



## Fall Program Safety Reminder

As the busy summer season winds down for organizations it is important to ensure that several key risk management functions are included in the transition and preparation for the fall season.

### **Aquatics:**

Pools and aquatic programming are primary exposures for organizations as they provide their mission-driven services through this popular program area. It is critical for the organization to take every step possible to ensure a high level of aquatic vigilance, safety and emergency preparedness. Some key areas to include in fall planning are:

- Lifeguards tested at time of hire for abilities and awareness of procedures
- Implementing a monthly in-service training program for aquatic staff
- Rehearsing emergency procedures with key staff and local EMS
- Implementing a swim testing and identification for all youth participants
- Strengthening instructional programs to reduce the number of non-swimmers
- Ensuring that Lifeguards are Rescue Ready and vigilant at all times through, training, supervision and organizational support
- Properly equipping and maintaining aquatic facilities
- Ensuring all venues are equipped with a push-button activated type “All Call” alarm such as a wireless system available from [Terrapin Communications](#).

### **Child Abuse Prevention:**

Youth protection is a primary risk management concern for all youth serving agencies; organizations must constantly include protection strategies in their training, operations and programming. These are some key action items for fall programming:

- All employees and any volunteers that work with children should be trained in current youth protection strategies and trends. This includes refresher training for returning staff.
- Implement supervision practices such as the “Rule of Three” for all programs
- Staff contact with program participants outside programs should be restricted
- Bullying prevention practices should be included in training and activities
- Staff, children and parents should understand the organization’s policies and practices

### **Internal Crime Prevention:**

With the current financial climate in the US, organizations should take time to review their internal and external crime controls. Financial pressures can increase the risk of employees looking becoming involved with financial misbehaviors. A review of procedures for identifying and preventing employee dishonesty and other crime is a prudent move.

Organizations can turn to their financial auditor or accountant for guidance in establishing financial controls. Regular review of procedures will ensure that practice follows policy. It is also a good time to review your crime-related coverages with your insurance agent/broker to make sure you are properly covered for these risks. Forensic accounting firms such as [CPA Solutions](#) can be helpful in detecting and preventing financial fraud.

## **Facilities:**

Regular maintenance of facilities can often prevent accidents and damages. Regular documented inspections should be conducted and corrective action should be taken for repairs and preventive maintenance. These are some key issues to remember for the fall:

- All off-site facilities should have a documented inspection
- Use of non-owned facilities should be confirmed in a use agreement or contract
- Playgrounds should be inspected in accordance with the [Guidelines for Public Playground Safety](#)
- Plans should be made for storms and Hurricane season
- October is [National Fire Prevention Month](#) and is a great time to reinforce fire prevention strategies with staff and in program activities. Common areas for fire prevention focus include dryer ducts and lint traps, saunas and contractor's activities
- Winter preparations should include strategies for the prevention of slips and falls during inclement weather and protection from freezing pipes.

## **Programs:**

Programs can be on-site, off-site, youth and/or adult focused. With this many possibilities, it is important for organizations to ensure that programs are well planned and strong practices are in place to ensure the safety of staff and participants. Here are some tips to include for the fall:

- Staff should inspect all programs at the beginning of each session; especially off-site and outdoor facilities
- All programs should be conducted with recognized standards and have established goals
- [Soccer goals should be securely anchored](#) to fields or stored in a manner to prevent tipping and accidently injury. Programs may consider [Goal Alert](#) to help prevent soccer goal injuries.
- Program staff should be trained in their program areas and understand accident prevention strategies and emergency response plans
- When transportation is provided, all vehicles should be well maintained, inspected and staff should be trained in defensive driving strategies
- To help ensure the health and safety of young athletes, the CDC has developed the ["Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports"](#) initiative to offer information about concussions—a type of traumatic brain injury—to coaches, parents, and athletes involved in youth sports. The "Heads Up" initiative provides important information on preventing, recognizing, and responding to a concussion.