

# HOSPITALITY COVER PLUS+

HOSPITALITY VIEW • FEBRUARY 2012

## PROMOTING A SAFETY CULTURE

Developing a strong safety culture at your property can have one of the greatest impacts on accident reduction. Generally, a property's safety culture is a direct reflection of the organization's overarching culture and the people who work in it. As a result, most employees will generate their perceptions of safety and its importance based on the attitude of management and their peers.

In a strong, successful safety culture, everyone feels responsible for safety and pursues it each day. Team members are encouraged to go beyond "the call of duty," identify unsafe conditions and intervene to correct them. They look out for one another as well as guests.

At the leadership level, management must recognize that if employees are your greatest asset, then you have to develop a passion for keeping employees, guests, and their environment safe; helping them to return home safely to their families.

Organizations with strong safety cultures typically experience few at-risk behaviors and higher productivity, as well as lower accident rates, turnover rates, and absenteeism.

It is recommended that your team include the following in your safety program:

- Implement a mentoring system in which experienced individuals are placed with newer workers. The tenured staff should serve as role models for newer employees.

- Encourage all staff to look out for others. In doing so, develop safety responsibilities for all levels of staff at the property.
- Align management and supervisors by establishing a shared vision of safety and health goals.
- Implement a plan that holds managers accountable for being visibly involved, setting the proper example and leading a positive path for safety and health.
- Promote safety training and host emergency response training.
- Use a system for tracking and ensuring timeliness of safety corrections.
- Encourage all team members to report health and safety concerns they may encounter in a timely manner.
- Track and review near miss accidents, injuries, and the need for first aid treatment.
- Make a commitment to employees to provide access to the quality medical care necessary to return to work as soon as medically appropriate.
- Establish a return to work program which provides opportunities for injured employees to return to the property in an adapted or light duty role.

## QUICK TIP

Create a list of critical business contractors and others whom you would contact immediately after an emergency. Review this with your team and make it readily available on and off of the premises in the event of an emergency.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Rain falling on accumulated snow is especially dangerous as it can quickly triple the weight of the snow. When warm weather follows a large snow storm, the accompanying rain multiplies the likelihood of a roof collapse.

- C.N.A.

## FROM YOU

- Q: What if I don't have all of the information requested in the Claims Handling Guide in order to report a claim?
- A: *Please provide as much information as is readily available. It is better to notify The Hospitality Cover Plus+ Risk Management Team of the incident as soon as possible, even if you are continuing to gather information.*

## CONTACT

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## SNOW ACCUMULATION

The severe winter storms of recent years have raised the awareness of many properties to the dangers of collapsed roofs and severe building damage. Even a partial roof collapse has the potential for injuries, property damage, and an interruption of your operations. In most cases, the cost to repair the roof is a fraction of the cost to repair building utilities, contents, and compensate the property for lost income.

Even warmer regions are susceptible to this hazard as building codes that permit lower live load specifications can increase the possibility of a roof collapse in unusually severe weather.

Be sure your emergency response program includes details about winter emergencies, including appropriate response procedures for excessive snow loads. Also, determine the maximum safe snow depth for the roof, based on the roof's live load capacity. Before a storm, make sure to inspect the roof for any damage as well drains and downspouts to ensure that they are free from debris.

During and following a storm, regularly monitor the snow depth on the roof, paying particular attention to areas where snow tends to drift. Often, the effect of snow on a roof is multiplied by multiple high roofs, creating a "roof step" which allows snow drifts to form. Contact a certified contractor to remove snow accumulations from the roof

before the snow reaches 50% of the maximum depth. Only remove snow during a storm if forecasts indicate that the total snowfall will result in dangerous accumulations.

After a storm, examine the building for visible signs of structural distress, such as twisting, bending or cracking. Any distressed area should be cordoned off and a professional, contractor should be contacted in order to clear the snow and assess the damage. Snow should be removed in layers uniformly across the roof to prevent unbalanced loads. Also, avoid making snow piles on the roof during the removal process.

In order to prevent roof cover damage, use care with snow removal equipment. It is not necessary to clean completely down to the roof surface as long as melting snow and water can freely flow to drains.

A roof's live load capacity can be determined by reviewing the building plans and specifications for your property or consulting with a structural engineer. Adjacent building structures that vary in height must be evaluated for proper snow load design as this can create a "step" requiring a greater live load capacity.

## PARKING GUEST VEHICLES

All hospitality employees are taught to serve guests' needs to the best of their abilities. This, however, is limited when it involves guests' vehicles.

Parking a car for a guest in a rush, late at night, or in a rainstorm may seem like an easy way to enhance a guests' stay at your property. This seems like a reasonable request for a hurried guest to make of the hotel staff.

However, due to the potential for an incident while in possession of a guest's vehicle, an employee should never offer to park a vehicle.

Moreover, the front desk should not hold or possess a guest's keys for any period of time. The possession of a guest's keys puts the hotel in control of the vehicle.

It is suggested that you kindly notify the guest that it is the hotel's policy to neither park anyone's car nor hold the keys to a vehicle. If there is no readily available parking, you may suggest nearby garages or lots which would accommodate the guest's needs.

Valet parking should only be provided by professional, certified, valet parking contractors.

## WINTER DRIVING

Another concern throughout the winter is employees who drive vehicles for the property. All vehicles should be equipped with emergency materials such as a snow scraper, blanket, first aid kit, flashlight, and flares. Vehicles not equipped to drive in snowy or icy conditions should be kept off the roads for the safety of employees, guests, and others. Vehicles and machinery which are not outfitted to be driven in the inclement weather (such as golf carts or maintenance vehicles) should be stored with no employee access during these conditions. Any employees who may drive in inclement weather should be trained in safe, cautious driving techniques and what to do in case of an accident.

ADDITIONAL RISK MANAGEMENT RESOURCES, INCLUDING YOUR GUIDE TO CLAIMS REPORTING, ADDITIONAL CLAIMS FORMS, CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE REQUESTS, PAST AND CURRENT NEWSLETTERS ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT:  
[WWW.HOSPITALITYCOVERPLUS.COM](http://WWW.HOSPITALITYCOVERPLUS.COM)

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