



Considerations for Sauna Operation

Sauna units are a common part of fitness facilities and operations. The safe operation of these units is a serious risk management consideration for the organization. The following considerations along with any applicable national, federal, state or local guideline/regulation should be used when developing an organization's safe operating procedures for sauna unit(s).

Facility:

- Units should be properly installed by a qualified contractor within manufacturer's specifications
- Units should have fire suppression sprinklers (or equivalent) installed
- Temperature should be controlled and maintained at safe levels (not to exceed 170° F)
- Humidity levels should be maintained at safe levels
- Health warning and use guidelines should be prominently posted outside the entry to the unit (see sample below) in a language(s) that is common to your location and users
- Clocks should be installed to provide easy viewing from inside the unit
- Thermometers should be installed in plain view of users
- Heating elements should be protected by protective grating or slats to prevent items from being placed on or near heating source
- Emergency shut-off controls should be accessible to users and facility staff
- Units should be cleaned and disinfected at least daily (within manufacturer's recommendations and any federal, state or local regulations)

Safe Use Guidelines (for signs):

- Sauna should not be used for more than 10 minutes
- Use of the sauna may cause an increased health risk for some users
- Individuals with the following conditions should not use the sauna unless authorized by their physician:
 - High blood pressure or Heart disease
 - Respiratory problems
 - Diabetes
 - Stress and/or Emotional disorders
 - Epilepsy or seizure disorders
 - Pregnancy
- Individuals taking prescription medicine should approval from their physician before sauna use
- No one should use the sauna while under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- User should wait at least five minutes after exercising before using the sauna
- No food or drink is allowed in the sauna
- Shaving or other acts of personal hygiene are not allowed in the sauna
- All users should shower prior to entering the sauna
- No one should use the sauna alone
- Youth under 12 years of age are not permitted to use a sauna
- Youth between the ages of 12 and 17 may use the sauna with adult supervision
- No one should exercise while in the sauna

The information contained in this document is for illustrative purposes only and should not be construed as strict recommendations for operations of saunas; safe operation of such devices is the responsibility of the owner/operator. Manufacturer recommendations should be followed at all times. Additional information may be obtained from the American College of Sports Medicine.