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Greening the Workplace

Price competition among providers of “green” products to businesses is making the green dream a reality for business owners hoping to reap the rewards of an eco-friendly workplace.

According to *Fortune Small Business*, it costs owners between 2% and 4% more to outfit a green office, down substantially from just a year ago. Further, many of these investments pay for themselves in just a few years.

If you plan to go green at your workplace, re-evaluate your business insurance policy. Refitting with environmentally friendly building components can increase the

insured value of your property—both structure and contents—and you will want your policy to reflect that change. In addition, it is essential that you keep sales records and

receipts of your improvement purchases to help ensure the insurance company will replace the damaged items with an equally eco-friendly version.

For more information on insuring your eco-friendly overhaul, call our service team today. For more information on “greening” your work-

place, visit the website of the American Society of Interior Designers—www.asid.org. ■



Update Your Policy Profile

Important changes to your business should generate changes in your insurance program. If any of the following are true for your business, you need a policy update.

Have you increased or downsized your workforce? This directly affects your general liability and workers compensation premiums and audit outcome.

Have you purchased or sold any equipment? This could change your property premium as well as represent a need for additional coverage (e.g., transit coverage, special equipment coverage).

Have your sales changed? These

changes will directly impact your general liability premium and audit outcome.

Have you expanded or closed an existing location or added a new one? Call our service team for important information about how your current insurance applies to changes in business location.

Have your operations changed? You might need to alter or extend your insurance to cover your new operations.

Don't let the flurry of activity that surrounds big changes prevent you from keeping your policies in line with your operations. Call us to update your business insurance records. ■

Don't Get Burned by Cold Weather Losses



If you haven't already, now is the time to make your business's preparations for impending cold weather. Check your building's heating systems and outdoor water supply lines, if you have them. Verify contracts for snow plowing of walkways and parking lots. Look into backup generators to cover your business in the case of power outages. Make sure you have shovels, entry mats for wet feet, caution signs for slippery areas, and sand and salt.

If you have a business auto fleet, you have extra preparations to make, potentially including snow tires and chains, winter emergency kits for your vehicles and a radiator and battery check.

Prevent costly and possibly debilitating cold weather-related damage to your business through prevention and maintenance. ■

Liability for Unused Property

Recently in northern Florida, an 8-year-old boy drowned while playing in a sand pit located within an unfenced property owned by an excavation company. The case is a grim reminder of property owners' responsibilities. Under the fence and property laws of many states, property owners can be held liable for injuries children receive on their land if some dangerous condition attracts a child onto the property. Examples include discarded appliances, a sand pile or pit, and holding ponds.

Many companies own properties that are not a normal place of business. Often, these properties are nothing more than parcels of vacant

land being held for some future purpose. Because these properties are often unused, unvisited, or vacant for long periods, an owner may apply a lower degree of care in protecting the public in these locations than it does in its regular places of business.

In addition to keeping all properties clear and secure, owners should consider purchasing liability insurance—even for vacant properties. Often called "premises liability," this policy is designed to help shoulder the cost of defending and settling liability cases involving bodily injury that occurs on the property—costs the owner will incur out of pocket if the property is uninsured. ■

Terrorism Risk Insurance

In 2007, the federal government extended the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act, originally enacted in 2002, until the year 2014. The act requires that insurance companies offer coverage to customers for losses relating to terrorist attacks. In return, the federal government will reimburse insurance companies up to a threshold for insured losses.

Advantages to purchasing terrorism insurance include:

Considerable benefit for the cost. According to the Insurance Information Institute, the average cost of coverage is \$37 per \$1 million of insured value.

Coverage for acts of "terrorism" as defined by the federal government. Without the coverage, such losses are not covered by property insurance, and resulting damage will be shouldered by the property owner.

Terrorism by nature is unpre-



dictable. Having insurance provides at least some peace of mind that if terrorists destroy property there is insurance coverage in place to help recover.

If you are in a metropolitan center or suburb, you might have a special interest in this coverage. For more information about terrorism insurance for your business, call our service team today. ■

Insure Your Business Against Floodwaters

June 2008 brought some of the worst flooding to the Midwest in American history. Unfortunately, the lack of flood insurance has caused great financial burden to business owners.

If you have not purchased flood insurance for your business, consider the following five steps:

1. Realize that you are in a potential flood zone even if you don't make the national flood map. The truth is that floods occur in all 50 states and that more than 30% of property damage by flood occurs in areas not designated as "high hazard" flood zones.

2. Inventory assets and current property values to help assess how much flood insurance you will require.

More than 30% of property damage by flood occurs in areas not designated as "high hazard."

3. Visit www.floodsmart.gov or call our service team to determine if your community participates in the National Flood Insurance Program.

NFIP rates are the lowest available. However, there is a limit to the amount of coverage available through that program. Currently, the limits are \$500,000 for a structure and \$500,000 for contents.

4. If the NFIP limits are inadequate, or you are situated in a community that does not participate in the NFIP, call our service team. Many insurance companies offer additional flood insurance.

5. Buy now. Flood insurance can be purchased at any time. However, most flood policies do not take effect until 30 days after purchase. ■

Hidden Damage

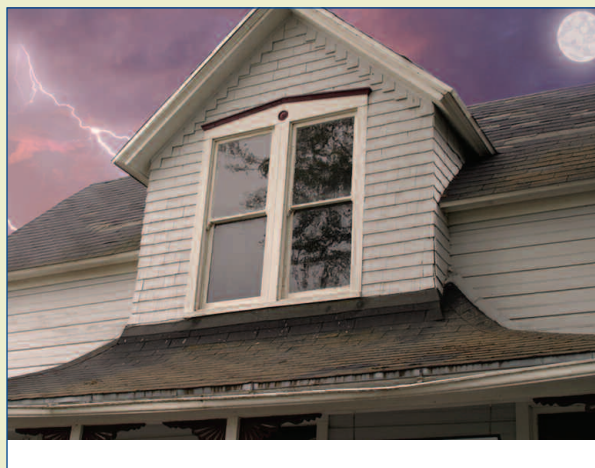
High winds associated with storms and tornadoes damage offices in all parts of the country all year long. While some damage may be obvious, such as a collapsed roof or crumbling wall, other damage can remain hidden for some time. The longer the damage goes unrepaired, the longer it could cause decay, leading to increased repair costs.

When inspecting your building for hidden damage after a storm, leave no stone unturned. Be sure to look for the following:

Wall Cracks

Look for cracks in spots that weren't there before. Cracks as small as a quarter of an inch are a sign your walls may have shifted or settled. Pay close attention

around windows and doors as this tends to be where most cracking occurs.



Breaches in Foundation

New, visible cracks in the foundation are a sign of impending structural damage. Also check for changes in the levelness of the floors.

Plumbing

Check around water heaters and tanks for signs of any leaking that did not previously exist. Check everything thoroughly by turning on faucets, flushing toilets and inspecting all connecting pipes.

Stains

Check walls and ceilings for yellow stains that can signify roof damage.

Gutters

Damaged gutters do not function properly and can ultimately cause harm to the interior of your building.

Storage Rooms

Storage rooms, closets, unused rooms and crawl spaces should be checked. Don't skip areas just because you never use that part of the building. ■

**Thank you for
your referrals.**

If you're pleased with us, spread the word! We'll be happy to give the same great service to all of your friends and business associates.

Cover the Cash You Keep on Premises

If your business keeps cash on the property, you should know that most business insurance policies limit coverage for cash to a specified amount, often minimal. This means, if your business is victimized by thieves, you may not be reimbursed for the full loss.

Consider protecting your cash with a commercial crime insurance policy. This policy can cover several types of losses that make cash disappear, including theft by employees. This policy can also be amended to offer a greater reimbursement for cash that is stolen in a burglary or robbery from tools such as a safe or cash register.

For more information on protecting the cash you keep in your workplace, call our service team today. ■
