

Preparing for Summer Closure

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It's almost time for school doors to close for the summer and to take advantage of unoccupied buildings for deep cleaning, repairs, and maintenance. This season, however, is also a time that presents higher risks of theft, arson and vandalism. The following are safety and maintenance hints to keep in mind as summer nears:

Keys

In the case your school practices a key-return system, check with all teachers, teacher aides, school secretaries, coaches, and other personnel before they leave for the summer to make sure all school keys are accounted for. If any of the staff have legitimate reasons for keeping keys during the summer, keep a record of their names and the reasons for holding on to the keys.

Money

Remove money from the school building. Minimal amounts of petty cash can be retained if needed in the summer. Keep petty cash in a locked safe and reconcile periodically.

Building Maintenance

Inspect all buildings and document the inspections. Thoroughly check outdoor facilities as well. Correct any deficiencies found during inspections.

Appliances - Gas and Electric

Help reduce the possibility of fire or electrical damage by turning off all gas. Close all gas valves, including pilot lights and do not forget the ones in the science labs and welding classrooms. Unplug all electric appliances and equipment that will not be used during the summer (including computers).

Computers & A/V Equipment

Store moveable equipment out of the line-of-sight from exterior windows. Store all other equipment in a secure area, preferably in rooms without windows. If equipment cannot be moved, close curtains or blinds. Inventory the equipment and permanently mark the District's name on each piece of equipment. Backup important documents on hard drives and store them off-site. Keep an accurate list of all equipment loaned to staff for the summer. Check TV/AV locations to ensure that TV sets are securely attached with either bolts or straps, and ensure the equipment is properly supported. Summer is a good time to make a video inventory of the school's contents. Store these videos off-site for use in the event of a loss.

Fire Alarm and Sprinkler Systems

Plan for and schedule testing, inspection and maintenance of fire alarms and fire sprinkler systems. Have the district's fire extinguishers inspected, tested and maintained.

Lighting - Interior and Exterior

Check all lighting, inside and out. Replace lights and lighting equipment as needed. Periodically check night lighting to ensure it is property functioning. Remember to include illuminated exit signs and emergency lighting (including battery packs) in your inspection and maintenance routine.

Construction Renovation

If renovation is planned, be sure to do a thorough inventory of all equipment, as well as supplies, prior to allowing contractors access to the building. Keep the inventory list in a secure place off-site. If people are going to use the building during renovation, make sure they are aware contractors are working, and the contractors know other people are using the building.

Athletic Equipment

Remove and store any equipment from the fields and gymnasiums in a locked room or cabinet (including portable soccer goals and volleyball stands). The Pool recommends against loaning district equipment to outside groups such as summer athletic camp participants or community members. If you decide to loan out your equipment, protect against potential liability by taking the following actions:

- Ensure that safety/protective equipment is reconditioned (if needed) and inspected prior to loaning.
- Document the condition of each piece of equipment to be loaned; have both the loaner (the district) and the borrower (the outside group) attest to the condition of each piece of equipment (with a date and signature) before it is borrowed, and upon its return.
- Require the outside group to provide the district with a certificate of liability insurance and an endorsement naming the school district as an *additional insured*.

Playgrounds and Fields

Inspect all playground equipment. Perform planned maintenance and repairs. Add additional protective surfacing. Maintain fields, fill holes and water grass surfaces regularly or as permitted with watering restrictions. Remove pieces of equipment that have been the source of frequent injuries or that create unsafe conditions and cannot be repaired.

Summer Use

If district buildings, equipment and property are used during the summer, adequate supervision is still required, unless the district has entered into a contractual agreement where the group/user will provide their own supervision. Districts are still liable for summer activities in or on their premises and are responsible for inspections and maintenance. For example, school may not be in session, but playgrounds and athletic fields are still used. This use requires the district to provide regular maintenance to correct hazards.