

ABC's of Building Maintenance

Attitude of management can raise or lower the bar for building maintenance.

Become familiar with Occupier's Legislation, the Building Code and all other applicable Codes.

Curled mats and linoleum and worn rugs should be repaired or replaced immediately to eliminate a tripping hazard.

Document all of your maintenance and repairs. Your documentation will form the basis of your defence if a third party is injured on your premises.

Exit signs should be illuminated, highly visible and show the direction of egress. Replace burnt out bulbs immediately. Inspect all exit signs once a month.

Fuse panels require a higher level of maintenance than circuit breaker panels. They also run the risk of improper replacement of fuses – using coins or pieces of metal to “jump” the circuit. Whenever possible, replace the fuse panel with a circuit breaker panel.

Grade the land to slope away from the building to prevent drainage problems and basement flooding.

Hallways and exits are not additional storage space. They must be clear of obstructions at all times.

Install smoke and/or heat detectors, illuminated exit signs, emergency lighting and fire extinguishers in appropriate areas of the building.

Junction boxes should have cover plates installed to prevent access by people and water.

Keeping an exterior building envelope in good repair helps maintain the security of a building, reduces the possibility of vermin infestation, mitigates weather damage to the interior, and forestalls further deterioration of the building as a whole.

Laudry room lint screens and the lint exhausted into the exterior wall of the laundry area should be routinely cleaned.

Mats placed in entranceways should be 30 feet in length. This will give visitors ample time to wipe water/dirt from their footwear.

Non-slip surfaces go a long way in reducing slip and falls on both floors and stairs.

Oily rags, paper towels and other combustible garbage should be stored in ULC approved containers for flammable trash.

Parking lots should be free of obstructions, potholes and free of ice or snow in the wintertime. Keep them safe for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Quit procrastinating. Implement that regular inspection and maintenance system. Document work performed.

Reduce the risk of falls on stairways by painting the nosing in a contrasting color or installing grip tape on each stair tread to aid in safety to the users.

Smoking should be limited to designated areas segregated from flammable or combustible materials. No smoking signs should be posted and the regulations should be strictly enforced.

The practice of using wedges or flip-down door stops on Fire Doors should be discontinued and all employees made aware. Remember Fire Doors help to prevent the spread of fire and smoke.

Use perimeter fencing and “No Trespassing” signs to discourage unauthorized access to the premises.

Vacant buildings need to be maintained. Don't abandon them.

Welding, grinding, or other spark-generating processes conducted on the premises require a Hot Works Policy designed in conformance with documented guidelines in NFPA 51B-“Fire Prevention in Use of Cutting and Welding Processes”.

Xtra caution should be exercised in buildings that cater to seniors or seniors' programs. Unintentional falls are the leading cause of injury among seniors.

You should always have fuel tanks installed on a concrete pad at grade level with appropriate bollard protection to prevent vehicle impact problems. If the tank is a single-wall design, a fuel containment system should be built into the concrete pad in case of a fuel spill.

Zero in on any “falling hazards” – loose building materials, icicles hanging off the roof, signs attached to buildings, awnings, etc. These could fall or be blown off the building and cause injury to an unsuspecting public.