

Safe Harbors

October 2008

A Loss Control And Risk Management Communication

Taking simple steps could prevent a tragic accident from occurring on your premises (and they may cut your energy usage too)!

Hot water burns and scaldings cause catatrophes

Have you checked the temperature setting of your hot water heater lately? Hot water burns and scalding from excessively hot tap water can result in tremendous pain, suffering and disfigurement to those you serve. Help protect your organization and those you serve by:

- Checking all potable water heater temperature settings and manufacturer's recommendations.
- Reducing temperature settings to 120 degrees Fahrenheit (49 degrees Celsius) or lower, or to such levels that will satisfy appropriate hot water needs for all clothing and dish washing machines and manufacturer's recommendations.
- Ensuring that temperature controls are accurate and tamper resistant.
- Develop routines and protocols to

check, reset and document water temperatures and settings.

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Deadline approaches for pool safety act

From 1997 – 2007, there were 74 reported U.S. incidents associated with pool drain suction entrapment, including 9 deaths and 63 injuries. As of October 1, 2008 there are only 80 days remaining for operators of commercial pools and spas to comply with the new Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act. This new federal law requires all commercial pools to meet standards to prevent drowning and entrapment by December 19, 2008. Draft standards have been released by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

This is an important topic, particularly if your organization has pool and spa exposures. To find out more about this topic, visit the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission website (www.cpsc.gov), and see what this new federal law may mean to your organization.

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“Cyberbullying” is no joke



Youth-serving organizations need to be aware of the complex dynamics involved with cyberbullying.

On-line use by teens and children has dramatically increased. In fact, according to a 2005 report of the PEW Internet & American Life Project, 87% of kids aged 12 to 17 use the internet daily.

Use of technology for socializing can be a good thing for youths. Technology can help build on a positive experience for youth-serving organizations, and it can help youth stay connected as well. However, on-line interactions between youth can also lead to “cyberbullying” – the use of information and communication technologies to support hostile behavior that is intended to harm others. Unfortunately, cyberbullying appears to be a growing problem with evidence linking it to violent crimes and even suicide. Cyberbullying is no joke.

Youth-serving organizations need to be aware of the complex dynamics involved with cyberbullying and consider the following:

- Determining what is an appropriate vs. inappropriate use of technology within the context of your programs.
- Developing policies around the use of technology that are intended to protect participants.
- Assessing what information to give to parents if their children are discovered to be exchanging private and inappropriate messages and materials.
- Training staff to identify cyberbullying and to take appropriate steps to address it.

This is an evolving risk exposure for youth-serving (and potentially all) organizations. For more information on this and other topics, consider visiting the following websites:

- www.netsmartz.org;
- www.cyberbully.org; and
- www.stopcyberbullying.org.

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