Securing your property: have you considered key control?

Church property often contains a significant number of expensive items such as computers, musical instruments, and fine art. In addition, church property has something even more important to protect: the students, parishioners, and guests you serve. When addressing security issues, you may have considered alarm systems or even video surveillance. A step you might not have considered is key control. The systematic control of locks and keys is one of the most important components of any security program. Without proper key control, locks provide little deterrence to illegal or unauthorized entry into your facility.

Knowing who has keys and what they allow access to, can be a very effective prevention tool. It doesn’t have to be complicated, but it’s important you have control over who has access to your facilities and when. Key controls should also include keys to any motor vehicles you own.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Do you know exactly how many keys you have issued?
- Can you account for all keys that have been issued?
- Do you know who currently holds these keys?
- Can you control who can duplicate these keys?
- If you answered “no” to any of these questions, it’s time to change the locks and establish a key control system. Here are a few tips:
  - Separate the business office, petty cash, records & computer areas, etc., through the use of separate locks instead of continuously from the open access areas of the building. This will allow you to provide different levels of access. If feasible, consider a key card system. While this may seem more expensive initially, after the expense of replacing your locks several times because of lost or misplaced keys, it may actually be less expensive in the long run and provide a number of added benefits over a standard metal key system.
  - Use restricted or patented locks that prevent unauthorized duplication.
  - Create a log to identify who has keys. This should identify the individual and the assigned key, when it was provided and when returned.
  - Have the parish council, or other leadership group, make decisions on who should be provided keys and where and when access should be granted. They also should review the access log on a regular basis to confirm access already granted is still acceptable.

Create a key control policy with a signed acknowledgement that requires the key holder to alert church officials if the key is lost or stolen, and when it must be surrendered. For employees that are leaving, you may want to consider withholding their final paycheck until the key has been returned.

Develop procedures for re-keying when keys are lost, stolen, or otherwise unaccounted for. We are not suggesting that keys be withheld from those you rely on that need access to your facilities on a regular basis. What we are suggesting is controls be in place that allow you to manage who has access, when they have access, and to what areas they have access. For more information, please contact the Catholic Mutual Risk Management Department at 800-228-6108.

Stability
Commitment

Catholic Mutual Group

Inside this issue

EMPLOYEE INJURY PREVENTION
RISK MANAGEMENT CORNER
WINTER'S AROUND THE CORNER

Catholic Mutual is excited to announce a revision to our website and the arrival of electronic newsletters in 2014. The new website will include a search engine which will allow our members to easily find documents on the site. Members have also been recognized for improving the user experience for our users. The electronic newsletters arriving in 2014 will replace our hardcopy version. Every 2-3 months, locations will receive an email with a link to our website where one or two pertinent articles will be posted on a risk management or safety issue facing the Catholic Church.
Winter's Around the Corner…Are You Prepared?

Frosted pipes are a major wintertime source of claims for Catholic Mutual members. It’s no surprise that in cold weather States, this is a frequent issue. What is surprising is how many of these occur in States that are not normally associated with cold weather. As weather patterns change, more and more we see unusual causes for these injuries. The most common auto liability incidents now are fender benders. unties. The most common auto liability incidents now are fender benders.

Ryan believes that communication is the key to their success. Rather than mandating restrictions, which wouldn’t sit well, he prefers to coach and mentor on ways to manage risk. He also believes success lies in making change easy to implement, reeducating paperwork and lessening the burden on coordinators.

Hans Ryan’s approach to reducing the Dio-

ce’s auto liability exposure been success-
ful? The facts can speak for them-

selves. Their auto liability loss ratio, which was in excess of 270% when they started, is now down in the single dig-

its. The most common auto liability inci-

dents now are fender benders.

As mentioned earlier, Ryan’s focus was also on workplace safety. His con-
cern extended beyond employees, to in-
clude parishioners, students and vol-
unteers. Utilizing a program he previ-
ously worked with, Ryan customized a

Workplace Safety Program to meet Dio-

cesan needs. It was distributed in

three volumes targeted specifically for

Parishes, Food and Nutrition Services

(cafeteria workers) and Catholic

Schools.

The program materials, presented in

mini-topics, afford the flexibility for

either formal or informal training, de-

pending on the location preference.

Quizzes provided with the material

work well as a group activity. But even

if a separate meeting is not possible,

locations can distribute smaller sections

of the safety information on a frequent

basis.

Recognizing he can’t be everywhere,
Ryan believes it is important to provide

the tools and resources needed by em-
ployees and volunteers to perform their

jobs well, then trust they will help to

educate other employees and volunteers.

Ryan manages the diocesan risk man-

agement website that offers a variety of

insurance coverage information and loss

control resources for all parishes and

schools in the Diocese of Lafayette.

A new safety article is published monthly in

addition to safety related factoids under

a column entitled “Did you know?” Ryan
welcomes anyone to visit his website at

www.diolafinsurance.org.

Employee Injury Prevention

With your teachers and other school staff helping to

keep it’s important to think about injury

prevention. Each injury, no matter how

small, affects employees and their families. In addition, it interrupts your nor-

mal work activities, forces others to take on more responsi-
bility, and incurs your workers compensation premium for years to come.

When thinking about preventing injuries, it’s important to consider all causes, but

over 90% of the injuries that occur in schools come from three main causes:

Slips, Trips, and Falls; Strains; and Impact Injuries.

Let’s look at each one individually and visit a few suggested steps to assist in

preventing these injuries from occurring.

Slips, Trips, and Falls

Keep all classrooms, halls, and other acces-

sible areas clean and floors and walkways

clear. Make sure they are not used as work

corridors or wires. Floor coverings should

be free from tears, wrinkles, holes, or cracks.

Make sure all walkways, stairs, and parking

lots have adequate lighting.

Require all employees to wear slip

resistant footwear and use nonslip coat-

ing, if possible, when cleaning or wash-
ing floors.

Have designated places for storing

backpacks, coats, etc. to eliminate them

from becoming a tripping hazard.

Avoid the need, whenever possible, to

climb on things such as chairs to deco-
rate or do repairs and maintenance.

In cases where this is necessary, only use ladders or step stools.

Immediately clean up any liquid

that may be spilled in classrooms or hall-

ways and use “wet floor” signs as a

warning to those in the area.

Use proper floor mats in entryways and

make sure they are in good repair and

are always lying flat.

When a surface, walkway, or curb has a

elevation, make sure it is properly marked.

Encourage staff to only do jobs they

are physically capable of doing. If

they are not, find someone else to per-

form the task or provide assistance.

Evaluate classrooms and offices to determine if they are ergonomically

correct. Limit lifting when possible. Encour-

age the use of carts, dollies, and other

similar equipment. Review proper lifting
techniques during staff meetings and

emphasize the importance of inju-

ry prevention.

Impact Injuries

Consider stacking or padding objects

that might cause injury from someone run-
ing into them.

Stack and store objects properly, mark

low doorways, pipes, or ceilings with

warning signs.

These are a few suggestions to prevent

valuable employees from unnecessary

injury. We also recommend reviewing

safety tips and the importance of em-

ployee safety at each staff meeting.

When your employees realize you feel

safety is important, they will be en-

couraged to report possible hazards

they see in the work areas, making

your prevention efforts even more ef-

ective. For more information on em-

ployee injury prevention, contact the

Catholic Mutual Risk Management

Department and we can

work with you to reduce this poten-

tial hazard.

If a pipe does burst, immediately turn

off the water at the main shut-off

valve and contact a licensed plumber.

Take steps to identify where the shut-

off valve(s) are before a problem oc-
curs.

If your pipes do freeze in spite of your

prevention efforts, don’t panic. Frozen

is much better than if they actually burst.

If a pipe becomes frozen, open the fa-

cets connected to the frozen pipes to

release pressure and to reduce the chances

of the pipe bursting. Turn up the ther-

mostat to increase the temperature in

that area, space heaters are acceptable if

needed for individual rooms. You may

apply heat to the pipe by using towels or

rags soaked in hot water, but avoid using

electrical devices at the same time. A

torch can also be used but this should

only be done by a licensed plumbing

professional. If a pipe does burst, immedi-
ately turn off the water at the main shut-off

valve and contact a licensed plumber.

Take steps to identify where the shut-

off valve(s) are before a problem oc-
curs.

If false ceilings exist, consider removing

them. If a building or part of a building will not

be used, consider turning off the water and draining the pipes. This is essential

if the heat will be on, but no one will be checking it on a regular basis.

Prevention

For plumbing and sprinkler systems inside

of buildings, keep the temperature above 55

degrees. If you are anticipating a period of extreme cold, discontinue using lower

nighttime thermostat settings that might nor-

mally be used.

To help maintain proper temperatures, add

insulation to crawl spaces and attics, cov-

ering any pipes that might exist in these

areas. Pipes can be individually isolat-

ed as well, which would be highly rec-

ommended for pipes that have frozen in the past.

If false ceilings exist, consider removing a few ceiling tiles to allow warm air to

circulate to pipes that exist above the ceiling.

Open cabinet doors to expose un-insulated pipes under sinks and appli-

ances near outside walls.

Check windows and doors for leaks and

properly seal them.

In long periods of unexpected cold, let a

trickle of water run from a faucet on an

outside wall overnight.

Buildings not in use

If a building or part of a building will not

be used, consider turning off the water and draining the pipes. This is essential

if there will be no heat on the building or if the heat will be on, but no one will be

checking it on a regular basis.

Prevention

If your pipes do freeze in spite of your

prevention efforts, don’t panic. Frozen

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