

**Diocese of Syracuse
Risk Management Office
Safety Newsletter
Spring-Summer 2010**

Parish Festivals & Parish Outdoor Events

A number of our parishes and schools have festivals and other outdoor events during the summer. While these events are very worthwhile, great for the parish or school and they also build community, they present exposures to risk that we need to be anticipate and be prepared to handle properly. Here are some steps that we recommend be taken in the course of planning and preparing for any parish festival or major parish or school event:

- Before finalizing plans, it is important that you advise the Risk Management office of your event and discuss what activities are planned.
- Have all festival, carnival ride and food service vendors and contractors provide certificates of liability and workers compensation coverage and provide copies to the Risk Management Office. Contracts with these vendors should include a Hold Harmless and Indemnification agreement.
- Be sure to obtain any necessary town or city permits that may apply.
- Alert local police, fire and ambulance officials of your festival plans and seek their suggestions and support.
- Assess your staffing needs and resources-make sure you have enough trained employees and volunteers for the event.
- All booths, rides, fencing and all other temporary fixtures should be able to withstand any expected "weather events", especially strong winds. Regular checks should be made on the stability and security of these buildings and fixtures.
- Cables and ropes should be clearly marked and secured. They should be kept out of any walkway areas. If they have to cross walk areas, they should be completely covered and secured.
- Make sure there are medical first aid kits available. If AED defibrillators are provided, there must be certified users available.
- If the event continues into the evening, make sure there is adequate lighting to cover all areas where people will go.
- Plan and consider all parking needs. Be aware also of pedestrian needs as they cross streets and walk to the site of the parish event.

- Have a plan for evacuation of the festival area, working with police and fire officials.
- All parish or school buildings, or areas of buildings that are NOT a part of the parish event should be closed and secured.
- Have an effective "clean-up" plan, including proper removal of all trash, removal of festival signs (on and off the parish premises). "Clean-up" also includes securing the agreement of all vendors to safely and quickly remove their rides and equipment from parish property.

Lead Paint Abatement

On April 27, 2010, new restrictions went into effect that effect renovations on houses built before 1978. All businesses that work on homes must be certified for lead paint removal. Safe removal practices include minimizing lead-paint dust and keeping work messes confined to the work area. Workers must educate the residents about lead paint, distribute pamphlets and post educational signs in work areas. Although there are some "opt out" possibilities, we recommend that if you are having any work done, especially in rectories, convents and schools, that the existence and removal of lead paint be given the proper attention and consideration, and be discussed and accounted for as you seek bids and finalize any repair plans.

Use of Pesticides

We recommend that the use of pesticides on parish and school properties be kept to a minimum or not at all. If pesticides are used, we should provide 48 hour notice to any one who we know may be on or near the effected buildings or areas. In our 48 hour notice, we should provide a name and phone number a person that can be contacted if they have questions or concerns. We must also place signs, outside and inside, and keep them posted for at least 24 hours following the application. Secure and keep on hand the MSDS sheets that accompany and apply to any chemicals or pesticides that are used. MSDS sheets provide information on the chemicals and treatment of contact. Be aware of any pending legislation that may affect the use of pesticides, as new rules are being considered that may further restrict the use of pesticides. If you have any questions in regard to pesticides, please contact the Risk Management office.

Lifting Safety

Most Parish, School and Diocese jobs involve some lifting. It is important that we provide employees with help to lift heavy or bulky items. Whether a particular lift will require assistance depends on several factors, including the weight of the object, how frequently the object is lifted, how close the object is to the ground, how high it must be lifted, and how far it must be carried. Assistance can include a dolly or cart, or help from a co-worker. For lighter items, an employer should ensure that employees use good lifting techniques.

When holding, lifting or carrying items

- Before lifting boxes and cases, check to see if the weight is given so you can prepare to lift properly.
- Keep the item close to your body.
- Turn with the feet, not the torso.
- Keep your back straight.
- Use your legs to do the lifting.
- Get close to where you want to set the item down.



Outside Maintenance-Building and Grounds

Summer is a good time to inspect the parish and school grounds for unsafe conditions. We recommend that your custodian(s) inspect a number areas where exterior conditions may need attention before the end of the year, including:

- Lawn areas for any signs of ground sinking.
- Any erosion of hill areas which could affect pedestrians.
- Trees: check for dead trees, or dead limbs in trees.
- Sidewalks and entrances for deterioration of slabs or brick.
- Gutters and downspouts-check that they are secure and cleaned out.
- Roof shingles and building brick mortar-check for loose shingles and bricks.
- Fencing: repair any fence that is down. Check for sharp edges, broken pieces.

Have a great and safe Summer!