



Municipal FACILITY MAINTENANCE

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Manitoba Municipalities enjoy the benefit of a great many wonderful facilities such as arenas, curling rinks, community halls and recreation complexes.

These facilities are the focal points for these communities and would be a devastating blow if lost. Two Manitoba municipalities experienced that blow this year when their arenas were lost to fire. Most losses can be prevented or greatly reduced with regular inspection and maintenance of equipment and services to prevent fires and liability claims or by securing the building to prevent vandalism or arson losses.

Like any building, municipal facilities require regular maintenance to ensure that building services and fire service equipment remain in good and serviceable condition. This becomes increasingly important as the buildings and services age.

Many of the recreation facilities in Manitoba towns and RMs, such as arenas, curling rinks and community halls, are run by committees made up primarily of volunteers. Without volunteers, many of these facilities would not be able to operate.

Volunteer committees provide a cost-effective method for municipalities to operate these facilities and these volunteers do a tremendous job keeping these facilities and programs running. However, at times it is difficult to keep an adequate number of volunteers and with so much work to do just keeping programs running, building repairs and maintenance often gets forgotten.

The committees need the municipalities' assistance to ensure the facilities are kept in good condition. Recent inspections of municipal facilities have found that regular checks of fire alarms, exit lights, emergency lights and fire extinguishing systems often fall by the wayside if not made a priority.

Monthly inspections of each facility conducted by the municipality or a volunteer designate would determine what maintenance / repair items needed to be completed before the list became overwhelming.

These monthly inspections are not difficult. Following a checklist can quickly determine any areas that need attention. Most maintenance items can be completed very quickly and easily once they have been identified.

Forms are available on the HED website: www.bedinc.com/amm/risk/checklists.asp



Missing a hazard does not automatically result in liability. The courts do not expect perfection, just reasonableness.

BUILDING / FACILITY MAINTENANCE

- Implement a regular inspections and maintenance program as soon as possible.
- Document all maintenance and repair work. Your documentation will form the basis of a defence if a third party is injured on your premises.
- Vacant buildings or those shut down for the off-season still require regular


inspection and maintenance to prevent serious damage to the building such as water damage from a frozen/leaking pipe.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE: FIRE HAZARDS

- Check fuse panels frequently for oversized fuses. As soon as possible, change fuse-panels to circuit breaker panels.
- Install smoke and/or heat detectors throughout the building.
- Check the fire alarm system and its connection to monitoring station annually.
- Fire extinguishers and emergency lighting should be visually checked monthly. Full inspection and testing should be done annually by a qualified contractor and the units tagged with the date of the inspection / test.
- Volunteers should be trained annually in fire extinguisher use by the local fire department.
- Automatic wet chemical extinguishing systems in kitchens should be checked every 6 months by a qualified contractor. Tag systems with service date.
- The kitchen hood and exhaust system should be steam cleaned at least annually by a qualified contractor. Filters should be cleaned at least monthly.
- Move garbage cans / bins at least 25 ft. away from the building to prevent a fire in a garbage bin from spreading to the building.
- Oily rags and combustible garbage should be removed from the building immediately. Oily rags should be kept in a metal can with a tight fitting metal lid to prevent spontaneous combustion of the rags.
- Ensure that the buildings are securely locked when not open to the public. Many facilities are very large and you may not hear someone enter the building if you are in the rear areas of the building.

- Monitored burglar alarm systems should be installed to detect unauthorized entry. Even if you may think that there is not much to steal, there is a very real danger that vandals could damage the building / equipment or set the building on fire.

LIABILITY HAZARDS FOR ARENAS AND COMMUNITY HALLS

- Facilities that cater to seniors or disabled persons should be checked more stringently for any slip, trip and fall hazards.
- Curled mats and worn rugs should be repaired or replaced immediately to eliminate trip hazards.
- Mats placed inside entrances should extend at least 30 feet into the building to give facility users ample time to wipe water / dirt / snow from their footwear.
- Exit stairs / ramps should be checked to ensure that the structures and the handrails are structurally safe enough to carry a full load of people exiting the building in case of emergency. An exit stair that collapses could result in multiple serious injuries.
- Exit signs and emergency lights should be illuminated and highly visible to show direction of egress in case of power outage and / or smoke filled room.
- Replace burnt out exit and emergency light bulbs immediately. Inspect and test exit signs and emergency lights monthly. Log tests.
- Stairwells and exits must be kept clear of storage or refuse at all times. Obstructions could result in serious injuries in the event of an emergency.
- Check for any "falling hazards" around the exterior of the facility – Loose roofing, siding materials, signs / awnings attached to the building, icicles hanging off the roof / overhangs. These could fall off the building and injure passersby or damage vehicles parked near the building.
- Clean away snow / ice accumulations on sidewalks, stairs and ramps to reduce slip and fall hazards especially after snowfalls, freezing rain and thaw / freeze cycles. Sand / salt frequently. Keep a log of when these tasks were performed. 

If you have any questions or concerns please contact **Ken Fingler**:
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MTCML members looking for tires for their construction equipment should be speaking with Kal Tires **John Huthersall**, who will be pleased to tell them of the many attributes of the Nokian TRI 2 tire. At the recent Trade Show in Brandon, John was joined at the Kal Tire booth by **Bryan Humphries** of Tennessee-based Nokian Tyres Inc. They touted the new and improved TRI 2 as even better than its predecessor because of a number of features including:

- A new construction that guarantees excellent grip on all surfaces – even in winter;
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- The low rolling resistance reduces fuel consumption.

For more information, call John Huthersall at 204-694-8560 or visit www.nokiantires.com.



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Westcon Equipment and Rentals of Winnipeg can provide Manitoba municipalities with a wide selection of rotary brush cutters from BC-based manufacturer Pro Mac Manufacturing Ltd. Pro Mac offers over a dozen models of brush cutters ranging from a 24" rotary single arm blade to a 66" rotary mulching disc. The brush cutters are available in single or two-door frame; while adaptor brackets are come in pin type, quick change, pusher pads or grapple brackets.

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WINTER

December 5

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