

Safety Committee Program

Policy

Structure and Functions

Safety Officer Job Description

Alaska Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
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Safety Committee Program Policy

I. Policy Purpose

To organize a cooperative effort within the Alaska Conference to promote and assure a safe and healthful environment and to foster the commitment and involvement of employees, volunteers, and management in this cooperative effort.

II. Applicable Documents

The Safety Committee structure and procedures outlined in the following documents are applicable to all Alaska Conference operations and employees. These documents are available from the Alaska Conference Safety Officer.

- A. Safety Committee Structure and Functions
- B. Safety Officer Job Description
- C. Self-Inspection for Church Facilities
- D. Field Trip/Outing Planner

Safety Committee Structure and Functions

I. Committee Objective

The primary objective of a safety committee is to work with the Safety Officer to prevent accidents. The committee can help achieve this objective by evaluating the premises for possible dangerous conditions and consistently taking corrective action after each accident, thereby reducing causes of major loss.

II. Primary Method of Controlling Accidents

The primary method of controlling accidents will be formal investigation and review of all accidents at the church entity—both actual accidents and near miss incidents.

III. Committee Composition

- A. Each year a safety officer and a safety committee are to be appointed by the operating board of the church entity. (See *Safety Officer Job Description* later in this document) The committee will maintain a minimum of four members and is generally composed of the safety officer, at least one deacon/deaconess or school maintenance person; one Sabbath School or grade school teacher; and one youth pastor, sponsor of youth activities, or school principal. Attempts should also be made to represent those areas or activities involving a higher degree of risk.
- B. Members need to serve a continuous term of at least one year. The committee representation shall be such as to assure experienced membership at all times.
- C. In small church entities, the operating board may function as the safety committee provided the functions of the safety committee identified in this document are made a regular part of each month's board meeting agenda.
- D. Youth participation in accident investigations is left to the discretion of the respective church entity. Accident investigation may involve confidential information; therefore youth involvement should be restricted to committee work on pre-loss activities.
- E. The chairperson of the safety committee is to be appointed by the group.

IV. Committee Meetings

- A. The safety committee is to meet on a regular basis (generally assumed to be monthly).

- B. The safety committee chairperson is responsible to:
 - 1. Organize and chair all meetings
 - 2. Assure that minutes are published in a timely fashion
 - 3. Follow up on action items to assure that the responsible individuals complete their assigned tasks to correct noted safety issues
 - 4. Assist in quarterly inspections.
- C. Within two weeks after a safety committee meeting, minutes from that meeting will be distributed to all safety committee members, and the conference safety officer.
- D. The minutes shall include the time, date, and place for the next meeting, and action items discussed at the meeting with responsible individuals indicated to complete the assigned tasks.
- E. The minutes from each meeting will be used as an agenda item for the subsequent meetings. Also, a review of all incidents and corrective actions will be discussed at each monthly meeting and results of quarterly inspections.

V. Committee Functions

- A. Review accidents or near-miss incidents
 - 1. At each regularly scheduled meeting, the chairperson or safety officer is responsible for providing the following information regarding any accidents or near-miss incidents:
 - a) Injury Accidents
 - (1) What was the person doing?
 - (2) How were they injured?
 - (3) What unsafe act was committed?
 - (4) Was there a hazardous condition?
 - b) Property Losses
 - (1) Provide a description of the property.
 - (2) Where possible, supply a photograph of the damaged property.
 - (3) Was there an unsafe act?
 - (4) Was there a hazardous condition?
 - (5) How was the property damaged?
 - 2. Using the above information, a designated individual, formally appointed in writing by the committee should seek to determine the underlying causes of the accident by the following:
 - a) Visit the scene
 - b) Interview witnesses to the accident
 - c) Check for causes resulting from anyone's actions, dangerous practices, inability, disobeying rules, etc.
 - d) Check for poor housekeeping
 - e) Determine if there was improper apparel

- f) Determine if there was defective equipment
 - g) Record information of any other poor conditions.
3. Upon receiving the report from the designated individual, the committee is to make written recommendations to the church pastor or school principal. The recommendations will include their conclusion as to what caused the accident, and corrective measures to prevent a similar accident in the future. The pastor or principal may choose to present significant findings to the respective board for information and possible policy adjustments.

B. The Committee Should Avoid

- 1. Attempting to place the blame on an individual.
- 2. Assuming there is just one cause for an accident.
- 3. Assigning causes of accidents which are too general or vague.
- 4. Determining causes of an accident without investigation.
- 5. Attempting to take the place of the administration in corrective action.
- 6. Any signed, written statement or description of the incident by witnesses or persons involved.
- 7. Investigation of sexual misconduct incidents.
- 8. Release of information to anyone other than a claims representative of Adventist Risk Management, Inc. or the Alaska Conference Safety Officer.

C. Areas Requiring Professional Expertise

The committee should review the following areas, and ensure periodic inspections and/or repair by licensed professionals:

- 1. Boilers
- 2. Construction Activities
- 3. Electrical wiring and equipment
- 4. Fire extinguishers and alarm systems
- 5. Heating/air conditioning systems
- 6. Vehicles

D. Areas Requiring Periodic Committee Review

- 1. The following basic safety features should be present and procedures followed in play activities (picnics, socials, etc.), sports, and Pathfinder activities:
 - a) Before each activity, require a thorough warm-up period;
 - b) The sponsor/activity leader teaches performance techniques of each activity;
 - c) All playing areas are smooth, well drained, and level (grass, blacktop, track surfaces, gymnasium floors, etc.);
 - d) Sand, pea gravel, or other resilient materials are maintained beneath playground equipment;
 - e) Adequate space is provided for each activity;
 - f) Adequate safety areas and boundary lines are provided around all games and activities;
 - g) Equipment is in safe, sound condition;

- h) Equipment is inspected on a periodic basis;
 - i) Hazardous obstructions are removed or properly padded;
 - j) Players wear properly fitted, appropriate clothing;
 - k) Members participate in activities suitable to individual skill level;
 - l) Require supervisor of activity to have signed Medical Consent forms readily available;
 - m) Adequate sponsors for specific activity.
2. Within the first two weeks of appointment and then at least annually thereafter, the committee should perform an inspection of the premises. A written report of findings and recommendations should be sent to the church pastor or principal, the respective board, and the Alaska Conference Safety Officer. (The *Self Inspection for Facilities* form can be used). Items to be addressed in the report include:
- a) Fire Extinguishers
 - (1) Appropriate type for the location
 - (2) Date last checked
 - (3) Fully charged
 - (4) Rust and/or corrosion
 - (5) Safety pin in place
 - (6) Mounted securely
 - (7) Kept in potential fire hazard areas
 - (8) Instructions on use
 - (9) Readily visible
 - b) Fire Alarms
 - (1) Reachable height
 - (2) Date last checked
 - (3) Readily visible
 - (4) Smoke alarms operational
 - c) Fire Escapes
 - (1) Broken steps
 - (2) Mounts and brackets
 - (3) Splinters or other obstructions
 - (4) Directional sign readily visible
 - d) General Fire Safety
 - (1) Drapes and curtains flameproof and away from any heat source
 - (2) Excess material and supplies properly stored
 - (3) Trash containers constructed of metal
 - (4) Oily rags and mops stored in metal containers
 - (5) Compressed gas cylinders properly secured
 - (6) Dead-end passageway properly labeled
 - (7) Exit doors open in direction of exit travel
 - (8) Evacuation routes posted

- (9) Deacons/deaconesses assigned for evacuation posts (at each exit door)
 - (10) Self-closing doors in boiler and furnace room
 - (11) Monthly school fire drills or church fire drills once a year (possibly at the end of a service, during a potluck, or during a Pathfinder meeting)
 - (12) Sabbath School rooms do not have exits blocked by tables, chairs, etc.
 - (13) Cradle Roll, Tiny Tots, and Kindergarten rooms have safety caps on electrical outlets
 - (14) Baptistry is equipped with automatic shut off for water and heater
 - (15) Microphone is away from baptistry, and away from anyone's reach
 - (16) Exit signs properly lighted
 - (17) Meeting room capacity signs posted
 - (18) Panic hardware on main doors
 - (19) Smoke detector in kitchen
 - (20) Proper exit provided for fellowship hall
 - (21) Emergency numbers posted, must include:
 - (a) 911 or Police Department,
 - (b) Fire Department,
 - (c) Ambulance,
 - (d) Nearest emergency room
- e) Walking and Working Surfaces
- (1) Free of tears, tripping hazards and slippery surfaces
 - (2) Unguarded floor openings
 - (3) Proper handrails on stairs with four or more risers (Except where stairs are part of emergency egress; in which case, handrails are required regardless of the number of risers)
 - (4) Baptistry has non-slip floors, steps, and proper handrails
 - (5) All handrails properly secured
 - (6) Proper handrails including:
 - (a) Mid rails on open sides,
 - (b) Mid rails and toe boards for balcony and overhead storage.
 - (7) Uniform height of stair steps
 - (8) Clear aisles
 - (9) Dark areas properly lighted
- f) First Aid
- (1) First aid kit
 - (2) Adequate supply of stock
 - (3) Inventory kit once a month
 - (4) Note dated items
- g) Written Program/Documentation
- (1) Meeting minutes
 - (2) Training (where applicable)
 - (3) OSHA injury report

- (4) Driver selection program
- (5) MSDS (Hazardous material program – Material Safety Data Sheets)

h) Miscellaneous Activities

- (1) The committee should, in conjunction with the safety officer, be involved in reviewing the church or school's disaster plan with the entire membership and conduct at least one practice "drill" for each type of disaster during the year.
- (2) The committee should require the supervisor of all off-premises activities to have signed Medical Consent forms readily available. Especially on Pathfinder camping trips or outings, on Sabbath afternoon activities/walks, work bees, and school activities, etc.
- (3) The committee should be alert to any opportunity to promote safety:
 - (a) Bulletin Boards
 - (b) Church Bulletins
 - (c) Newsletters
 - (d) Sermon Material
 - (e) Videos and Films
 - (f) Special Announcements

 - (g) Discussion at Board Meetings
 - (h) Guest Speakers

3. Pathfinder Program

The Safety Committee will closely adhere to the standards set forth in the *Loss Control for Pathfinders Guidelines*.

Safety Officer Job Description

I. Qualifications and Appointments:

- A. In recognition of the pastor's or principal's leadership role and responsibility in loss control, it is recommended that the pastor, principal, or respective board appoint a head deacon or another qualified individual as Safety Officer for the church or school.
- B. The Safety Officer should be organized, possess a knowledge of the local church or school's organizational structure, and know the church membership. In addition, he/she must be able to get along with people, demonstrate sound and mature judgment, and respect the strict confidential procedures associated with various aspects of accident review and investigation.
- C. The Safety Officer shall be given active membership on the respective board.
- D. A safety committee should be appointed to support the Safety Officer and assist in carrying out all aspects of the loss control program for all church and school activities. (See *Safety Committee: Structure and Functions* earlier in this document.)

II. Safety Officer Objectives:

The primary objective for the Safety Officer is to prevent accidents. The Safety Officer with the assistance of the safety committee can help the church or school achieve this objective by evaluating the premises for possible dangerous conditions and consistently taking corrective action after each accident, thereby reducing causes of major loss.

III. Meetings:

The Safety Officer is to meet with the safety committee on a regular basis. Minutes of each meeting should be recorded. (Note: Where a church is too small to adequately form a safety committee, one option is to have safety concerns addressed by the Safety Officer during monthly staff or board meetings.)

IV. Controlling Accidents:

- A. The primary method of controlling accidents will be formal investigation and review of all accidents – both actual accidents and near miss incidents.
- B. At each regularly scheduled meeting, the Safety Officer is responsible for providing the following information about accidents that have occurred since the last meeting:

1. What was the injured person doing?
 2. How were they injured?
 3. What unsafe act was committed?
 4. Was there a hazardous condition?
- C. In addition to injuries to persons, property losses should be investigated by the Safety Officer to determine such items as:
1. Description of the property.
 2. How was the property damaged?
 3. Was there an unsafe act?
 4. Was there a hazardous condition?
 5. Where possible, supply a photograph of damaged property.
- D. The Safety Officer shall assist the safety committee with determining the underlying causes of all accidents by using the following procedures:
1. Visit the scene;
 2. Interview witnesses to the accident;
 3. Check for causes resulting from anyone's actions, dangerous practices, inability, disobeying rules, etc.;
 4. Check for poor housekeeping;
 5. Determine if there was defective equipment;
 6. Determine if there was improper apparel;
 7. Record information of any other poor conditions.

V. Actions to Avoid:

- A. Attempting to pin the blame on an individual;
- B. Assuming there is just one cause for an accident;
- C. Assigning causes of accidents which are too general or vague;
- D. Determining causes of an accident without investigation;
- E. Attempting to take the place of the church board/administration in corrective action;
- F. Any signed, written statement or description of the incident by witnesses, or persons involved;
- G. Investigation of sexual misconduct incidents;
- H. Release of information to anyone other than a claims representative of Adventist Risk Management, Inc. or the department head of the local conference.

VI. Church Activities:

- A. An inventory should be made of all church-sponsored activities. Another list should be made of prohibited activities, which would include, but are not restricted to:

1. Trampolines
 2. Tackle Football
 3. Baseball
 4. Airplanes
 5. Skateboarding
 6. Motorcycles
 7. ATVs (3-wheeled & 4-wheeled All Terrain Vehicles)
- B. An inventory should be made of activities which require an extra degree of supervision, planning, and procedural guidelines. The activity sponsor should be required to have signed Medical Consent Forms readily available. Written rules and formal procedures should be maintained and required for activities such as, but not restricted to:
1. Day care centers
 2. Day camps
 3. Field trips
 4. Pathfinder activities
 5. Afternoon hikes/trips
 6. Bonfires and campfire socials
 7. Work bees
 8. Hayrides, skating, water skiing, etc.
 9. Ingathering programs
 10. Health-screening fairs

VII. Areas Requiring Professional Expertise:

The Safety Officer should review the following areas, and ensure periodic inspections and/or repair by licensed professionals:

- A. Boilers and mechanical equipment
- B. Construction activities
- C. Electrical wiring and equipment
- D. Fire extinguishers and alarm systems
- E. Heating/air conditioning systems
- F. Cooking equipment
- G. Vehicles

VIII. Areas of Special Concern:

- A. Transportation: It is the Safety Officer's responsibility to establish an effective and safe transportation policy.
 1. Non-church owned vehicles used for church activities shall be currently insured to meet state law requirements.

2. Only mature drivers (19 years of age or older), with a known reputation for good driving habits and a clean drive record, should be asked to drive for the church or school activities.
 3. Open trucks, trailers, moving vans, and campers are prohibited for transporting people.
 4. Vehicles, including school buses, used for church or school activities shall be in excellent operating condition, properly licensed, and operated by experienced appropriately licensed drivers.
- B. Premises Inspection: At least once a year, the Safety Officer is encouraged to perform an inspection of the premises. Following the inspection, a written report of his/her findings and recommendations should be given to the church or school administration.
 - C. Fidelity Controls: Amounts above the minimum allotted Petty Cash shall not remain on church premises. Monies should not be taken to the treasurer's home. Instead, church deacons should be involved in counting the money immediately after taking up the offering, and deposited as soon as possible. Ideally, this includes a drop-off deposit on Sabbath, with the church treasurer or assistant treasurer going to the bank on Monday morning to prepare the deposit. The specific task of counting the money should be on a rotating basis, and the appearance of repetition in the procedure of depositing funds should be avoided.
 - D. Baptismal Tanks: Microphones are to be placed away from the edge of the water and mounted on floor stands. The stairs and walking surfaces should be coated with a proper adhesive to prevent slippery conditions, and handrails shall be installed.
 - E. Rental of Church or School Facilities: When the church or school is considering the rental of their facilities, the Safety Officer should make sure appropriate lease agreements and hold-harmless agreements have been signed, and that an endorsement is written listing the church as an additional insured. If rental of the premises is for non-SDA functions, the Safety Officer should review the nature of the activity. In addition, the Alaska Conference Safety Officer should be contacted for its approval.
 - F. Protection/Detection Systems: The Safety Officer should review the need for a burglary protection and/or fire detection system in the church. Should the church actually consider installation, the Safety Officer should be involved in reviewing the plans and proposal with the Alaska Conference Safety Officer.

IX. Miscellaneous Duties:

- A. Review procedures for the immediate reporting of all accidents to the Alaska Conference Safety Officer.

- B. On construction and remodeling projects, assure blueprints have been reviewed by the conference office and Adventist Risk Management, Inc. for life safety features well in advance of the initial construction date.
- C. Review contracts, in close consultation with the conference office, before obtaining signatures.
- D. Request annual information, from the conference, on church accident frequency and severity for churches throughout the conference to gain knowledge of general exposures to accidents.
- E. Use creative and innovative techniques to promote loss control, such as newsletters, bulletins, announcements, sermon material, discussions at board meetings, etc.
- F. Develop a close working relationship with the local fire marshal.
- G. Work closely with other board members on planning emergency evacuation procedures