

HOSPITALITY COVER PLUS+

NOVEMBER 2016

WINTER SPRINKLER SYSTEM PREPATION

During winter months, the largest property claims are frequently leaks or bursts of sprinkler system pipes or components. Frozen pipes in sprinkler systems occur most often in exposed or out of the way places and during slow periods at the property. This may include attics or walls which border the exterior of the building.

The freezing of sprinkler systems often occurs in regions not normally associated with colder weather, where sprinkler systems may not be regularly inspected in advance of cold weather. Most frozen pipes result from a failure to provide adequate heat or insulation as well as cracks, loose siding, exterior holes or gaps and similar defects in building maintenance.

In advance of any weather below 40°F, each property should include the following steps in any inspection process:

- Confirm that all regular scheduled maintenance has occurred and that any necessary repairs have been completed.
- Any piping exposed to the outdoors should be enclosed in heated, insulated, weather tight materials.
- Check that all areas of the building maintain a temperature of at least 45°F to prevent freezing. This includes all rooms or areas containing wet pipe sprinklers, risers, valve closets, sprinkler components, wet standpipes, and fire pumps.

- Consider installing low temperature alarms with central station monitoring and response at remote areas and crawl spaces.
- As needed, provide temporary interior openings to allow in heat from interior areas to the sprinkler system.
- Never use open flames or torches for thawing frozen pipes.
- Do not use electrical heat tape on dry pipe valves as a substitution for permanent heating.
- Protect fire extinguishers from the cold and make sure they can withstand low temperatures (antifreeze or ABC labeled extinguishers).
- Lubricate all sprinkler control valves and locks.

Dry sprinkler systems are generally installed in areas of buildings where temperatures regularly reach below 40°F. These systems can freeze due to water collecting in improperly pitched pipes, failure to remove accumulated water from low point drains, or failure to drain the system properly after the alert valve has been tripped.

DID YOU KNOW?

According to *The Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety*, 25% of all businesses involved in a major property disaster do not reopen. This includes winter incidents which may fully or partially shut down a property; including pipe bursts, roof collapses or leaks, and frozen sprinkler systems. The majority of these winter weather related incidents are preventable with an ongoing prevention, inspection and maintenance program. If your property is in need of such a plan, please contact The Hospitality Cover Plus+ Risk Management Team. As always, in the event of property damage or injury during a winter event, contact the team immediately.

FROM YOU

- Q:** What is the minimum age of an employee to drive a hotel vehicle?
- A:** *All hotel driver's must be 25 years of age or older. Additionally, the driver's motor vehicle record (MVR) must meet the requirements detailed in this newsletter by The Hospitality Cover Plus+ Risk Management Team. The MVR should be provided by the employee at the time of hire and annually thereafter.*

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AUTOMOBILE SAFETY PROGRAM

Many properties operate large 10-15 passenger vans which frequently shuttle guests to airports and local attractions. These vehicles present a unique set of risk characteristics.

Due to the design, handling, and balancing of these vehicles, studies have found that some of these vehicles have significantly higher rollover rates than other vehicles.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) now prohibits most schools from transporting children with 15 passenger vans due to these safety concerns.

The Hospitality Cover Plus+ Risk Management Team recommends the following for such vehicles:

- Remove the rear seat to reduce the weight behind the rear axle
- Limit capacity to 10 passengers (including driver)
- Load forward seats first
- Do not tow trailers or load cargo on the roof

All vehicles should undergo regular, comprehensive safety inspections and all the records of all drivers should be reviewed for any infractions or violations.

Hospitality Cover Plus+ is firmly committed to the safety of its partners and guests. Driver inattention is a factor in the majority of vehicle accidents.

Cell phone and other handheld device use while driving is a common, often harmful distraction. According to the NHTSA, distraction related fatalities represent approximately 16% of all fatalities. Researchers at the University of Toronto found the risk of having a traffic accident while using a cell phone to be the same as drunk driving. The annual cost of crashes caused by cellphone use totaled \$43B.

Drivers may not use any handheld device while operating a property vehicle or while driving a vehicle on company business. Cell phone use is PROHIBITED while driving any hotel vehicles.

The Hospitality Cover Plus+ Risk Management Team strongly recommends the following:

- Allow voicemail to handle all calls and return when safe
- Ask a passenger to make the call if necessary
- Headphones should never be worn while driving
- Laptops should never be used while driving
- Adhere to all state laws regarding cell phone use while driving
- Require notification by employees of any change in license status or driving record
- Enforce a clear policy banning texting while driving
- In the event of an accident, notify The Hospitality Cover Plus+ Risk Management Team immediately

Each hotel should request motor vehicle records (MVRs) for all potential drivers at the time of hiring, and annually thereafter. Driving history and violations are an indicator of future performance and may affect the insurability of a hotel driver. These are readily available by request of the driver.

All drivers of vehicles owned and insured by the property should be added as a driver to the insurance policy. In order to do this, please provide the driver's name, date of birth, and driver's license number to The Hospitality Cover Plus+ Risk Management Team.

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DRIVER REVIEW

MVRs should be pulled at time of hire as well as annually thereafter. All drivers must be 25 years of age. The Hospitality Cover Plus+ Risk Management Team recommends the following points system as relates violations:

Type A Violation: Includes (but is not limited to) DWI/DUI, Refusing Substance Test, Reckless Driving, Manslaughter, Hit & Run, Eluding a Police Officer, any Felony, Drag Racing, License Suspension, and Driving While License Suspended. Any driver with these types of violations is a major concern.

Type B Violation: Includes all vehicle accidents, regardless of fault.

Type C Violation: Includes all moving violations not classified as Type A or Type B (Speeding, Improper Lane Change, Failure to Yield, Running Red Lights or Stop Lights, etc.).

Type D Violation: Includes all non-moving violations (Illegal Parking, Vehicle Defects, etc.).

As relates the guidelines for disciplinary action or driving approval, The Hospitality Cover Plus+ Risk Management Team recommends the following:

Declination, Termination, or Reassignment to a Non-Driving Position:

- Type A Violations: 1 or more in the preceding 36 months
- Type B Violations: 2 or more in the preceding 36 months
- Type C Violations: 3 or more in the preceding 36 months
- 1 Type B Violation and 2 Type C Violations in the preceding 36 months

Probation (6 Months):

- Type B Violations: 1 or more in the preceding 36 months
- Type C Violations: 2 or more in the preceding 36 months
- 1 Type C Violation and 2 Type D Violations in the preceding 36 months
- Type D Violations: 3 or more in the preceding 36 months

WINTER PREPARATION

By the end of the month, properties around the country will begin to see significant winter weather. General Managers and their teams have a responsibility to maintain safe conditions for employees and guests throughout the property.

During the Winter season, all walkways, stairwells, driveways, interior roadways, and parking lots become safety hazards as snow falls and ice forms.

Before the season begins, establish a plan for how you will remove snow and ice and who will do so. Also, identify when removal will take place as relates to when snow falls. Make these preparations in the Fall in order to minimize any lag time in snow removal and review these plans annually with all vendors and members of your team.

To prevent injuries and minimize insurance costs, General Managers should implement a snow removal program using the guidelines below. Ensure that these plans contemplate impassable roads and power outages.

- Identify responsibilities, communication, documentation, strategies, equipment needs, and follow up procedures.
- Explore hiring a snow removal contractor. Investigate the quality of their work, timeliness of work during a storm, equipment adequacy, experience, references, and ability to work with your property's needs.
- Plan to routinely clear snow away from hydrants, sprinkler control valves, smoke and heat vents, and other essential equipment
- Obtain a Certificate of Insurance for any third party contracted to work on the property, including all snow

removal contractors. This Certificate of Insurance should name the property, as well as management, as Additional Insured and meet the requirements detailed in the Certificate Procurement Program.

Develop a list of phone numbers for emergency response contractors, and appoint someone to monitor weather reports.

Examine the entire heating system, including ancillary components (boilers, piping, burners, and controls) and repair where necessary.

Place weather mats at all entrances to the building. These mats should be placed in both directions to catch snow and water. Regularly inspect mats to make sure that they have not begun to curl. Consider working with a licensed mat replacement company to ensure clean, sturdy mats at all entrances.

Securely tie or weigh down supplies and furniture so that gusts of wind do not turn them into projectiles.

Ensure the integrity of building exterior by closing up unnecessary openings. Confirm all windows, doors, and skylights are weather-tight.

Install snow fences and marker poles at hydrants and sprinkler control valves. If your property has attic space, make sure that it is fully insulated and ventilation is maintained to control for ice dams.

Report snow and ice cleanup activities on a snow removal log as soon as the tasks are complete. Include the time, person responsible, and conditions of walkways at the time of snow removal. Use the same log for your staff and all hired contractors.

WINTER DRIVING

Hospitality Cover Plus+ is fully committed to the safety of its partners and guests. This includes the time when a guest is being transported to or from the property in a hotel vehicle.

Employees driving hotel vehicles present a significant risk for the hotel and this risk is amplified in the winter. All vehicles should be equipped with winter emergency materials; such as snow scrapers, blankets, a first aid kit, flashlights, 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 other drivers. 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 employee authorized to drive in inclement weather should be trained in safe, cautious driving techniques and what to do in the event 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