



Uniting Resources – Property Services

J

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Risk Management Checklist Church Buildings

The following information and advice is designed to assist Congregations, Church Councils and members of Property Committees who have responsibility to:

- Provide a safe and healthy environment for people who use the premises;
- Protect and maintain the property under their care.

In spite of every care being taken, losses cannot be totally eliminated, however by taking note of the following suggestions accidents can be reduced and safety improved.

1. The Church's desire to have Church buildings open during the day can leave the Church as a target of theft and vandalism. Intruders start many Church fires. The following are the points aimed at reducing the exposure to loss:

- | | | | | |
|---|-----|----|--------------|--------|
| • When the Church is open, is a responsible official present at all | YES | NO | ACTION TAKEN | times? |
| • Are all external locks (doors and windows) strong and effective? | YES | NO | | |
| • Do you have commercial vestibule locks and deadlocks?
Night lights and knob locksets provide inadequate security. | YES | NO | | |
| • Are keys always in care of a responsible person and never left hidden on premises? | YES | NO | | |
| • Are security lights and security screens on windows and doors, provided where needed? | YES | NO | | |
| • Are there window locks or stops on all windows that open? | YES | NO | | |
| • Are all ladders and tools securely locked away?
Sheds are a favourite target for theft, as they generally contain mowers and whipper snippers. Shed windows should be fitted with mesh screens on the inside and have good quality locks. | YES | NO | | |
| • Are lead light glass and stained glass windows appropriately
It is worth considering installing mesh or Perspex over stained glass window. Photographs of any stained glass windows may be necessary if replacement/repair work is required. | YES | NO | protected? | |
| • Are shrubs close to buildings trimmed back regularly to prevent prowlers hiding amongst them? | YES | NO | | |

! Thefts and burglaries frequently occur during renovations. Extra precautions need to be taken to prevent access to offices and rooms where electronic equipment is housed.

! Electrical items are a high risk. Keep microphones etc. locked away in a secure place. Pulpit microphones should be screwed down or removed to a safe place. Amplifiers and recorders should be mounted in a lockable box attached to a wall or desk and not adjacent to the main entrance. **Where possible store all electronic equipment in a locked storage area.**

! Engrave the name of the Church clearly on all items, as this has been proven to be effective.

! Unoccupied buildings are ready targets. Ensure lawns are maintained, mail picked up etc. In the event of long term vacancies it is better for the properties (including manses) to be rented or sold.

Remarks/Alternatives:

2. Fires are still a major cause of loss of Church property. You must do everything to prevent a fire.



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- Is all the electrical wiring professionally installed? YES NO
- Is electrical wiring checked at least every five years? YES NO
- Are electrical power cords regularly inspected for signs of wear and tear? YES NO
- Are portable heaters kept at least one metre from any combustible material and never left unattended? YES NO
- Is general housekeeping of all storage areas kept to high standard? YES NO
- Are grounds and any nearby trees maintained?
Dead branches checked and removed. YES NO
- Are all the gutters and drain pipes free of leaves and other debris? YES NO
- Are flammable materials in minimal amount under lock and key? YES NO
- Where fitted, are lighting conductors professionally checked on a regular basis? YES NO
- Where applicable, are pipe organs or other major items of electrical equipment professionally checked and maintained on a regular basis? YES NO

Remarks/Alternatives:

In case of fire, appropriate fire fighting equipment should be available for quick response.

- Are all fire extinguishers serviced at least every 12 months? YES NO
- Do the buildings have emergency exit signs? YES NO
- Are all exit doors able to be opened without a key? YES NO
- Do members of the congregation know the fire drill? YES NO
- Is there a first aid kit and is it up to date and properly stocked? YES NO

Ensure adequate fire extinguishers are installed in accessible, well marked positions:

- For general use, water type or dry chemical A. B. (E) extinguishers are best.
- Dry chemical extinguishers should also be installed near computers/electronic equipment and electrical distribution boards.
- Carbon Dioxide type extinguishers – near pipe and large electronic organs.

If in doubt seek advice from the local fire brigade.

Remarks/Alternatives:



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3. The general areas used by the public can be easily overlooked. There are some of the main areas to note:

- Are all footpaths, steps and parking areas free of conditions that will contribute to slipping and falling? (Tree leaves, roots, edging). YES NO
- Is there adequate exterior lighting for walkways and parking areas? YES NO
- Do external lights operate on time switch? YES NO

Are all exits:

- Free from obstructions and readily accessible? YES NO
- Properly marked with exit signs? YES NO
- Equipped with emergency lighting systems? YES NO
- Are exit doors easily opened and designed to open towards the outside? YES NO

General:

- Do entry points to building have raised metal strips that constitute to slip hazard? YES NO
- Are interior floor surfaces non slip and in good condition? YES NO
- Are stairs equipped with handrails and are they in good condition? YES NO
- Are the carpets, especially on steps to the pulpit area or vestry in good condition? YES NO
- Is there disabled access to the pulpit? YES NO
- Do stairs have anti slip strips on them? YES NO
- Is each riser painted white to highlight the step? YES NO
- Are glass doors and accessible windows marked to avoid someone walking into them? YES NO
- Are all glass doors able to be opened without use of key? YES NO
- Are all low level glass doors and windows laminated or safety glass? YES NO
- Are there any low protruding walls or other objects that people could trip over, bump into? YES NO
- In wet weather, do paths and stairs become slippery? YES NO
- Do you display "Danger – Wet Floor" sign? YES NO
- Have you noted any unusual hazards? (Skateboard area, driveways, playgrounds, parking areas, trees and roots or other hazards). YES NO



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- Is proper supervision and instruction given in the use of mowers and whipper snippers ? YES NO
- Before mowing nature strips, do you check for stones that might damage cars? YES NO
- Do hot water outlets comply with appropriate safety standards? YES NO
- Are there appropriate facilities and access for disabled people? Such as toilets, ramps, hearing facilities ad large print hymn books and bibles? YES NO

Remarks/Alternatives:

4. Playground equipment.

- Are children always supervised YES NO
- Is equipment in good condition? YES NO
- Does it comply with Australian Standards? YES NO
- Is the area fenced? YES NO
- Is there soft fall? YES NO

Remarks/Alternatives:
