

Safetyline

Apartment Association of Michigan

SAFETY AT A GLANCE

Safety is really an evolving process, which means it's continuous. If you really want to reduce work-related injuries and keep reducing them, you need to make safety a way of life by involving employees in your safety process.

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Apartment Association of Michigan

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Talking The Talk: Know When Safety Jargon Is Appropriate

Editor's Note: We encourage all of our members to use this information as a starting point for effective safety communication. Members should add to it based on their safety needs and work environments.

Most safety professionals recognize the following terms, use them every day, and know their meanings inside and out.

However, individuals outside the safety profession may not be as knowledgeable about safety jargon (technical terms used by a special group of individuals).

So, review the list, think about words not on the list that are unique to your work situation, and keep these words in mind when talking to someone outside the industry. A little clarification can go a long way to improving communication.

PPE—Personal Protective Equipment—such as safety glasses, gloves, etc

Means of Egress—Generally

refers to a way for exiting a building

Reg(s)—Regulation(s)—Usually refers to OSHA's safety rules as spelled out in Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Particularly, Parts 1910, 1903, and 1904.

Blue Book—Refers to OSHA's Recordkeeping Guidelines for Occupational Injuries and Illnesses.

Hazcom—Hazard Communication—Usually refers to OSHA's requirement that employers communicate to employees all hazards they could potentially be exposed to. Also, can refer to the hazard communication written program.

Light-duty—Refers to bringing an injured employee back to work in a capacity less than his/her usual capacity. Also called restricted duty.

Confined Space—Refers to a space that (1) is large enough

and configured so that an employee can enter and work (2) has limited or restricted means of entry or exit (3) is not designed for continuous occupancy.

MSDS—Acronym for a Material Safety Data Sheet, which contains information about a chemical. Employers and employees need the information contained on MSDSs to protect themselves from hazardous chemical exposures, and to work safely with chemical products.

Abate—Usually means to get rid of or reduce a hazardous condition.

ADA—Acronym for the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities.

Near miss—Perhaps would be better called "near hit," as it refers to a situation in which an accident almost happened but did not, or happened but barely avoided causing injury.

Safety Tune Up; Staying One Step Ahead Of Mold

The issue of residential mold—which is often called black mold—gained attention in 1999 following a USA Weekend magazine story about a family in Texas.

Health concerns surrounding the issue multiplied, and what was often common mildew was being blamed for all sorts of maladies.

Significant mold problems don't develop overnight.

See page two for steps every apartment community can take to keep this problem under control.



Use This Newsletter As A Tool To Conduct Your Own Safety Meeting

A common part of nature, molds become a problem when they start growing indoors because of water leaks or condensation. Occasional growth of common molds, like Cladosporium and Alternaria, rarely poses a significant health threat. But when a leak goes untended and timbers or wallboards become saturated, it doesn't take long -- a few weeks, perhaps -- for mold to grow and fill the air with spores.

- Fix plumbing leaks and other water problems as soon as possible
- Dry all items completely
- Scrub mold off hard surfaces with detergent and water, and dry completely
- Absorbent or porous materials, such as ceiling tiles and carpet, may have to be thrown away if they become moldy. Mold can grow on or fill in the empty spaces and crevices of porous materials, so the mold may be difficult or impossible to remove completely
- Do not paint or caulk moldy surfaces. Clean up the mold and dry the surfaces before painting. Paint applied over moldy surfaces is likely to peel
- Moisture control is the key to mold control, so when water leaks or spills occur indoors - ACT QUICKLY. If wet or damp materials or areas are dried 24-48 hours after a leak or spill happens, in most cases mold will not grow
- Clean and repair roof gutters regularly
- Make sure the ground slopes away from the building foundation, so that water does not enter or collect around the foundation.
- Keep air conditioning drip pans clean and the drain lines unobstructed and flowing properly

Make Everybody Part Of The Team

Lease language is a suggested sample. Consult your own legal counsel before amending your company's lease agreement.

Make your residents part of the team. If you haven't done so, put a paragraph in your leases concerning their responsibility in helping control mold and mildew. Below is a sample:

16. MOLD AND MILDEW. Resident shall acknowledge that it is necessary to maintain appropriate climate control, keep the dwelling unit clean, and take necessary measures to retard and prevent mold from accumulating in the dwelling unit. The Resident agrees to clean and dust the dwelling unit on a regular basis and to remove visible moisture accumulation on windows, window sills, walls, floors, ceilings and other surfaces as soon as reasonably possible. The Resident agrees not to block or cover any heating, ventilation or air-conditioning ducts. The Resident shall report immediately in writing to us: (i) any evidence of a water leak or excessive moisture in the dwelling unit, common hallways, storage room, garage or other common area; (ii) any evidence of mold that cannot be removed with a common household cleaner; (iii) any failure or malfunction in heating, ventilation or air conditioning, and (iv) any inoperable doors or windows. It is further agreed that the Resident shall be responsible for damage to the dwelling unit and personal property as well as any injury to all occupants of the dwelling unit resulting from the Resident's failure to comply with the terms of this Lease.

Fixing the Problem

THINK

BEFORE YOU CLEAN UP MOLD

Who should do the cleanup depends on a number of factors. One consideration is the size of the mold problem. If the moldy area is less than about 10 square feet (less than roughly a 3 ft. by 3 ft. patch), in most cases, you can handle the job yourself, following the guidelines below. However:

- If there has been a lot of water damage, and/or mold growth covers more than 10 square feet, consult the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guide: *Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings*. Although focused on schools and commercial buildings, this document is applicable to other building types. It is available free by calling the EPA Indoor Air Quality Information Clearinghouse at (800) 438-4318, or here at epa.gov/mold/mold_remediation.html.

What People Have Said About Past Seminars:

The seminar was very informative. Most of the things I heard were common sense. I think the lesson is to think further than what you are immediately doing. I want to know more about securing the property for the residents, in terms of the condition of the buildings, the property. I found it insightful. I drove around my complex and looked at possible problems I might have. It made me think about things and really evaluate them.

You're Invited to A Safety Seminar

May 5, 2006

10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Association Offices

30375 Northwestern Hwy

Farmington Hills, Michigan 48334

Contact Brenda Boomer at

bboomer@spsinsurance.com for details



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