

ILCA "HELP"

HAZARD EVALUATION LOSS PREVENTION BULLETIN OF THE
INSURANCE LOSS CONTROL ASSOCIATION

FALL 1993

Don't Miss 1993 Conference In Indianapolis

Don't miss the opportunity to meet with your peers and take part in seven general session presentations and four of six workshops at the ILCA Annual Conference for Insurance Professionals scheduled for October 18-20, 1993, in Indianapolis, IN.

To kick off the program on Monday, two associate professors from Indiana State University will discuss, "Providing Value Added Service to the Insured" and "Continuing Education and Certification in Loss Control." These will be followed by:

- Grading Liability Exposures;
- Agricultural Loss Control Inspections;
- Basics of Electrical Wiring;
- Flammable Liquid Storage;
- Coordinating Claims and Loss Control;
- Special Investigative Units;
- Presentation Skills;
- Pollution Issues;
- Building Construction Updates;
- Evaluating and Managing the Mini-Fleet;
- OSHA Overview;
- Burglary Loss Prevention.

1993 ILCA CONFERENCE

WHEN AND WHERE: October 18-20 at the St. Vincent Marten House in Indianapolis, Indiana.

HOTEL RATES: \$58 single or double occupancy, plus applicable taxes. Call the hotel direct at (317) 872-4111 and mention the ILCA Conference for Insurance Professionals for the group rate.

REGISTRATION FEES: Before September 24: ILCA members, \$229; nonmembers \$279*. After September 24: ILCA members, \$279; nonmembers, \$329*.

**\$15 of nonmember fee will be applied toward first year ILCA membership dues. Fee includes all seminar materials, coffee and soda breaks, reception snacks, two lunches, and 1.5 CEUs.*

Most of these sessions will be conducted by your peers who are involved in the insurance industry on a daily basis.

Each attendee will receive 1.5 hours of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for attending the entire program.

In addition, ILCA has obtained a very favorable hotel rate to help keep costs to a minimum.

To register, return the enclosed form to the NAMIC Education Department or to register by phone, call 1-800-33NAMIC. Take advantage of the "early-bird" discount and register before September 24th. (Please see enclosed brochure for more details.)

See you in Indy in October!

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"HELP" is published by the Insurance Loss Control Association (ILCA). It has been designed as an aid to claims, loss control, sales and underwriting personnel.

Havens or Hazards?

They're everywhere, at churches, apartment complexes, fast food operations, day care centers, homes and shopping centers, to name just a few. They're actively sought after and are often expected to be there. They can bring relaxation and enjoyment with usually no expense and minimal effort. Little thought is ever given to their regulation even though they can endanger what many of us hold most dear.

Playgrounds . . . those friendly havens. They can just as easily become minefields with dire consequences. The vast majority of the victims are under eleven years old. It seems to make little difference whether the playgrounds are private, public or commercial, in regards to the accident rate. Accidents usually are dependent on management, maintenance and design. Management must be dynamic, constantly adapting; maintenance must be done in a timely and skillful manner, and design must be thoroughly researched beforehand and continually monitored thereafter.

Across the nation, from our major cities to the smallest communities, there are codes, laws or other forms of regulation covering everything from accepted building procedures to the type of ice used to keep fish fresh. Yet playgrounds, which account for over 250,000 reported accidents that require hospital treatment each year, have only non-enforceable guidelines available in the vast

majority of cases. These reported accidents run the gamut from strains and sprains requiring a few days rest to permanent brain damage or even death. The most severe injuries occur to the head (70 percent) and the arm and hand (20 percent).

Correction of playground defects, when done at all, are in too many cases pro-active, resulting from civil actions

filed on behalf of injured parties. Many of these suits are settled out of court to avoid the unfavorable publicity which is of paramount importance to manufacturers or other commercial exposures. The trickle down costs affect everyone and are rising sharply each year. Like most societies, we levy a very high penalty on those who negligently injure children.

The basics of management, maintenance and design are elementary in keeping playgrounds safe and can be pre-active in approach; however, lacking key elements are hard to enforce. Recognized standards that have been formulated by organizations with proper expertise and incorporated into laws or codes, coupled with enforced penalties, provide these elements. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, American Society for Testing and Material, and The American Association of Leisure and Recreation are three acknowledged sources which can be consulted when establishing a model

code for use by regulatory agencies.

Nothing will be done unless legislators are informed of the public and industry desire for implementation. Without reference standards and regulations requiring compliance, the "bottom line" of the playground owner replaces public safety as the primary concern. These regulations are especially important to those of us in the insurance industry. Frequently, when recommendations are made to reduce an exposure problem, compliance by the insured will cost him time, effort and money. How many times have you been asked by the insured what code or regulation is being used as reference?

Recommendations to improve a property are frequently met with resistance even though they are based on fact and common sense. Regulations give us a "hook on which to hang our hats," and add to our credibility, making the recommendations easier to accept by the insured.

Playground Evaluations

Almost every playground, even the most simple in design with the most basic equipment, is fraught with hazards due to their very nature and those who use them. When judging a playground, the physical size and ability, limited use of reason and the habits of children should always be the perspective assumed. Some questions to ask in the evaluation of a playground can be:

- Is there daily inspection of playgrounds for defective equipment (broken or missing parts, etc.) and foreign objects (rocks, bottles, etc.)?

- Is defective equipment repaired immediately, using factory authorized parts. Barring that, is the equipment removed or rendered inoperable and safe (misuse not possible)?

- Is the equipment constructed with quality materials of sufficient substance and appropriate design?

- Does cushioning material limit impact from falls to 200G's? This could require 6-12" of traditional materials such as mulch or sand, or as little as 1 3/4" of man-made materials such as "Elastocrete," a

product made by E.R. Carpenter Co., Inc.

- Does cushioning material around each piece of equipment extend 6 feet minimum in all directions?

- Are footings and/or anchors properly recessed in playground surface to provide adequate fall protection while still providing stability?

- Do fastening devices come in contact with children in normal or expected use or are they properly altered, such as rounding of sharp edges, countersinking bolts,

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Hidden CO Hazard

We are all aware of the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO) from auto and truck exhausts where there are engines running in confined spaces. Carbon monoxide inhibits the blood from properly taking oxygen from the air, actually displacing it and leaving the brain starved for oxygen. A build-up of CO levels in the blood has serious, progressive consequences that typically start with headaches and lead to dizziness, vomiting, confusion, fainting, unconsciousness and finally, death.

When the CO hazard is observed during a workers' compensation or liability inspection, a recommendation of proper exterior venting, increasing air exchange rates or changing procedures would be appropriate. But how many times have inspections been conducted at a warehouse, storeroom, etc., where a forklift is in operation and the danger of possible CO exposure is overlooked? Gasoline and propane fueled lift trucks are the chief offenders. An important point to remember is that in confined areas and/or areas with poor ventilation, CO levels build up much faster and

tend not to dissipate quickly. Some CO levels drop only 30 percent two hours after the CO producer has left the area. In addition, such levels would increase more quickly should the producer return to the still contaminated area.

Presently, enforcement standards in relation to CO and lift trucks are almost non-existent at any governmental level. OSHA has established a PEL of 35 PPM for CO for workers during an eight hour shift.

If CO exposure is verified or suspected to be excessive, some means to lower the levels for a safer workplace or public area would be:

- change to electric or even diesel powered lifts;
- require strict adherence to tune up and motor maintenance that includes CO analysis, limiting CO to 1 percent for propane and 2 percent for gasoline engines;
- add catalytic converters to engines (expensive);
- improve air exchange with a minimum of 5,000 CFM for propane and 8,000 CFM for gasoline powered lifts, based on a study area of 150,000

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Beware — The Latest In Fraud

The criminal involved in fraud continues to outwit the public into willingly giving their valuables to him. One of the latest scams surfaced in late 1992 and is still causing problems throughout the U.S. as its sophistication increases. The fraud involves the ever useful credit card.

The thief obtains the valid credit card account number of another person. Using his own, or an accomplice's, credit card he modifies the magnetic strip on the back of the card, substituting the stolen number. The thief then usually makes some high dollar purchases using the altered card. The electronic verification machine charges the unsuspecting victim's account. Using this method, the account is not flagged or canceled as in the case of a card reported lost or stolen. Also, if the perpetrator is stopped and searched, a credit card in his name is found on him. To try and defeat this scam,

some credit card companies now require the last four numbers of an account (obtained from the front of the card) be keyed into the verification machine. A match of the keyed numbers and electronically read numbers are required before authorization is given. The thieves have countered this by shopping for account numbers that match their own accounts. Thieves can find these cards by using their own resources or from a pool of thieves working together in a loose confederation.

How can we help defeat this crime? Educate sales clerks to simply check the imprinted number on the card front with the number printed on the card slip. Also, requiring a second form of ID for larger purchases gives the merchant a second source of locating information in the event of fraud.

PLAYGROUND GUIDELINES

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providing protective covers, etc.?

- Is the maximum height of the equipment six feet?
- Is there a physical break or separation between active and passive play areas (i.e. sand boxes and swing sets)?
- Is there a separation of equipment designed for preschool and equipment designed for ages 6 and up?
- Are sliding boards designed with an incline of no more than 35 degrees with side guards of at least four inches? Is the end of the slide not more than 14" above ground level?
- Are ladder and climbing rungs 1-1 1/2" in diameter?
- Are swing seats made of a flexible material with the hanging chains spaced at least 20 percent wider than the seat? Is there at least 2 feet between adjoining swings?
- Are elevated play areas for preschoolers between 20-30" high protected with a continuous hand-rail and areas over 30" high protected with a barrier? (School age children require protection at 30" and 48" respectively.)

- Is there a raised area mounted under the seats of seesaws or on the ground under the seat area to prevent pinching of hands and fingers?

- Are balance beams no more than 10-12" above ground level?
- Is domed type climbing apparatus free of internal climbing pieces (empty inside)?

- Does the playground contain any of the following pieces of equipment (not recommended because of high incidence of serious injury): trampolines, merry-go-round type of equipment, exercise rings, giant stride (maypole type support with hanging rings on chains), trapeze bars, heavy metal animal-shaped swings.

These guidelines are far from all-inclusive and real life seldom allows for full implementation of all safety recommendations; however, they will offer engineering reference points and some information which can be used to educate property owners and managers.

Two New NAMIC Productions

• **Insuring Property With A Woodburning Appliance** reviews the proper installation, maintenance and use of this popular solid fuel burning appliance. Don Davis, ILCA member, leads you through this multi-purpose video which is a valuable resource of information for new employees, agents, loss control specialist and underwriters. It can also be used as a public relations campaign for your company to review with individual or groups of insureds.

• NAMIC's latest video release, produced in conjunction with Mennonite Property Aid Association, covers the basics of the fire restoration process and was designed with your company in mind. **The Fire Restoration Process: an overview**, gives you a good foundation for helping your insured through this devastating process. The next video in the After The Fire series will examine cause and origin.

*These videos sell to ILCA members for \$45 per video (a \$20 savings!).
To order, or for more information, please call NAMIC at: (800) 336-2642.*

Adhesive Alert

Due to the high cost of new construction and the current trend of saving historical or important older structures, renovation in full or part has become increasingly popular. When renovations expose the old "Red Label" adhesives they present the potential for a serious fire as they burn fast and hot when exposed to an ignition source, despite their age. When encountered, care should be taken when removing or recovering these adhesives. Removal and disposal require strict adherence to fire prevention guidelines. Recovering allows a highly volatile material to remain, preserving a hidden fire hazard.

Plastic Ducts And Corrugated Plastic Hoses Pose Fire Threat

Inspection of apartment laundry rooms increasingly discloses the use of plastic duct or corrugated plastic hoses for exhaust venting of clothes dryers. Tests have shown them to be a fire hazard, and many of the estimated 14,000 dryer-related fires reported each year have been attributed to these types of venting hoses. The plastic ducts and hoses become clogged by lint much more easily than metal. This restricts air flow and causes a resultant build up of heat which can lead to a fire. A metal venting system, regularly checked and cleaned, along with regular lint filter cleaning, can reduce the incidence of fire by an estimated 40-60 percent. Metal vents should be required in all commercial applications and is also advisable for domestic use.

CO HAZARDS

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cubic feet. CFM rates increase by 1.5 for 75,000 cubic feet and by 2 for 30,000 cubic feet with all of the above assuming an actual exposure that provides for lift operation 50 percent of the exposure time;

- improve driving habits, i.e. gradual acceleration and braking, refraining from "racing" the engine and avoiding unnecessary idling, all of which tend to reduce CO emission.

Most recommendations cost management time, money and effort to implement. As such, they sometimes resist making changes such as those related to CO levels, particularly since the effect is not readily observable. However, a worker with a headache or nausea will usually not work efficiently; a confused worker who causes an accident cannot only injure himself but possibly others, to say nothing of the potential for property damage. All of the aforementioned decrease productivity and increase expense, topics of great interest to management.

If you were not aware of the CO exposure risk from lift trucks, then it is very possible that the management at the risk was not either. They might welcome the information and, once informed, consider implementing some of the suggested improvements willingly.

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