

# Safety Newsletter

## Fall-Winter 2010-11

R.C. Diocese of Syracuse  
Risk Management Office

In this season's newsletter we want to focus primarily on safety and security in our buildings. The following information and recommendations were developed in the course of our addressing concerns over personal safety arising out of emergency situations that could develop due, not only to fires and weather-related crises, but also arising out of potential harm caused by unsafe individual acts. We encourage you to read and share these suggestions.

### Evacuation Plan Suggestions

- Whenever possible, take attendance and maintain a log of those who attend an event and occupy the parish or school building.
- Each employee or responsible volunteer at a parish or school event should be given specific evacuation and emergency responsibilities (which can be developed and assigned based on the suggestions below).
- There should be a pre-plan for evacuating the building for fire or other emergency situation, including alternative plans where one exit is blocked (as it may be if a fire or other emergency makes it inaccessible).
- 911 or the appropriate emergency number should be called immediately. Who calls should be predetermined, with a back-up.
- A process of communication to all occupants, on all levels of the building, should be planned, with escape routes/exits planned. Who communicates with what floor and area should be pre-planned.
- In the course of evacuating the building, one or two employees or responsible volunteers should be in charge of securing the attendance list of occupants' names, so it can be used outside to account for everyone. One meeting place outside should be agreed to. All occupants should be aware of this agreed area. Employees and volunteers should be assigned responsibilities in making sure occupants get to the agreed meeting place.
- A communication plan should be prearranged so that parents or other relatives of occupants are contacted to let them know their family members, who had attended the parish event, are safe; or if there are any other needs.
- Transportation to an agreed alternative safe building (especially in winter) should be arranged, if needed.
- Communicate with local fire and police officials. Advise them of your emergency plans, and include them in the planning.

We will be posting more comprehensive “Security and Lockdown” recommendations in the Risk Management area of the Diocese of Syracuse website <http://syracusediocese.org> in the very near future. We ask and invite you to review our website for previous Safety Newsletters and additional safety documents.

### Winter Safety

We remind all parishes and schools to make sure all entrance areas, sidewalks and parking lots are cleared of ice and snow. Ice-melting materials should be used when necessary. Be aware of roof overhangs and roof drainage areas where snow and ice may collect. These areas should be checked regularly and cleared of any overhead accumulation of snow (which could fall on people below). Keep an eye on weather reports and take pro-active steps to deal with any snow and ice accumulation. Keep a log of steps taken, on a daily basis, to attend to snow and ice. We recommend that snowplowing and ice clearing activities be recorded so these can be referenced at a later date if a question arises in regards to snow clearance efforts.

Potholes and cracks in parking lots, on sidewalks, or on landings by entrances should be repaired before the snow starts falling this winter. These unlevel areas can be hidden by a light snowfall, increasing the chance of someone tripping and falling.

Be aware of and alert to the water and snow that is tracked into the inside of buildings. Water on wood, terrazzo or tile floors can be very slippery. We recommend using carpet runners in wet areas to reduce the chance of slippery floors. Attending to the possibility of wet floors should be a daily preventative maintenance activity, especially in the winter months.

As we get into October and November, we know that many leaves are falling. Unfortunately, the leaves are wet, or fall on wet areas, adding to the slip and fall hazards outside and inside our buildings. Make every effort to control the accumulation of wet leaves, especially on walks and near building entrances. Leaves should be cleared out of any roof gutters or downspouts, so water, snow and ice is less likely to accumulate and create a safety hazard. Also, clear the inside hallways and rooms of any wet leaves that may be carried into the building on boots and shoes.

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Have a safe fall and winter this season. We encourage all to contact the Risk Management office anytime if you have a question, or, if you have suggestions that we can share with everyone.