

Facilities Maintenance Best Practices

Introduction: Some of the largest losses member districts face are related to the care and maintenance of their facilities. This section addresses some of the more common areas where concerns are seen. SDAO recommends that districts have a plan to address construction and maintenance of their facilities. SDAO Risk Management can assist you address specific circumstances. Contact your agent for coverage details.

Building Envelope

- The district inspects all buildings, including vacant and leased, regularly.
- The district has a documented inspection procedure reviewing the exterior of the buildings (items like roofs, walls, vegetation due to pests and arson, gutters and foundations, utility connections).
- The district has a documented inspection procedure reviewing the interior of the buildings (items like boiler rooms, extra humidity, leaking pipes and cracks in walls, electrical circuits).
- The district makes certain that roofs and gutters are kept free from damage and debris as often as necessary (minimum of twice a year).
- The district has a procedure in place to prioritize maintenance needs.
- The district has a procedure that outlines preventative maintenance priorities.

Fuel Tanks/Propane Tanks

- The district inspects the fueling area at least weekly for damage or deterioration.
- The facility is effectively grounded according to national standards.
- The district maintains proper labels on the structure or tank.
- The fueling facility is effectively protected from vehicles hitting the structure.
- There is adequate spill protection for the facility.

Utilities

- The electrical system is effectively grounded according to national standards.
- The district maintains proper labels on the breaker panels, disconnects, and fuse boxes.
- The water and gas shut-off valves are readily identifiable and unobstructed.
- The district inspects the apparatus bay shorelines and extension cords at least weekly for damage or deterioration.

Contracting

- The district has established procedures for hiring vendors (purchasing authority, licensed, insurance current, etc.).
- The district monitors contractors to ensure work is completed as required by the contract and local codes.

- The district reviews finished work at or before one year, five years and nine years to ensure the work is completed as required by the contract.
- All agreements entered by the district follow this basic outline:
 - Parties of the agreement (define who the agreement is between)
 - Terms of the agreement (what is being provided by both parties)
 - Duration of the agreement (does the agreement end at a certain time?)
 - Termination provisions of the agreement (how do/can the parties end the agreement?)
- The district has a single point of contact for review **and** approval of these and all agreements - **The chief should have oversight of the agreements if they are not the point of contact for approvals.**



Crime Prevention

- The district has established procedures to reduce potential for crime on their property.
- The district has adequate lighting installed around all facilities.
- The district controls access to the facility by use of fencing and signage that delineates areas open only to authorized users.
- The district has security systems and cameras installed in areas needing monitoring.
- The district maintains public areas separate from restricted areas inside the building by using doors, counters, or gates.
- The district keeps objects from blocking sight lines around the buildings, shrubs are trimmed lower than two feet tall **or** lower branches are trimmed up at least four feet from the ground.

- The district keeps windows and doors locked when buildings are not occupied.
- The district keeps equipment out of open sight lines to avoid theft.
- The district has a good working relationship with local law enforcement and has regular contact.