

## **An ounce of prevention – managing facility risks at your YMCA**

The YMCA was not yet founded when Ben Franklin first published his famous quote: “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure”. But in my experience there are few words of wisdom that are more reflective of facility maintenance issues at YMCAs. Little things do mean a lot and keeping issues from getting out of hand is sound risk management. [Read more](#) on this article from the Y-USA Pipeline newsletter.

**Best practices** – Responding to emergencies effectively requires preparation and, in many cases, practice. Here are some practical examples of emergency preparation from the field. Steve Serge from the **Fulton County YMCA** reports that his organization uses checklists for their emergency response drills. When the alarm is sounded staff report to the service desk and these lists are distributed to the responding staff. Each list outlines the things to review in an area of the facility that the staff person is now responsible for. The lists make sure that staff checks out the critical parts of that area including evacuating any people before returning to the control desk. David Elliot from the **YMCA of Central Massachusetts** has labeled and inventoried each fire extinguisher and emergency light device in his 110,000 sq/ft facility. This inventory is used to assure that units are regularly tested and that no extinguisher is forgotten during annual servicing. Carole Bell of the **Somerset Hills YMCA** reports of how their emergency preparation and drill program paid off with lifesaving effectiveness. After a basketball player collapsed an alert staff member immediately responded, began CPR and activated the facility’s Emergency Action Plan (EAP). The Manager on Duty responded in seconds with an AED. The staff then administered the indicated shock, continued CPR for another 2 minutes, and had the player breathing when the paramedics arrived. The player was transported to the hospital and has since recovered from the incident.

**More of the Best** - The Central Bucks Family YMCA has implemented a number of progressive policies and procedures in their YMCA to protect both their members and their staff. All staff must complete 13.5 hours of New Staff Orientation before their first day of work. This program is called “SEFA” (Safe Environment for All). This orientation includes; Child Abuse Prevention training, CPR PRO, AED, Oxygen Administration and First-Aid in addition to the required HR orientation to association policies, procedures, payroll and electronic background checks. The Y has provided all construction workers who are currently building a new facility a membership with photo ID which all workers must display at all times. If that were not enough, all workers are also criminal background checked. All volunteers including the members of the Board of Directors must be card carrying members of the organization. This includes photo ID on the membership card. All volunteers are screened with background checks.

**The Cost of Doing Business** - As the current economic downturn continues and nonprofits prepare for fiscal tightening many supervisors will be considering how to reduce costs for programs and services. As expense controls are considered it is very important to remember that there is always a cost for doing business. [Read more in this article](#) from the Texas Association of Nonprofits.

**More on Waivers** - A patron's fall off a stationary bike meets a court's support of waiver protection for clubs. Why do courts in some jurisdictions fail to uphold waivers, while other courts will accept them in most cases? Often, the reason is a belief that waivers encourage a lack of care. As a result, a court will closely scrutinize and invalidate a waiver if it is found to violate public policy or is overly broad, or if it is clear that the individual signing the document did not understand what he or she was signing. [Read more about this in "Riding Lesson" from Athletic Business magazine.](#)

**Recall Notice** - MSA, manufacturer of Redpoint and Auto-Belay Descenders, issued a recall and reimbursement notice on December 23, 2009. MSA has chosen to discontinue the Redpoint Descender and exit the recreational market for climbing wall auto-belay systems. MSA is recalling all Redpoint and Auto-Belay Descenders covered under the previously issued Stop-Use Notice. More information on MSA's recall notice can be found [here](#). The notice also includes instructions and forms for return of the units.

Learn more about these and other topics in the [Online Resource Library](#)

The following resources have been added to the [Online Library](#):

[An Ounce of Prevention – from the YMCA "Pipeline" newsletter](#)  
[Considerations for the use of Emergency Oxygen](#)  
[Eye Wash Station Guidelines \(updated\)](#)  
[How to Use a Portable Fire Extinguisher \(updated\)](#)  
[Managing Risks at your Hometown YMCA – from "Perspective" magazine](#)  
[Sample Confined Space Permit](#)  
[Sample Confined Space Plan](#)  
[Sample Youth Restroom Policy \(updated\)](#)  
[The Cost of doing Business – from TANO newsletter](#)  
[Use of an AED in Wet Environments](#)

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