

Inspection Program for Pre-1970 Buildings

Lines of Business: Property Liability, General Liability

Risk Control Strategy/Key Issues: To establish a procedure for the systematic recognition and control of hazards in older buildings.

Suggested Program Components:

1. **Program Statement:** A general statement noting that the program establishes guidelines and procedures for routine pre-1970 building inspections; as well as establishing the process for identifying hazards and controlling them. An endorsed statement from management regarding its commitment to the process should be included. This endorsement should contain a zero tolerance declaration for evaluating pre 1970 buildings.
2. **Program Responsibilities:** Management should assign responsibilities and accountability for policy enforcement to an individual within the organization who has the authority to implement established written procedures and controls. Similar guidelines should be established for employees who direct and implement the program.
 - **KEY:** Regular training will help all involved become familiar with exactly what is expected of them during all stages of the inspection process. It will also give them the confidence to perform their duties that are essential to the success of the program.
3. **Program Components:** Specifics should be established for reviewing all pre 1970 buildings to include frequency of inspection, reporting, follow up of corrective measures, prioritize corrective measures, consequences for not following procedures, and periodic measurement and evaluation of the program. Also a process for monitoring program components (spot checks or similar) should be in place to assure requirements of the program are being adhered to.
4. **Inspections Components:** It is strongly recommended that a certified architect complete the initial inspection. This will assure that areas of concern are thoroughly examined. Listed below are the components the inspection and program should concentrate on.
 - **Building Exterior Roof Covering.** The inspection should look at the type of covering and its' condition. Inspection of the interior ceiling will also help determine the roof condition (leakage occurring). Also the roof structure should be evaluated to determine if it is properly anchored to the building walls. At some time the product history and entity's experience with it should be researched to determine if there are any problems with the type of roofing system installed.
 - **Building Interior.** The inspector should be looking at exits locations, exit capacity, floor conditions, stairs conditions and design, lighting, attic spaces, fire walls, wiring, insulation, smoke and fire alarm system, sprinkler systems, life safety code issues, health issues, etc.
 - **Electrical.** Electrical systems that are 20 years or older should be inspected by a licensed electrical contractor. Computer lab wiring should be reviewed for system overload issues. Then every 5 years a licensed electrician should re-inspect the building (s) electrical systems. Only a licensed electrical contractor should be allowed to complete any suggested improvements.
 - **Facility Equipment Issues.** Boilers, pressure vessels, and heating systems which are 20 years or older should be inspected annually by a certified person. Smoke and fire alarm systems and sprinkler systems should be inspected annually by a certified person. It is strongly recommended

that a centrally monitored smoke and fire alarm system be in place, especially in buildings located in rural areas. Other systems that should be inspected are the security and plumbing systems.

- **Other Elements to Consider.** The inspection should include flammable and combustible materials storage (in locked flameproof cabinets, or removed from the building); as well as condition of exterior walkways, stairs, parking lots, grounds, statues, art work, and so forth. Review vacant building security to assure that proper building and premier protection is in place, monitored, and upgraded/repaired as needed. This protection includes fencing, boarding windows and doors, and central station monitoring of fire and security alarms. See Trident's "Controls for Security and Inspection of Vacant and Unoccupied Buildings" process guide for more details.

Also hazardous materials issues should be included - science labs, laboratories, mechanical rooms, trade shops, asbestos, lead, natural gas lines, and above and below ground tanks.

Another issue that should be included is pest control, especially in older wooden structures. The inspection should include a review of where, how often, by who (certified), and is the correct chemicals being used.

Program Activities Calendar:

- Annual review of policy with all maintenance employees
- Immediate review of all acquired pre-1970 construction buildings
- Quarterly review of system replacement/upgrade process
- Annual review of building acquired process.

Web Site Links:

- United States Environmental Protection Agency
<http://www.epa.gov>
- Occupational Safety & Health Administration
<http://www.osha.gov>

Other Reference Material:

- Building Self Inspection Program Guidelines
- Fire Inspection Checklist
- Electrical Checklist

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