards may be required.

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- ❑ **Alcohol Consumption:** If alcohol is part of the rental group's activities, it may be necessary to obtain a temporary liquor license. The lease or rental agreement should require the rental group to obtain both the license and, if available, liquor liability insurance, adding the owner/landlord as an *additional insured*. Finally, the contract should include an acknowledgment by the rental group that no one under the age of 21 will be served alcohol.

Another way for an owner/landlord to limit its liability is to require the rental group to obtain its own liability insurance to provide coverage for accidents resulting in bodily injury or property damage. If the rental group is to provide such insurance, the rental agreement should require that the lessee provide a certificate of such insurance. The rental group's policy should also name the owner/landlord as an additional insured.

## Insurance

The owner/landlord should also purchase an insurance policy to cover the risks of leasing its land. General liability insurance is commercially available both for outside groups who lease or rent property and for the landowners that lease their land. Landowners should also consider purchasing medical payments coverage, which provides coverage for medical expenses of third parties injured on the premises regardless of fault (subject to policy conditions). The existence of "med pay" coverage often serves as a deterrent to lawsuits.

## Release or Waiver

In some circumstances, an owner/landlord may also use a release or waiver form to limit its potential liability. By signing a release or waiver form, an adult participant waives his right to sue and agrees to hold the owner/landlord harmless for any injuries that might occur. Pre-injury releases have been held invalid in many states, however, based on public policy

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considerations. See *Hiatt v. Lake Barcroft Community Ass'n, Inc.*, 244 Va. 191, 418 S.E.2d 894 (1992). Thus, an attorney should be consulted before such a release is used. If a release is permitted, a lawyer can prepare a well-drafted release form that may shield an owner/landlord from liability.

After an injury occurs, owners/landlords may still limit their liability by obtaining a post-injury release. Post-injury releases are typically used to obtain an absolute waiver of all present and future claims in exchange for the payment of medical expenses or some other comparable sum. An owner/landlord often may avoid costly litigation by quickly approaching a potential plaintiff who has been injured on its premises with an offer to pay his medical bills. However, always talk with your insurance professional and attorney before extending such an offer.

### Affirmative Defenses

Despite the use of rental agreements and waivers, there's still the possibility that an owner/landlord will be sued for an injury or accident involving a rental group member. If and when this happens, there are a number of affirmative defenses potentially available. Depending on the nature of the organization that owns the property and the particular state involved, charitable or sovereign immunity may be a defense against a claim of negligence.

Several defenses available to owners/landlords focus not on the landowner but on the plaintiff and his own conduct. Depending on the law of each state, a plaintiff whose own negligent actions contribute and cause his own injury will either be barred from recovery completely (contributory negligence) or may have his recovery reduced by the amount of his own negligence (comparative negligence). Likewise, a plaintiff who voluntarily exposes him- or herself to a known danger may have "assumed the risk" and be barred from recovery.

Obviously, it's the hope of every owner/landlord and rental group that no accidents happen, no one is injured and no lawsuits are filed. The best way to protect against the possibility

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of a lawsuit when renting property to an outside group or when you are renting property from a landlord is to get everything in writing. With the assistance of an attorney, an owner/landlord or the rental group can obtain a well-drafted rental agreement clearly limiting its exposure. Waivers and release forms may also be used to limit liability. Finally, the procurement of insurance policies, by both the owner/landlord and the rental group, can provide assistance if liability is alleged.

*The advice in this section first appeared in Community Risk Management & Insurance (Fall 1998), published by the Nonprofit Risk Management Center under the title: Risk Management for Rental Properties: How Landlords Can Protect Themselves Legally When Renting Their Land to Outside Groups by Stanley P. Wellman, Esq. and Stephanie P. Karn, Esq., of Harman, Clayton, Corrigan and Wellman in Richmond, Va., who advise and defend property owners and managers as to numerous liability issues.*

## Step 9 Provide Risk Financing

Whether your nonprofit is an owner/landlord, renter or borrower of the space in which it provides its services, you will want to protect yourself against liability claims. The most common form of risk financing is purchasing insurance. Note: risk financing is just one aspect of risk management. It provides money to defend against and pay claims. There are different types of insurance to protect against different types of claims. Work with a professional insurance agent, broker or consultant to determine which types will give you the most protection against claims. The money you invest in risk financing strategies will also be an investment in the future of your mission.

### **Owners/Landlords Insurance**

As an owner, you'll want to be certain your nonprofit has basic insurance to protect it from lawsuits. "Slips, trips and falls" are the most prevalent injuries. *General liability insurance* is available to most nonprofits and will protect against many

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liability claims. Other insurance policies are *fire, theft and damage*.

Another way for an owner/landlord to limit his or her liability is to require the rental group to obtain its own liability insurance to provide coverage for accidents resulting in bodily injury or property damage. If the rental group is to provide such insurance, the rental agreement should require that the lessee provide a *certificate of-such-insurance*. The rental group's policy should also name the owner/landlord as an *additional insured*.

The owner/landlord should also purchase an insurance policy to cover the risks of leasing its land. General liability insurance is commercially available both for outside groups that lease or rent property and for the landowners that lease their land. Landowners should also consider purchasing policies that include *medical payments coverage*, which provides coverage for medical expenses of third parties injured on the premises regardless of fault (subject to policy conditions). The existence of "med pay" coverage often serves as a deterrent to lawsuits.

### ***Homeowner's or Apartment Renter's Insurance***

Some of the questions you'll want to ask the homeowner or apartment renter where the nonprofit is housed:

- Do you have homeowner's or apartment renter's insurance?
- Does the insurance cover injury or accidents to visitors to your residence?
- If visitor accident/injury coverage isn't included, can it be purchased?
- Is the nonprofit's business conducted in a dedicated workspace (no personal business is done there)?
- Do you have automobile insurance?
- Will you be driving your own vehicle on nonprofit business?

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- ❑ Does your auto coverage cover business use of the vehicle? Is there coverage to defend the nonprofit, in addition to the vehicle owner?
  - ❑ Do you have property coverage for equipment used to produce materials for the nonprofit?

### ***Irreplaceable Collections***

If your nonprofit has any sort of irreplaceable collection, such as a museum collection, historical documents or artifacts for the nonprofit, consider keeping this in a separate secured area or cabinet to reduce the chance of theft or damage. Your nonprofit might want to insure this collection separately or get a rider to its property insurance to cover the loss of this collection. A professional appraisal to validate the replacement cost of the collection will help your nonprofit determine the amount of insurance it should purchase.

### ***Record Keeping***

It's important to conduct an inventory when there is no crisis because it may be impossible to do so in the aftermath of a crisis (such as a hurricane or flood, fire, or major theft) when premises and property are damaged or destroyed. The vital asset inventory will be helpful for claims adjustment with the insurance company and possibly the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that requires detailed documentation of what was destroyed in order to provide replacement dollars.

Critical records should also be inventoried: insurance forms, leases, partnership agreements, and databases of clients, volunteers and contributors. Keep copies on site for reference and use; keep backup copies off site in a lock box or in your attorney's office. A fixed asset schedule is a good place to start to build your nonprofit's asset inventory.

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## ***Insurance for Contractors***

### Security Firm

Have you performed due diligence on the security firm?

- Did you check out the history of the company with the Better Business Bureau?
  - Did you get confirmation from the company that the company is insured for:
    - crime, theft and robbery from your premises by their employees (crime insurance coverage)?
    - employee injury on the job (workers' compensation coverage)?
    - injuries or accidents while driving for your nonprofit (automobile liability coverage)?
- Are their employees bonded in case of theft from you?
- Did you confirm that employees hired as security guards by the company have been through a rigorous background check for criminal records, drug and/or alcohol abuse (and sexual misconduct if they may have one-to-one contact with vulnerable clients)?
- Did you ask how the company deals with employees hired as security guards that are suspected of abusing drugs or alcohol on the job?

### ***Abatement***

If your nonprofit owns the building(s) where abatement is being done, check with the state office to see if the project requires a certified contractor. Make certain that the contractor takes legal responsibility for the crew's safety, for following all applicable laws, for requiring that those who transport and dispose of hazardous waste have liability insurance as a protection for the nonprofit.



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## ***Risk Management Steps May Reduce Your Premium***

Speak with your insurance agent or broker to discuss how implementing changes in the following areas would affect your premiums:

- Have you met local and state building codes for the type of facility you run?
- Have you met local and state fire regulations for the building?
- Has your facility been inspected by the local police department for improvement in security?
- Has your facility been inspected by the local fire department for improvement in fire safety?
- Do you have appropriate fire extinguishers for the types of fires (grease, paper, chemical) you might have?
- Do you have sprinkler systems and are they maintained as suggested by the manufacturer?
- Do you have a key-card access system and/or burglar alarm system?
- Are entrances brightly lit and well-marked?
- Are bushes and shrubs neat and trimmed around the entrance?
- Do you regularly inspect equipment using checklists, and maintain records of inspections, maintenance, repair and replacement?
- Are hazardous materials clearly marked and properly stored in locked cabinets or closets?
- Do you have a formal risk management program in place with documented evidence of mitigation activities?

Monitor improvements and inform your insurance broker when they are complete. Prepare paperwork to reflect these improvements for the next insurance renewal proposal.

## ***Liability Insurance***

Liability insurance has one purpose: to protect insureds from the financial risk of civil lawsuits. If an insured (the insurance buyer) is sued for a covered (specified or not excluded in the policy) liability, the insurance company will generally provide a legal defense and pay any judgment up to the policy limits (amount of insurance purchased). Insurance companies settle most liability claims out of court to avoid the expense and uncertainty of litigation.

A nonprofit may be required to purchase liability insurance because a landlord (lessor) or mortgage holder requires you to show evidence of liability insurance.

### General Liability Policy

Commercial general liability, also called CGL, is designed to cover the liability exposures that are common to all organizations, from large corporations to small nonprofits. The policy is a combination of three separate coverages:

#### A) General Liability (*Bodily Injury and Property Damage*)

Sometimes referred to as the *premises and operations insurance*, Section A of the CGL policy covers liability for bodily injury or property damage caused by accident.

The following is a partial list of the categories of claims that can be covered by general liability and involve facilities:

- injuries arising from your premises
- injuries to clients under your supervision
- injuries to volunteers while working for you
- injuries to guests at special events
- injury caused by products you sell or manufacture
- fire damage to your landlord's building
- damage to property not owned by you or in your possession.

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## B) Personal Injury and Advertising Injury Liability

Section B of the CGL policy covers a specific group of liabilities that don't involve bodily injury or property and aren't caused by accident, and therefore aren't covered under general liability.

The liabilities that relate to facilities are wrongful eviction, wrongful entry, violation of privacy, libel, slander, false arrest and malicious prosecution.

## C) Medical Payments

Section C of the CGL policy, medical payments coverage, is accident coverage with a standard limit of \$5,000 per person. It covers accidents at your premises or at activities you sponsor off-premises, regardless of your liability. It's important to remember that medical payments coverage is not liability insurance. It allows the insured to promptly compensate for minor injuries on a no-fault basis, and has the further advantage of discouraging lawsuits.

Talk to your insurance professional about CGL to find out about exclusions (things not covered) and ways to purchase additional coverage, some of which is specific to nonprofits.

## ***Basic Property Insurance***

Most nonprofit organizations purchase some type of property insurance. The scope of coverage depends upon the type of property that may be damaged and what caused the damage to occur. Evaluate property coverage needs with your insurance professional.

Keep in mind that property insurance protects persons who have an interest in the continued use of the property and who will experience a financial loss in the event of damage to, or destruction of, the property, such as an owner, tenant or mortgage company.

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Nonprofit organizations purchase one or more policies to protect the following types of property:

- real estate/buildings
- valuable papers
- money and securities
- equipment breakdown (previously called boiler and machinery)
- lost income/extra expense
- personal property
- fine arts (owned/nonowned; transit and exhibition)
- account receivables
- contractors equipment/buildings under construction or renovation
- property while it is in-transit
- property belonging to others

Property coverage starts with coverage for damages due to fire and is broadened as respects the causes of loss that are covered, such as lightning, explosion, windstorm, weight of ice, snow and water damage and more.

The information in this section was condensed from *Coverage, Claims & Consequences, An Insurance Handbook for Nonprofits*. The book is available at [www.nonprofitrisk.org](http://www.nonprofitrisk.org).

## Step 10            Instill a Risk Management Culture

The most effective and inexpensive way to ensure that employees, volunteers and service recipients are safe in your facility is to give the participants a role in risk management. This participation creates a risk management culture within your

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facility and stresses that management takes facility safety seriously. Your job is to get everyone—paid and volunteer staff, even your service recipients—thinking and behaving as risk managers.

### ***Awareness/Training***

Put a banana peel on the ground and many people will walk around it; a few might toss it aside and even fewer will pick it up and place it in the waste container. However, you should make the people in your facility aware that a banana peel can cause injury. If you educate them to take personal responsibility for removing the hazard and the procedure you expect them to use to dispose of the hazard, you will exponentially increase the number of people who will pick up the banana peel and properly dispose of it. If in addition to building awareness, you have each person actually go through the steps of the proper procedure, even more people will comply.

How many risks, such as a banana peel on the ground, are evident in your facility? What types of training do your people need to experience to reduce the risks of accident and injury in your facility? Some will be general and affect all facilities, such as the banana peel. Others will be inherent in the population you serve and the programs you provide. For instance, very young children will need additional and different protection than their older teenage counterparts, because of their chronological and developmental ages. Nonprofits with sports-related programs will need to offer different training than meal-delivery programs.

### ***Checklists***

If you provide short and simple-to-follow checklists for basic safety measures, you can help remind employees, volunteers and service recipients what to do if they see a ruffled area rug, an unsecured electrical cord, an unlocked hazardous materials storeroom and so forth.

Checklists can be turned into colorful posters with easy-to-follow steps. They can be made into bookmarks or laminated cards that fit into a shirt pocket. They can be turned into a

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rhyme or made into a song for easy memory. The easier it is to remember and do, the more likely people will comply with your wishes.

You may want to consider initiating a safety program with incentives for employees to comply.

### ***Reporting Procedure***

Depending on the size and complexity of your nonprofit, you might not want everyone having involvement at a hands-on level, but you do want people to be alert for hazards and to promptly and clearly report to the person who can expedite a solution what the hazard is and where it's located. You need to know when, what, where, who and how. The person reported to should have the authority to act and the knowledge to set priorities for the replacement or repair.

S A M P L E	
Hazard Report	
Date:	October 30, 2004
Time:	5 p.m.
Description:	Light bulb burned out
Location:	Porter St. Entrance
Who:	Zach Arnholt
Phone number:	Ext. 222

### ***Supervision***

No matter how good your policies and procedures, your training and your checklists prove to be, you still need to have proper supervision of your employees and volunteers. The supervisor is responsible for monitoring how well staff comprehend and implement those items. The supervisor is responsible for reinforcing positive behavior that results in a safer facility and for correcting negative behavior or lapses in behavior that don't move the organization toward the goal of infusing everyone to think as a safety officer.

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# Chapter 3

## Special Situations

**P**laygrounds, shops, museums and nonreplaceable collections, camps, and day-care or residential-care programs have specific needs above and beyond basic facility risk management. These are not the only special situations that exist in nonprofits, but they are frequent enough to merit mention here.

### ***Playgrounds***

If your nonprofit's facility doesn't include a playground but your clients use a public playground or your nonprofit is considering building a playground, you will want to review the following free publications.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's *Handbook for Public Playground Safety* offers formulas for determining the depth for various surface materials. You can download the publication from [www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/325.pdf](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/325.pdf).

The U.S. Access Board, a federal agency committed to accessible design, publishes *Accessibility Guidelines for Play Areas*, which is available at [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov).

### Inspections

Someone in your agency should perform a visual and written inspection of the playground each week it's in use by children. All equipment must be regularly inspected for safety and

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scheduled for maintenance. Equipment should meet safety standards recommended by the American Society for Testing and Materials ([www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org)), the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission ([www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)) or the Consumer Federation of America ([www.consumerfed.org](http://www.consumerfed.org)).

## Barriers

There should be a barrier between the children's playground and any water such as swimming pool, fountain, or water-retention pond at your nonprofit's facility. These water features are considered *attractive nuisances* under the law. To protect children and your nonprofit from harm, surround these bodies of water with a minimum four-foot-high fence and include a self-closing and self-latching gate. Keep the fence and gate maintained and in good repair.

Drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death in children ages 14 and under. Because children can drown in as little as one inch of water, they are at risk in wading pools, bathtubs, buckets, diaper pails, toilets and decorative pools. Preschoolers are at greatest risk around swimming pools and spas. School-age children and teens are most likely to drown in open bodies of water: lakes, ponds, streams, rivers and swimming pools. Children of all ages with seizure disorders are at greater risk of drowning than other children are.

## Supervision

Supervision of children at play is one of several strategies that will help protect children from playground injuries and death. The others include design and layout of the playground equipment, regular maintenance, and timely repair of equipment.

The playground should be designed to allow the teacher or playground supervisor to view the entire playground at once. If you can't renovate the playground, review the number and placement of supervising adults.



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- ❑ Consider the topography of the site; make sure the natural contours don't cause barriers.
  - ❑ Consider how pieces of play equipment relate to one another; make certain that large ones don't impede vision of smaller pieces.
  - ❑ Landscaping plans need to take into account the small stature of the participants and not impede sight lines of the caregivers.

When possible, the playground should be enclosed with a four-foot-high fence to keep children within the safe area, keep intruders out, and make play supervision easier. Locate gates away from street and inspect the fence for defects such as jagged or protruding parts. Maintain and repair the fence and gate promptly.

In addition to providing appropriate equipment for developmental abilities and separating young children from older children, preschoolers require close supervision. Older children require someone to referee so they don't misuse equipment, overcrowd or rough house.

### Developmentally Appropriate Equipment

The CPSC *Handbook for Public Playground Safety* says “a playground should allow children to develop progressively and test their skills by providing a series of graduated challenges. The challenges presented should be appropriate for age-related abilities and should be ones that children can perceive and choose to undertake.

“Preschool and school-age children differ dramatically, not only in physical size and ability, but also in their cognitive and social skills. Therefore, age-appropriate playground designs should accommodate these differences with regard to the type, scale and the layout of equipment.” Recommendations throughout the handbook address the different needs of preschool (2-5 years) and school-age (5-12 years) children.

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For instance, *Handbook for Public Playground Safety*, “6.3 Age Separation of Equipment” states:

“It’s recommended that for younger children, playgrounds have separate areas with appropriately sized equipment and materials to serve their developmental levels. The following items of playground equipment are not recommended for preschool-age children (2 through 5 years):

- Chain or cable walks
- Free-standing arch climbers
- Free-standing climbing events with flexible components
- Fulcrum seesaws
- Log rolls
- Long spiral slides (more than one turn—360°)
- Overhead rings
- Parallel bars
- Swinging gates
- Track rides
- Vertical sliding poles.

The handbook gives several specific recommendations for equipment designed for preschool-age children:

- Rung ladders, stepladders, stairways and ramps (Table 2)
- Handrail height (Section 10.3)
- Guardrails and protective barriers (Sections 11.3, 11.4 and 11.5)
- Stepped platforms (Section 11.7)
- Climbers (Section 12.1.2)
- Horizontal ladders and overhead rings (Section 12.1.5)
- Merry-go-rounds (Section 12.2)

- Spring rockers (Section 12.5)
- Single-axis swings (Section 12.6.2)
- Tot swings (Section 12.6.3)

Some playgrounds—often referred to as tot lots—are designed only for preschool-age children, so separation isn’t an issue.

In playgrounds intended to serve children of all ages, the layout of pathways and the landscaping of the playground should show the distinct areas for the different age groups. The areas should be separated at minimum by a buffer zone, which could be an area with shrubs or benches. Signs posted in the playground area can be used to give some guidance to adults as to the age appropriateness of the equipment.”

The handbook may be read online or downloaded as a pdf file from [www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/325.pdf](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/325.pdf).

S A M P L E

Public Playground Safety Checklist

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Inspector's Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes

- Surfaces around playground equipment have at least 12 inches of wood chips, mulch, sand or pea gravel or have mats made of safety-tested rubber or rubber-like mats.
- Protective surfacing extends at least 6 feet in all directions from play equipment.
- Protective surfacing around swings extends twice the height of the suspending bar in back and front.
- Play structures more than 30 inches high are spaced at least 9 feet apart.
- "S" hooks are closed.
- Bolt ends are flush with the surface.
- Openings in guard rails measure less than 3.5 inches or more than 9 inches apart.
- Spaces between ladder rungs measure less than 3.5 inches or more than 9 inches.
- Edges of equipment are smooth.

- Concrete footings are covered.
- Tree roots are covered.
- Rocks have been removed.
- Elevated platforms and ramps have guardrails to prevent falls.
- Litter has been picked up.
- Walls, equipment and paths are free of graffiti.

Summarize the condition of playground surfacing, equipment, and area. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Describe places where maintenance or repair work is required.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- File a work request with the appropriate person.
- Give priority to safety and health conditions.

## S A M P L E

### Playground Checklist

- Does your nonprofit perform a visual and written inspection of the playground each week it's in use by children?
- Is the area fenced and gated or are there natural barriers such as hedges between the play areas and streets or parking lots or animals or passersby?
- Is the fence a minimum of 4 feet high?
- Are the gates located away from streets?
- Do surfaces around playground equipment have at least 12 inches of wood chips, mulch, sand or pea gravel or have mats made of safety-tested rubber?
- Does protective surfacing extend at least 6 feet in all directions from play equipment?
- Does the protective surfacing for swings extend in back and front to twice the height of the suspending bar?
- Are fall zone materials replaced as needed or recommended?
- Are the play structures that are more than 30 inches high spaced at least 9 feet apart?

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- Does your nonprofit check for dangerous hardware (such as open “S” hooks or protruding bolt ends, sharp points or edges)?
  - Do spaces that could trap children, such as openings in guardrails or between ladder rungs, measure less than 3.5 inches or more than 9 inches?
  - Does your nonprofit check for tripping hazards such as exposed concrete footings, tree stumps and rocks?
  - Do elevated surfaces, such as platforms and ramps, have guardrails to prevent falls?
  - Are the play areas accessible and convenient to phones, water and storage?
  - Is there a barrier between the children’s playground and any water such as swimming pool, fountain or water-retention pond?
  - Does your nonprofit inspect the fence for defects such as jagged or protruding parts?
  - Is the area properly drained to eliminate standing puddles of water?
  - Is play equipment with moving parts, such as swings, located well away from walkways to avoid collisions?
  - Is equipment examined for broken pieces that can trip, pinch, crush, splinter, cut or puncture?
  - Is equipment repaired or replaced in a timely manner?
  - Is permanent equipment, such as climbers and slides, anchored firmly and deeply following manufacturer’s recommendations and licensing standards?
  - Is the play area designed to allow the teacher or playground supervisor to view the entire playground at once?
  - Is the playground equipment developmentally appropriate for the children that will use it?
  - Does your nonprofit repair or replace the most life-threatening or dangerous equipment hazards first?

As a reminder, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission’s *Handbook for Public Playground Safety* offers formulas for determining the depth for various surface materials. You can download the publication from [www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/325.pdf](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/325.pdf). The U.S. Access Board, a federal agency committed to accessible design, publishes *Accessibility Guidelines for Play Areas*, which is available at [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov).

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## ***Shops***

Thrift shops, museum shops, cafeterias and other services that invite the general public into your nonprofit's facility to purchase items increases the nonprofit's risk in several areas: security, property, employee and financial. Your nonprofit will need to think about:

- entrance/exit controlled access.
- door and window security.
- cash receipt reconciliation and banking at end of each operating day.
- inventory control systems.
- customer activity monitoring.

Consider which risks in these categories manifest themselves while the shop is open and which are apparent when the shop is closed. Some will be there in different degrees whether the shop is open or closed. Theft of property is an example. Shoplifters and employees can make off with the merchandise during hours of operation. Burglars (who might be employees, prior customers or opportunists) would be more likely to steal merchandise when the shop is closed. The harder your nonprofit makes it for someone to steal from its premises, the more likely the person will steal from somewhere else.

Security personnel, surveillance mirrors (or cameras), controlled entrance/exit doors, employees dispersed throughout the shop (rearranging merchandise, stocking shelves or helping customers find items) can dissuade potential shoplifters from trying to steal from your nonprofit. Doors with deadbolt locks, alarm systems, security gates or security guards; windows with security bars or grills or alarm systems; and separate, locked storage rooms make it more difficult for the burglar to succeed in stealing from your nonprofit.

Some questions to consider:

- Does the shop have controlled access (key cards, security guard or buzzer)?

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- Can you regulate who comes and goes via a single set of entrance/exit doors?
  - Are there angled mirrors in the shop that allow employees to monitor what customers are doing?
  - Does the nonprofit have an inventory control system in place?
  - Do the dressing rooms have a method to verify that the same number of garments that are taken in are brought out?
  - Are the windows secured with bars or grills, or alarmed?
  - Do display windows have security gates that bar access or access and view of merchandise?
  - If an alarm system is used, does it ring directly to the security company or police department?
  - Does the storage area have separate security?
  - Are costly items (such as jewelry, furs or antiques) removed from showcases and locked up at closing?
  - Are cash receipts reconciled against sales at the end of the selling day and deposited in the bank?

If your nonprofit's thrift shop employs a security firm, this is a wise precaution in an area where the public comes and goes at will and there is money in the till.

Have you performed due diligence on the security firm?

- Did you check out the history of the company with the Better Business Bureau?
  - Did you get confirmation from the company that the company is insured for:
    - crime, theft and robbery from your premises by their employees (crime insurance coverage)?
    - employees' injury on the job (workers' compensation coverage)?

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- injuries or accidents while driving for your nonprofit (automobile liability coverage)?
  - Are their employees bonded in case of theft from you?
  - Did you confirm that employees hired as security guards by the company have been through a rigorous background check for criminal records, drug and/or alcohol abuse (and sexual misconduct if they may have one-to-one contact with vulnerable clients)?
  - Did you ask how the company deals with employees hired as security guards suspected of abusing drugs or alcohol on the job?

If your nonprofit's thrift shop doesn't employ a security firm do you employ security personnel directly? If so,

- Does your nonprofit perform a thorough criminal, drug and/or alcohol abuse (and sexual misconduct if these employees will have one-to-one contact with vulnerable clients) background check before hiring these people?
- Is your nonprofit insured for:
  - crime, theft and robbery from your premises by employees (crime insurance coverage)?
  - injury on the job (workers' compensation coverage)?
  - injuries or accidents while driving for your nonprofit (automobile liability coverage for owned vehicles and non-owned automobile coverage for employees'/volunteers' vehicles)?
- Does your nonprofit have a plan for addressing suspected drug or alcohol abuse on the job? Have you reviewed this plan with your nonprofit's attorney?

### Dressing Rooms

Monitoring dressing rooms acts as a deterrent to someone thinking about shoplifting from your nonprofit. Whether the monitoring is by a security camera/videotape or through an inventory system that validates the same number of garments that enter the dressing room are brought out of the dressing



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room by the customer, the customer is aware that someone is watching his or her movements.

If your nonprofit uses a security camera/videotape setup, your nonprofit needs to consider having employee training, and policies and procedures set up to deter the employee from acting as a voyeur or reusing the videotaped material for his or her own personal gratification or financial gain. Requiring the employee to turn in the videotape to a supervisor at the end of the shift would reduce the opportunities for copying the tape. The supervisor would erase tapes according to a predetermined schedule or if the content showed no wrongdoing on the part of the customers.

### ***Museums and Other Nonreplaceable Collections***

Any premises, such as a museum, that invites public entry increases its risk. The group differs from clients served, because of random access by not necessarily repeat customers. There are several things a nonprofit can do to manage the risk of crime (theft, robbery or burglary) and the risk of accident or injury.

#### Controlled Access

The museum area of the premises can have controlled access. Controlled access might be in the form of a door with a deadbolt lock located between the nonprofit's service area and the museum. A security guard, a separate external entrance from the rest of the facility, a reception area with buzzer access for the museum entrance, a ticket (whether free or for a fee) dispensing area and ticket collector at the entrance are some of the possibilities. Whichever one your nonprofit chooses to use, it provides security and safety to the collection and the members of the general public who visit your nonprofit organization's collection. Your nonprofit runs a higher risk of theft, burglary or injury to the general public by not having the risk management tool in place.

If your nonprofit also has a museum shop, your nonprofit will want to isolate the shop from the collection and the rest of the premises, if possible.

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## Security

Window access can be dissuaded with key locks, grills or bars or a burglar alarm. Grills or bars shouldn't be installed in such a way that they limit exit in case of fire or other emergency.

Entrances and exits can be equipped with alarms, iron gates with padlocks or deadbolt locks, or keypads with changeable combinations of numbers and limited numbers of employees with the code. Employees in the museum shop should have a hidden method (buzzer activated by finger or foot behind the counter) of alerting other staff that there's an emergency.

Storage for the museum shop and storage for the part of the collection that isn't on exhibit should be secured by a separate system.

## Theft

The employees (positions) handling financial transactions should be bonded. For many nonprofits, coverage for insider theft is part of an overall crime insurance policy. Sales should be reconciled with payment and cash and checks should be deposited in the bank at the end of each sales day.

If the nonprofit has any sort of irreplaceable collection, such as historical documents or artifacts for the nonprofit, consider keeping this in a separate secured area or cabinet to reduce the chance of theft or damage. Your nonprofit might want to insure this collection separately or get a rider to your property insurance to cover the loss of this collection. A professional appraisal to validate the replacement cost of the collection will help your nonprofit determine the amount of insurance it should purchase.

## **Camps**

There are general risk management procedures that are applicable to all camps and additional ones that apply if your nonprofit's camp serves food, provides overnight accommodations in the wilderness or serves children with

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special needs. More than 5 million children attend these summer camps annually. The challenge is to provide safe, valuable experiences, while minimizing risks from flora and fauna, sports and recreational activities, food, water and facilities.

Inspect campgrounds and buildings and maintain them in good repair to avoid injury and accidents. Safety and quality of food and water, and the potential for food-borne illnesses must be considered. Evaluate the likelihood of campers' exposure to poisonous berries and vegetation, excessive heat and sun, animals and insects that can cause trauma, infectious disease or toxic reactions to your activities. Plan how to educate campers and provide antidotes for camp counselors and counselors in training to use if the worst case scenarios play out.

Your State Health Department can supply a summary of the state regulations governing water supplies, garbage disposal procedures, food preparation and food service areas and all other areas of camp life in which health and safety is a factor.

Another source for information on camp safety is the American Camping Association ([www.acacamps.org](http://www.acacamps.org)) that has a "Camp Knowledge Center."

Even if your nonprofit occasionally rents a camp or uses someone else's camp for its employees or clients, you'll want to inspect the camp to make certain that it meets code and state health and safety regulations before agreeing to use the facility.

### Regular Inspections

Your nonprofit should inspect its campgrounds and buildings on a regular basis. Working from a checklist provides consistency no matter who does the inspection. The checklist could be expanded to provide a column to describe what condition each item was found in and what repairs were requested and when they were completed. A sample checklist follows.

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S A M P L E

Camp Grounds Checklist

- Do you inspect campgrounds and buildings on a regular basis?
- Do you adhere to a maintenance schedule for the grounds and buildings?
- Is the drinking and bathing water supply checked for purity before camp opens and once during the season?
- Is there hot and cold running water in the camper showers and in the kitchen?
- Do showers have necessary drainage and nonslip surfaces?
- Are toilet facilities (indoors or out) clean, adequately lighted and well ventilated?
- Are toilets screened, are doors self-closing and seat lids tight fitting?
- Are pit latrines fly-proof?
- Are water, soap and individual paper towels provided near toilet facilities?
- Are the grounds inspected for poisonous plants and berries, animals and insect nests?
- Are coolers and refrigerators maintained at 45° Fahrenheit or below?
- Does the steam table maintain cooked food temperatures at 140° Fahrenheit or higher?
- Is unopened food stored above floor level on clean shelves or racks?
- Do dishwashing machines have a wash cycle at a minimum of 100° Fahrenheit and a rinse cycle of 180° Fahrenheit?
- Is the water heater temperature maintained at 120° Fahrenheit? [Drained once a year to check for rust?]
- Do garbage and refuse containers have tight-fitting, animal-proof lids?
- Does the camp comply with state law requiring fire extinguishers in the kitchen, dining hall, health center and other areas of camp?
- Do the types and sizes of fire extinguishers meet the specifications of the state health and safety code?
- Does your camp have antidotes to poison; protection from excessive sun/heat?
- Does your facility have a fire evacuation plan?

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Establish a baseline at the beginning of the season and make needed repairs before the first counselor or camper arrives. Then if there is an injury or accident during the camping season, your nonprofit will have a record of its risk management procedures to check against. If the claim turns into a lawsuit, you have proof that you took reasonable care in protecting the campers, visitors and counselors from harm.

### Overnight Camp

Because of sleeping accommodations, overnight camps require additional inspection, maintenance and repair to ensure that they are safe for campers and counselors.

Some questions to ask yourself:

- Are shelters (tents or cabins) in elevated areas that are reasonably clear of hazardous undergrowth and have good drainage?
- Does water runoff affect any public water supply?
- Have swampy areas been avoided or filled in to avoid mosquito breeding?
- If mosquitoes are a problem, has mosquito netting been provided?
- Are cabin windows and screens in good repair?
- Are cabin doors self-closing and do the mechanisms work smoothly?
- Are buildings or tents in good repair, easily cleaned, have good light and cross ventilation, and have watertight sides and roof?
- Does space allotted per camper meet regulations with at least 6 feet between the head of campers' beds?
- Are grounds free of trash and litter, especially beneath buildings and tent platforms?
- Are poison ivy and poison oak destroyed or controlled?

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- Are tents and cabins erected away from tick habitats such as tall grass, bushes, brush, and woods?

### Serving people with special needs

If your camp serves people with special needs—people with mental, as well as physical, challenges—check that your organization’s camp is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines.

To help you determine your camp’s compliance with the ADA, ask yourself:

- Are public areas accessible for people with varying degrees of mobility?
- Are paths wide, slip-resistant and free of debris?
- Are parking spaces at least 96 inches?
- Are there inclined ramps instead of or as well as stairs?
- Are floors and walkways nonslippery?
- Are turnaround spaces in restrooms at least 51 inches wide?
- Are doors at least 32 inches wide?
- Are door handles, light switches within reach and easily operated?
- Are bathrooms, ramps and stairs equipped with handrails?

If you’ve answered no to several or all of these questions, you’ll want to download the *ADA Standards for Accessible Design* from the Department of Justice Web site ([www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm)).

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## **Day Care**

Day care for the very young to the very old has special requirements for building safety. You'll want to check the licensing and regulations for the state(s) in which your nonprofit organization operates to make certain that your facility meets the requirements. In addition, you'll need to look at the space from the client's viewpoint.

If your nonprofit serves small children, the nonprofit's inspectors should get at a child's eye level to discover protrusions, trip and fall potentials, uncovered electrical outlets, looped cords, small holes, and rough edges that could cause injury or accidents.

If the clients are elderly, consider how well the floor surfaces accommodate walkers (wheeled or not), wheelchairs, shuffling gaits, legs that don't lift easily and reflexes that are slowed. Are door handles easily opened and water faucets easily turned on and off by hands that are weakened or crippled, or by elbows?

In general, no matter what the age of the clients, the answers to the following questions should be yes.

- Is the area well ventilated?
- Are screens securely fastened?
- Do upper story windows have window guards?
- Are floors washable in areas where messy activities (painting, eating) take place?
- Do electrical outlets have protective devices over or in the sockets?
- Do carpets or masking tape cover appliance or other electric cords?
- Are cords from window coverings (drapes, curtains and blinds) secured?
- Is the hot water kept at 120° F to avoid scalding burns?

- 
- Are harsh chemicals labeled and kept in a locked cabinet or closet? Does OSHA require that a Material Safety Data Sheet be kept on file for any chemicals on hand?
  - Are flammable liquids properly labeled in a tightly closed safety can that is outside, out of reach of children and far away from ignition sources (pilot lights on gas water heater, gas furnace, gas dryer or gas range)? Flammable liquids include: gasoline, acetone, turpentine, alcohol, benzene, charcoal lighter fluid, paint and lacquer thinner, and contact cement.
  - Are cleaning supplies secured?
  - Is food prepared on sanitized counters and with sanitized equipment?
  - Are radiator covers nonmetallic?
  - Do you have a CO (carbon monoxide) monitor outside the nap-room door?

#### Child specific

- Is the facility designed for maximum supervision of children at all times?
- Are child-size toilet facilities designed with low-dividers and doors or no doors on stalls?
- Are microwave ovens, or ranges in an area that is kept off-limits to children?
- Are window guards installed to prevent children from falling out of windows? (For windows on the 6th floor and below, install window guards that adults and older children can open easily in case of fire. For windows on the 7th floor and above, permanent window guards can be installed); or, install window stops that permit windows to open no more than 4 inches.



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## Older adult specific

- Are there handrails along the hallways and all stairways?
- Are toilet seats raised?
- Is seating placed along long hallways for people to rest?

## State and Federal regulations

The space used by your nonprofit for day-care should be designed specifically to serve young children. Fitting a day-care center into space designed for other purposes can increase your nonprofit's risks, unless the facility is retrofitted to meet children's needs.

Adherence to state licensing and federal regulations helps manage risk to employees, volunteers, children and families. Licensing standards, designed to assure minimal standards for health and safety, are set by each state and vary widely.

Your facility must comply with state childcare licensing regulations basic protection for children, staff and families. The Americans with Disabilities Act (P.L. 101-336) requires that all public areas be accessible for people with varying degrees of mobility. Wider doorways, inclined ramps, nonslippery floors and paths make buildings more flexible for all concerned. Other ADA requirements—low light switches and firm-grip door handles—may need guards to keep children from using them.

Make certain someone in your nonprofit is responsible for monitoring changes, deadline dates and compliance. You'll want to bookmark these Web sites on the office computer: Consumer Product Safety Commission, [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov); Access Board, [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov); Americans with Disabilities Act, [www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm) and your state licensing and regulation URL.

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## ***Residential Care***

The nature of the residential care facility determines the types of concerns you need to have. There are nursing homes, group homes, mental health facilities, foster care and emergency shelters. Within the category, let's take mental health facilities for example, there are different needs. Staff of a secure mental health facility needs to be concerned that the doors, windows, roof hatches, alarms and gates keep the clientele in, while the staff of a community mental health facility needs to be concerned that the visitor access controls, alarms, and door locks keep the community out.

Ages of the clientele adds another layer of needs. The emergency evacuation plan in the mental health facility needs to accommodate physical, as well as the mental, health of the clients. Older adults and infants need transport to the nearest available exit in case of fire. Ambulatory adults and children could be guided to the nearest available exit. Fire doors mustn't be blocked or locked to prevent emergency use, but in a secure facility, the building must also keep the clientele safely inside the building. Properly marked exit routes or exit signs required by building codes won't help a mentally challenged client get out of the building by him or herself. Americans with Disabilities Act accommodations for emergency evacuations of multi-story buildings are one answer; assigning staff to groups of clients is another possibility.

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# Epilogue

**D**on't gamble with the safety of your service recipients, employees, volunteers, visitors and vendors. The codes and regulations vary depending on whether the nonprofit is the facility owner/landlord, tenant/borrower, or home-based, but all nonprofits have facility exposures.

A large part of managing facility risk is knowing what code, law and licensing requirements apply to your particular arrangement. You are also charged with keeping up with changes in these rules: "I didn't know" is not a defense should an accident, injury or a fatality occur within your space.

As soon as people set foot onto the space your nonprofit is occupying, their injuries or accidents have the potential to become your nonprofit's liability and expense. The cost to your nonprofit should you not attend to the safety and maintenance of the space your nonprofit operates within could include insurance co-pay, attorney's fees, loss of reputation, adverse publicity, diminished funding, and loss of clients, board members and staff. There might also be costs of temporarily relocating if your facility is uninhabitable.

Use ordinary care to maintain the premises in a reasonably safe condition for invitees. Look for unsafe or dangerous conditions on the premises and either remedy the problem, report the problem or issue an appropriate warning. Repair or replace the most life-threatening or dangerous hazards first. Not setting priorities based on danger to your clients, employees, volunteers and visitors can be compared to playing Russian roulette with their safety.



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# Appendices

## S A M P L E

### Hold Harmless Agreements

(Type: limited)

#### Sample #1

[Name of Organization\*] agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless [Name of Nonprofit] and/or any officer, employee or other representative of [Name of Nonprofit] from and against any and all claims, demands, suits, actions, proceedings (formal or informal), investigations, judgments, deficiencies, damages, settlements, liabilities and expenses (including reasonable legal fees and expenses of counsel acceptable to [Name of Nonprofit]) as and when incurred arising out of, based upon or in connection with the [description and date of activity – e.g., use of Name of Nonprofit’s headquarters for ABC Organization’s annual fundraising dinner], except for damages arising out of bodily injury to persons or damage to property resulting directly from the sole negligence of [Name of Nonprofit].

#### Sample #2

[Name of Organization\*] agrees to indemnify and hold [Name of Nonprofit], its officers, employees and agents harmless from and defend against any and all claims, loss, costs, expense or liability, including reasonable attorneys’ fees, for any injury or damages to any person that may arising out of or connected in any way with the [name and description of activity] scheduled for [date of activity].

\* For this example, Name of Organization refers to the organization seeking something from the nonprofit, such as an organization seeking to rent a facility owned by the nonprofit. This term is used to distinguish the two parties to the agreement – both may in fact be nonprofits.

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S A M P L E

## Indemnification Clause for the Grant Agreement

**“Indemnification:** Grantee will indemnify and hold harmless [name of nonprofit] for any claims by or liability to third parties to which [name of nonprofit] may be subject on account of this project other than those caused by [name of nonprofit’s] willful misconduct or knowing violation of the criminal law in the performance of its duty.”

S A M P L E

## Cleaning Routine

### ***Daily Routines***

#### *Restrooms*

- Scrub toilets and urinals, cleaning all ceramic surfaces, pumping hardware and toilet seats.
- Scrub and clean all sinks.
- Clean mirrors.
- Fill all soap, paper towel and toilet paper dispensers.
- Wipe down all walls immediately surrounding toilets, urinals and sinks.
- Mop floor, using a proper disinfecting chemical.
- Wipe down restroom doors on both sides.
- Make visual check of all lighting, plumbing, and other fixtures to make sure that the area is left in a safe operating order. Report any malfunctions to the Program Director.

#### *Hallways and Stairs*

- Wipe down all walls containing fingerprints, etc.
- Wet mop all floors, if necessary, otherwise go over all floor surfaces with a treated mop.
- Empty all wastebaskets.
- Wipe down all adjoining doors and hardware fixtures.
- Clean all glass with appropriate glass cleaner.
- Wipe down all handrails and other rail parts with a damp cloth.
- Visually inspect all light fixtures, door locks, etc. for damage or malfunction. Report any malfunctions to the Program Director.

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*Meeting Rooms, Games Room, Learning Center, Library*

- Wash down all tabletops and adjoining table side rails, etc.
- Wipe all chairs and window sills.
- Check and wipe all window blinds as necessary.
- Empty all waste baskets and clean interior and exterior of basket.
- Wet mop or vacuum floor.
- Remove any hand prints from walls and windows.
- Visually inspect all light and door fixtures. Report any malfunctions to Program Director.
- If applicable, lock the door as you exit from the room.

*Arts and Crafts and/or Shop*

- Dust all tables and equipment.
- Dust window sills and other work areas.
- Clean sinks.
- Empty all waste baskets.
- Mop all floors with treated mops.
- Remove build-up from tables, i.e. paint, glue.
- Visually check all equipment, fixtures, etc. for safety. Report any malfunctions to the Club Director.
- Lock all doors, if applicable, when leaving.

*Offices*

- Dust all file cabinets and other equipment items.
- Wipe down all desk tops or other work area surfaces.
- Empty and clean all waste baskets.
- Vacuum entire carpeted area.
- Wipe down all doors and hardware.
- Clean all office glass other than windows.
- Visually inspect all light, door, and other adjoining fixtures. Report any malfunctions to the Club Director.

*Gymnasium*

- Clean drinking fountain.
- Wipe finger and ball prints off the wall surfaces.
- Mop floor and remove gum or other marks, as necessary.
- Empty all waste baskets.
- Wipe down all door surfaces and hardware.
- Visually check all equipment, fixtures, etc. Report any malfunctions to the Program Director.

*Lockers*

- Remove any fingerprints or marks from locker and wall surfaces.
- Scrub all urinals, sinks, toilets, as outlined under "Restrooms".
- Check shower room floor and remove any soap and other debris.
- Clean all mirrors and shower room window glass.
- Wipe down doors.
- Wet mop with a proper disinfectant the entire shower, locker room, and adjoining hallway floor surfaces.
- Check to make sure there are adequate paper and soap supplies for the next day's operation.
- Visually check all light fixtures, hardware, equipment, etc. for safety and proper use. Report any malfunctions to the Program Director.

**Dates**

**Monthly Routine**

- Wash restroom walls. \_\_\_\_\_
- Machine scrub and refinish restroom floors and high-traffic areas. \_\_\_\_\_

**Three-Month Routine**

- Wash and polish wood furniture. \_\_\_\_\_
- Wash all desks, tables, chairs, file cabinets. \_\_\_\_\_
- Vacuum drapes or other window covering. \_\_\_\_\_

**Six-Month Routine**

- Wash light fixtures. \_\_\_\_\_
- Machine-scrub and refinish non-carpeted floors. \_\_\_\_\_
- Wash exterior glass. \_\_\_\_\_

**Annual Routine**

- Wash all walls and ceilings. \_\_\_\_\_
- Machine shampoo carpeting. \_\_\_\_\_

*Provided courtesy of Boys and Girls Clubs of America.*





S A M P L E

Swimming Pool Inspection Checklist

Inspector's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: Perform the specified inspection. Make any comments which are pertinent to future maintenance needs.

<b>Item to be inspected</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Check pool concrete for cracks, breaks, spalling, exposed reinforcing, settlement, etc.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check pool tile for chipped, cracked, loose, and missing pieces, mortar joints.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check pool expansion joints for leakage and damage.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check pool wall and floor finishes for roughness and dirt.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check depth markers and lane strips for legibility.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check springboards for cracks, breaks, splintering, and other damage, loose or missing fastenings, absence of nonslip coverings.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check ladders for rust or corrosion of metal parts, loose, missing, broken, rot or other damage to wooden parts, alignment of towers.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check main drains for sediment and rust.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check gutter drains for obstructions.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check fences, barricades, dividing walls, and footings for broken, loose, missing, or other damage. (Outdoor pools)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check painted surfaces for blistering, checking, cracking, scaling, wrinkling, flaking, peeling, rust, corrosion, absence of paint.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check room walls for stains.	_____

*Provided courtesy of Boys and Girls Clubs of America.*

S A M P L E

## Roof Inspection Checklist

Facility/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Inspected By: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Roof: \_\_\_\_\_

	Condition	Repair Priority			Repair
		None	Low	High	Date Completed
<input type="checkbox"/> Plumbing/vents					
<input type="checkbox"/> Gutters					
<input type="checkbox"/> Drains					
<input type="checkbox"/> Fasteners					
<input type="checkbox"/> Flashing					
Membrane					
<input type="checkbox"/> Cracking					
<input type="checkbox"/> Splits					
<input type="checkbox"/> Blisters					
<input type="checkbox"/> Rotting Membrane					
<input type="checkbox"/> Structural Deterioration					
<input type="checkbox"/> Soft Spots					
<input type="checkbox"/> Ponding					
<input type="checkbox"/> Leading Parapets					

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

*Provided courtesy of the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.*

S A M P L E

## Window & Door Inspection Checklist

Facility/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Inspected By: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Windows

- Hinges
- Caulking
- Operation/Closure
- Glass
- Window Glazing
- Weather Stripping

Doors

- Hinges
- Latches
- Panic Hardware
- Door Checks
- Locks

	Condition	Repair Priority			Repair
		None	Low	High	Date Completed

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

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S A M P L E

Walls Inspection Checklist

Facility/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Inspected By: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Walls: \_\_\_\_\_

- Cracking
- Spalling
- Efflorescence
- Parapets
- Mortar Joints
- Weepholes
- Joints
- Painting
- Signage

Condition	Repair Priority			Repair
	None	Low	High	Date Completed

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

*Provided courtesy of the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.*

S A M P L E

## Exterior Inspection Checklist

Facility/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Inspected By: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Condition	Repair Priority			Repair
		None	Low	High	Date Completed
Sidewalks					
<input type="checkbox"/> Cracks					
<input type="checkbox"/> Breaks					
<input type="checkbox"/> Unevenness					
<input type="checkbox"/> Sidewalk Shifted					
Parking					
<input type="checkbox"/> Cracking Asphalt					
<input type="checkbox"/> Drainage					
Landscaping					
<input type="checkbox"/> Weeds					
<input type="checkbox"/> Shrubbery					
<input type="checkbox"/> Sprinklers					
Graffiti					
<input type="checkbox"/> Any in evidence					
Lighting					
<input type="checkbox"/> Functioning					
<input type="checkbox"/> Controls					
Signage					
<input type="checkbox"/> Functioning					

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

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	Condition	Repair Priority			Repair
		None	Low	High	
See-Saw/ Merry-Go-Round					
<input type="checkbox"/> Structural components					
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving parts					
<input type="checkbox"/> Seats/handrails					
<input type="checkbox"/> Hardware - bolts/nuts					
<input type="checkbox"/> Painted surfaces					
<input type="checkbox"/> Ground cover					
<input type="checkbox"/> _____					
General Area					
<input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism apparent					
<input type="checkbox"/> Tripping hazards					
<input type="checkbox"/> Drainage					
<input type="checkbox"/> Fencing					
<input type="checkbox"/> Ground cover					
<input type="checkbox"/> _____					
Comments _____					
_____					
_____					
_____					

*Provided courtesy of the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.*



SAMPLE

Safety Inspection Guideline

Facility/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Inspected By: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Fire Safety

- Are all exit lights in good operating condition on emergency doors?
- Are all panic hardware and self-closing devices in good operating condition?
- Are all emergency doors free of obstructions (locks or any barriers) during all hours of occupancy?
- Is the emergency lighting system functioning properly throughout the building?
- Are heat/smoke detectors functioning properly throughout the building?
- Does the fire alarm system function properly throughout the building?
- Are all fire extinguishers in the proper locations throughout the building?
- Have the fire extinguishers been recently tested and serviced? When? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the furnace room clean and free of combustibles and all debris?
- Are all exterior fire escapes and ladders in safe and operating condition?
- Have requisite fire drills been performed? When? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the fire evacuation plan current and properly displayed throughout the building?

YES	NO	COMMENTS

Comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Building Condition

Carefully walk through every part of the facility to identify any potential hazard which might jeopardize a person's safety. Check general room condition, including lighting, electrical, windows/doors, tripping hazards. Also, verify good operating condition of all equipment contained in room.

	Condition	Action Required
<input type="checkbox"/> Exterior of building		
<input type="checkbox"/> Lobby		
<input type="checkbox"/> Control Counter		
<input type="checkbox"/> Restroom - boys		
<input type="checkbox"/> Restroom - girls		
<input type="checkbox"/> Locker Room - boys		
<input type="checkbox"/> Locker Room - girls		
<input type="checkbox"/> Gymnasium		
<input type="checkbox"/> Swimming Pool		
<input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Crafts		
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood shop		
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning Center		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting Room(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen		
<input type="checkbox"/> Games Room(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Furnace Room		
<input type="checkbox"/> Electrical Room		
<input type="checkbox"/> Filter Room		
<input type="checkbox"/> Storage Rooms		
<input type="checkbox"/> Office(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Janitor's Closet(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Stairwells/Corridors		

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

*Provided courtesy of the Boys and Girls Clubs of America.*

S A M P L E

Kitchen Safety Checklist

	YES	NO
1. Do you have a smoke detector located in the kitchen?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Are appliances, plugs and cords in good condition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Are cords of appliances not dangling or lying across traffic areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Do your appliances have short cords that do not dangle over the kitchen bench?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Are long telephone cords far from the floor?		
6. Do you use the back hot plates and turn pot handles around to prevent pots being pulled from the hot plates?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Are matches, knives and other sharp objects stored in a place where a child cannot reach them?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Are knives, forks, scissors, and other sharp tools in a drawer with a safety latch?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Are cleaning products, chemicals and medication stored in a locked cupboard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Are glass objects and appliances with sharp blades stored in a high cabinet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Is the garbage can behind a cabinet door with a safety latch?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Are all appliances unplugged when not in use, with cords far from reach?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Are all vitamin, aspirin, or medicine bottles stored in a cabinet far from reach?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Is the cabinet under the sink free from cleaning supplies, dishwasher detergent, and dishwashing liquids?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Are all garbage bags and sandwich-style baggies far from reach?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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S A M P L E

Bathroom Safety Checklist

	YES	NO
1. Does the bath have non-slip mats or handrails?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Are medicines and sharp objects (e.g. razors), kept in a locked cupboard out of reach of children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Are any electrical items (e.g. hairdryers), stored safely and away from water when in use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Are shampoos, soaps and cosmetics out of reach of children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Are cleaners, bleaches and detergents stored out of reach, in a child resistant cupboard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Is the thermostat on the hot water heater set to 120 degrees F or lower?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Are razors, blades, nail scissors, and other sharp tools stored in a locked cabinet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Is there a toilet-lid locking device on the toilet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Are there nonskid strips on the bottoms of bathtubs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Are there specially designed pads under loose rugs to hold them securely to the floor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Are all prescription and nonprescription medications stored in a locked cabinet far from reach?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Are bottles of mouthwash, perfumes, hair dyes, hair sprays, nail and shoe polishes, and nail polish removers far from reach?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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S A M P L E

Common Area Safety Checklist

	YES	NO
1. Are all radiators and baseboard heaters screened if needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Are safety plugs fitted in spare power points?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Are all unused outlets covered with safety caps?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Are sharp edges on tables and furniture covered?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Are glass doors protected by safety film, colorful stickers or made by safety glass?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Are toys stored in an area to allow free passage after use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Are chairs and tables not easily overturned?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Are tablemats used instead of tablecloths?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Are hot drinks placed up high out of children's reach?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Are there specially designed pads under loose rugs to hold them securely to floors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Are there working smoke detectors and at least one carbon monoxide detector?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Are there fire extinguishers available that are not easily accessible by children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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## Managing Facility Risk: A Short Glossary

**Additional insured**—a person or entity, other than the named insured who/that is protected by a particular insurance policy.

**Avoidance**—eliminates risk by deciding not to build a swimming pool or playground, not to purchase a camp, not to operate from a building with a historic designation.

**Certificate of insurance**—a form that indicates the types of insurance policies written, policy dates and coverage limits.

**Duty of care**—standard of behavior required in a particular circumstance. The standard is to use the level of care that a reasonably prudent person would exercise in a similar situation.

**Facilities**—built, installed or established to serve a particular purpose (i.e., camp grounds, playgrounds, natatoriums, day-care centers, and nursing homes). A facility can have buildings, which are defined as roofed and walled structures built for permanent use (i.e., an office building, a cabin or swimming pool changing rooms and showers).

**Indemnification Clause**—a provision holding the owner/landlord harmless for any negligent acts or omissions by the rental group during the term of the lease.

**Insurance professional**—an agent, broker or consultant.

**Invitee**—the legal status of guests to a facility.

**Material Safety Data Sheet**—contains important information about chemicals, specifically proper handling and spill clean up instructions. It also includes chemical compatibilities, storage information, recommended personal protection and, if a chemical can kill, how it can kill and what to use to keep it from killing.

**Medical payments coverage**—provides coverage for medical expenses of third parties injured on the premises regardless of fault (subject to policy conditions).

**Modification**—changes the nature of risks by altering the conditions under which the facility is maintained or operated, such as adding perimeter fencing, installing high intensity lighting, repaving the parking area, substituting a ramp for entry stairs.

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**Property**—category of nonprofit assets at risk that includes real property (buildings, improvements and betterments), personal property (furniture, fixtures, valuable papers and records, equipment, and supplies) and intangible property (copyrights, business goodwill and trademarks).

**Public accommodations**—private entities who own, lease, lease to, or operate facilities, such as restaurants, retail stores, hotels, movie theaters, private schools, convention centers, doctors' offices, homeless shelters, transportation depots, zoos, day care centers and recreation venues including sports stadiums and fitness clubs.

**Rent**—refers to property borrowed for a fee or for free.

**Retention**—nonprofit accepts all or part of a risk, including preparing for the consequences if a risk should become a reality, such as risks from uninsurable losses (fines and penalties for criminal acts and loss of public support due to negative publicity), deductibles for insurance claims, cost of insurance premiums.

**Sharing**—partially transferring an activity or the consequences of risk to another party by contractual means, such as a waiver, leasing agreement, becoming a named insured.

**Waiver**—the giving up of a right or privilege. Nonprofits frequently require participants in recreational or other programs to waive the right to sue in the event of injury. Courts often invalidate waivers on the grounds that the individual didn't fully appreciate the rights being waived or that the waiver didn't specifically indicate that it covered liability for negligence.





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Patterson, John C. and Barbara B. Oliver, *The Season of Hope: A Risk management Guide for Youth-Serving Nonprofits*, Nonprofit Risk Management Center, Washington, D.C., 2002.

*Readily Achievable Barrier Removal and Van-accessible Parking*, U.S. Department of Justice, [www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm).

Wellman, Stanley P. and Stephanie P. Karn, "Risk Management for Rental Properties: How Landlords Can Protect Themselves Legally When Renting Their Land to Outside Groups," *Community Risk Management & Insurance*, Fall 1998, Nonprofit Risk Management Center, Washington, D.C.

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# Resources

Access Board

[www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov)

Monitor for changes, deadline dates and compliance.

American Camping Association

[www.acacamps.org](http://www.acacamps.org)

Camp Knowledge Center—camp safety

American Society for Testing and Materials

[www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org)

Standards

Americans with Disabilities Act

[www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm)

Monitor for changes, deadline dates and compliance.

Bingo Hall Rental Agreement sample

[www.michigan.gov/documents/BSL-CG-](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/BSL-CG-SampleBingoHallRentalAgreement_1402_7.pdf)

[SampleBingoHallRentalAgreement\\_1402\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/BSL-CG-SampleBingoHallRentalAgreement_1402_7.pdf)

Consumer Federation of America

[www.consumerfed.org](http://www.consumerfed.org)

Equipment safety standards

Local Playground Safety Survey Form

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CPTED

[www.cpted-security.com](http://www.cpted-security.com)

Design regulations

Cultural Center Rental Conditions sample

[www.morgan.public.lib.ga.us/madmorg/rentals.htm](http://www.morgan.public.lib.ga.us/madmorg/rentals.htm)

Cultural Center Rental Request sample

[www.morgan.public.lib.ga.us/madmorg/Rentbook.htm](http://www.morgan.public.lib.ga.us/madmorg/Rentbook.htm)

Jacobs, Jane, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, New York, Vintage Books, 1961; Reissue edition, 1992.

Discusses the interaction of the physical environment with its inhabitants and how important this is in the life and vitality of a street or neighborhood.

Material Safety Data Sheets

MSDS are included in any chemical shipment and made available for end users.

They are also available on line. Or you can request a specific MSDS from the manufacturer, who can send it by fax. Check local library to see if it is one that has MSDS for more than 100,000 substances.

Renting Newberry Facilities sample

[www.newberry.org/nl/general/rentafterhours.html](http://www.newberry.org/nl/general/rentafterhours.html)

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

[www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)

Equipment safety standards

Monitor for changes, deadline dates and compliance.

U.S. Department of Agriculture

[www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov)

*Cooking for Groups: A Volunteer's Guide to Food Safety*, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Washington, D.C. Read online, print or order a copy sent to you, [www.fsis.usda.gov/oa/pubs/cfg/cfg.htm](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/oa/pubs/cfg/cfg.htm).

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

[www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov)

*HUD Technical Guidelines for the Evaluation and Control of Lead-Paint Hazards in Housing* published by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Title X Residential lead-Based paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992, part of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992 (P.L. 102-550)

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*Lead Paint Safety, A Field Guide for painting, Home Maintenance and Renovation Work*, pdf in English, [www.hud.gov/offices/lead/training/LBPguide.pdf](http://www.hud.gov/offices/lead/training/LBPguide.pdf). Spanish Adaptation is available from the National Lead Information Center, 1-800-424-LEAD (5323).

U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety & Health Administration  
[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

Click on "H" for more information about hazard regulations.

OSHA currently regulates exposure to approximately 400 chemicals present in the workplace that are capable of causing harm. The OSHA Chemical Sampling Information file contains listing for approximately 1500 substances.

Regulations for flammable liquids

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
[www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

Compliance News and Updates—TSCA Lead; TSCA Asbestos

EPA's TSCA Chemical Substances Inventory lists information on more than 62,000 chemicals or chemical substances.

[www.epa.gov/region5/defs/html/tsca.htm](http://www.epa.gov/region5/defs/html/tsca.htm)

Read about the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) of 1976 and link to the Inventory of 75,000 industrial chemicals currently produced or imported into the United States.

State licensing and regulation

Search your state's Web site for code, licensing, and regulation. Look for those specific to your mission, as well as those in place for all buildings and grounds.

State's Hazard Communication Act (flammable liquids)

Search your state's Web site for "flammable liquid."

Use & Lease by Non-University Groups (University of Minnesota) sample

[www.fpd.finop.umn.edu/groups/ppd/documents/procedure/Use\\_Lease.cfm](http://www.fpd.finop.umn.edu/groups/ppd/documents/procedure/Use_Lease.cfm)

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## Telephone Numbers and Web Sites for ADA Information

This list contains the telephone numbers of federal agencies that are responsible for providing information to the public about the Americans with Disabilities Act and organizations that have been funded by the federal government to provide information through staffed information centers. The agencies and organizations listed are sources for obtaining information about the law's requirements and informal guidance in understanding and complying with the ADA.

### ADA Information Line

U.S. Department of Justice

For ADA documents and questions

800-514-0301 (voice)

800-514-0383 (TTY)

[www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm)

### U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

For publications

800-669-3362 (voice)

800-800-3302 (TTY)

For questions

800-669-4000 (voice)

800-669-6820 (TTY)

[www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov)

### U.S. Department of Transportation

ADA Assistance Line for regulations and complaints

888-446-4511 (voice)

TTY: use relay service

[www.fta.dot.gov/office/civ.htm](http://www.fta.dot.gov/office/civ.htm)

### Federal Communications Commission

888-225-5322 (voice)

888-835-5322 (TTY)

[www.fcc.gov/cib/dro](http://www.fcc.gov/cib/dro)

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**U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board**

800-872-2253 (voice)

800-993-2822 (TTY)

[www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov)

U.S. Department of Labor

**Job Accommodation Network**

800-526-7234 (voice & TTY)

[www.jan.wvu.edu](http://www.jan.wvu.edu)

U.S. Department of Education

Regional Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers

800-949-4232 (voice & TTY)

[www.adata.org](http://www.adata.org)

Addresses for ADA Information

U.S. Department of Justice

Civil Rights Division

Disability Rights Section

P.O. Box 66738

Washington, DC 20035-6738

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

1801 L Street, NW

Washington, DC 20507

U.S. Department of Transportation

Federal Transit Administration

400 Seventh Street, SW

Washington, DC 20590

Federal Communications Commission

1919 M Street, NW

Washington, DC 20554

Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board

1331 F Street, NW Suite 1000

Washington, DC 20004-1111

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