

Safety InsightsSM

Safety & Risk Management News & Notes

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Foul Weather Driving - Driving can be dangerous when there is sleet, snow or ice on the roadway; speed must be reduced. When roads are slippery, drivers must look farther ahead so they can anticipate emergencies and avoid the need for sudden maneuvers. Most skids are caused by last-second stops and turns on slippery pavement. Loss of traction and gravity can work against you on hills and downgrades. Good drivers allow more clearance between vehicles when maneuvering on bad surfaces. A pile of snow or an ice rut may throw vehicles off just enough to cause an accident if there is not enough distance between vehicles. The lighting systems of vehicles become especially important during the winter months; nights are longer, and visibility is often reduced by bad weather. Tires are always important, especially in inclement weather, and should be inspected, in good condition and properly inflated. Drivers should conduct a vehicle safety check prior to each use. Vehicles should have a thorough maintenance review at the beginning of each season, at a minimum. These are just a few of the [Winter Driving Tips](#) available in the [Online Library](#).

The New 2010 ADA Standards recently adopted by the Department of Justice (DOJ) are now available on the US Access Board's Website in [PDF format](#). This edition, like the HTML version posted previously, notes supplementary design requirements included in DOJ's updated ADA regulations. For more information and guidance on the ADA standards, visit the [US Access Board's Website](#).

Improperly written accident reports cause headaches and issues. [Aquatics International Magazine](#) recently published an article on proper report documentation techniques. Along with the tips in this article, always remember to keep your insurance representative in the loop on accidents. The article can be viewed online [HERE](#).

Protecting your back is an important accident prevention issue. One out of every five workers in this country who is hurt and off the job for a day or more has a back problem. One out of every five workers who becomes disabled because of a work-related injury is the victim of a problem back. Nonprofits are not immune to these realities. Because of this, it's important for us to discuss [how to keep your back healthy and strong](#). Back injury prevention should be part of your initial [Staff Safety Orientation](#) and the followed by position specific training on [Proper Lifting](#).

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) voted to publish the new proposed interpretive rule drafted by staff on “public accommodations facility” for purposes of enforcing the **Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act**. The proposed rule was published in the Federal Register on Oct. 22, 2010. CPSP invites public comments on this proposed interpretative rule. Instructions can be found [HERE](#).

Reference Checking: A Lost Art is an article by Melanie Lockwood Herman from the Nonprofit Risk Management Center that discusses the process of recruiting and screening applicants. The prevalence of technology in the process does little to transform the nature of the process. Finding the best match for a demanding position in a nonprofit is not a science. Choosing wisely from a pool of applicants is an art. And an often ignored art form within the discipline of staff screening is reference checking.

Timely preparation to reduce the impact of severe winter weather can avert many accidents and safety concerns. The following measures can be effective in dealing with the challenges of severe winter weather.

Vehicles: The leading cause of death during winter storms is transportation accidents. Preparing your vehicle for the winter season and knowing how to react if stranded or lost on the road are the keys to safe winter driving. Safety techniques such as reduced speeds, increased following distances and leaving extra time for trips can help staff prepare for inclement weather. Vehicles should be thoroughly inspected and items such as brakes, batteries, defrosters, wipers and cooling systems should be maintained. Make sure that tires have adequate tread, All-weather radials are usually adequate for most winter conditions. However, some jurisdictions require that to drive on their roads, vehicles must be equipped with chains or snow tires with studs. Vehicles should be equipped with a windshield scraper, a small broom for ice and snow removal and a winter emergency kit. Maintain at least a half tank of gas during the winter season.

Facilities: Roofs should be inspected for soundness and drainage systems should be cleared to alleviate water and ice build-up with snow loads. Sky lights, windows and other openings should be prepared to prevent water infiltration. Staff or contractors must be prepared to keep walks, parking lots and floors clear, free from ice and standing water. HVAC units require regular maintenance and filter changes, preparing for the change of season when many staff and members will be indoors is crucial to maintaining properly functioning equipment and good air quality. AC units should be properly shut down and secured for the season by qualified personal to ensure that they function properly in the future. Kerosene space heaters and gasoline powered generators should not be used indoors. Holiday decorations must meet fire safety requirements and be properly installed.

Communications: Closing and communication plans should be reviewed and communicated to staff, members and parents. NOAA Weather Radio or local authorities can be monitored for severe weather warnings. Contingency plans for stranded staff or participants can be reviewed.

General: First aid kits should be stocked and flashlights should be made available for use in the event of power outages. Back-up and surge systems should be utilized to maintain computers, peripherals and association files. Staff working outdoors must dress for the season and expected conditions: for cold weather, wear several layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing rather than one layer of heavy clothing. Outer garments should be tightly woven and water-repellent. Mittens are warmer than gloves. Wear a hat. Cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs from extremely cold air. Wear sturdy, waterproof boots in snow or flooding conditions.

More information about planning for weather and emergencies can be found in the [Online Library](#).

This month's issue of *Safety Insights* is now available [Online](#).

Topics include:

Foul Weather Driving

New 2010 ADA Standards

Accident Reporting

Back Injury Prevention

Virginia Graeme Baker Act Update

Reference Checking

Winter Preparations

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Notes from the Field has been added to the [What's New](#) section of our Website.

Forward this link to a colleague, volunteer or staff member so they can [sign up for the e-news](#)

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