

Loss Control Resource Guide

ACCURATE BUILDING VALUE

No one wants to have a property loss that is not fully covered by insurance because the property was found to be underinsured. A professional appraisal of your church's buildings is strongly recommended due to factors including age, building style, construction method, materials and special artisan features. The amount of property insurance you carry on buildings and contents will determine the maximum amount of money you could receive if a disaster were to strike. This is why it is important to have an [accurate replacement cost](#); a figure that differs from both original price and market value. It reflects how much it will cost today, to reconstruct your building. [Your insurance agent](#) can help you obtain an estimate of your building's replacement cost.

ABUSE PREVENTION

Written policies and procedures for abuse prevention are the foundation of a [safe environment](#). Elements of a strong policy include: [screening and selection](#), adult-child interaction guidelines, monitoring procedures, [training](#) and reporting of suspected abuse as required by state law. All staff and volunteers should learn about predatory behavior and how to recognize if a child is in distress. Insurance Board offers a [sample policy template](#) that includes best practice policy considerations, in addition to the [Know Your Score](#) self-assessment tool, which will help your ministry identify potential gaps in your abuse prevention practices.

BOUNDARY TRAINING

Boundary training is specifically for clergy and covers various issues taking into account their roles as pastors, counselors and teachers. Material for clergy includes such subjects as sexual harassment and ethics in personal relationships. [Faith Trust Institute's](#) program titled, "Healthy Boundaries for Religious Leaders" is recognized by the denominations we serve as a program to equip clergy and spiritual teachers to understand the importance of healthy boundaries in ministry, and to critically discern the complexities of boundaries in pastoral relationships.

HUMAN RESOURCES

There are many challenges facing churches, especially with so many [employee and small business](#) concerns. Insurance Board policyholders have access to an exclusive resource through our partnership with AIG and collaboration with Littler Mendelson. The [EPL Pak® Premier](#), is an industry-leading loss prevention resource in helping ministries manage their HR needs. The materials and services available online include handbooks and policies, a human resources forms library, employment law reference manuals, legal reference materials, and employment law podcasts. To access this site, you will register using an email address and your Insurance Board Policy Number which can be found on your MOI or a quarterly bill. You may view a guided tour of the website in [this video](#).



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TENANT AGREEMENTS

Your church is not only a place of worship, but also an [employer and small business](#). Opening your doors means opening your church to liability risk. Whether or not rent is paid, create formal lease or use agreements with all permanent tenants or non-church user groups. Written agreements define responsibilities to maintain and secure premises and to provide appropriate insurance coverage. Lease/use agreements should contain an indemnity agreement by which the tenant/user agrees to hold harmless, defend and indemnify the church for claims arising out of the tenant's/user's use of the facilities to include injury to tenant's employees. We encourage you to view [this video](#) offering insights for managing your contracts and third party relationships. For permanent tenants, agreements define responsibilities to provide liability, property and workers compensation insurance. We do offer your users a [Tenants & Users Liability Insurance Program](#) to help protect your church.

WATER INTRUSION PREVENTION

Churches are frequently empty and more vulnerable to water damage losses. Since clergy and staff can't be in each building all the time, with some facilities empty for days, it's often impossible to detect damage from potentially destructive incidents, like pipe bursts or water intrusion in time to mitigate the damage. The problem is significant, especially since severe weather incidents are increasing around the country. Imagine if you could receive a text or email alert telling you there was an issue before significant damage occurred. Insurance Board has partnered with [HSB Connected Technologies](#) to offer you with a valuable early warning system that uses the latest sensor technology. This technology will detect water and monitor indoor temperatures that may help avoid a disruptive impact on your ministry. Access Insurance Board's [Water Damage Prevention Toolkit](#) to download valuable resources directly to your computer.

ROOF INSPECTION

By completing routine roof inspections, you will be able to detect and repair little problems before they become big problems. While it is important for church staff to periodically do visual inspections from the ground, at least twice a year (spring and fall), a license roofing professional should inspect the roof at least once every 5 years. The roofing professional should provide a report that evaluates the current condition of the roof covering/membrane, the flashing and seams, and the eaves and downspouts. If any damage is discovered, immediate action should be taken to repair/ replace the damage before water can penetrate, and should be completed by a professional roofer with adequate commercial general liability and workers compensation insurance. Please visit our site for valuable information on [roof maintenance](#).

ELECTRICAL INSPECTION

It is critical to obtain regular safety inspections by a certified electrical contractor. Many fires are caused as a result of electrical problems that would easily be detected during an inspection; an electrical inspection will ensure that all electrical systems and components in your facility meet safety standards. Insurance Board's [Electrical Inspection Resource](#) provides more information on the benefits of regular inspections, tips and warning signs to help keep your ministry safe.

FINANCIAL CONTROLS

An independent annual financial audit should be done by an accounting firm or by someone who does not have a part in daily financial transactions. This is the hallmark of [financial transparency](#), and church leadership's accountability to its members. If your by-laws require an annual audit and it is not done, church officers are open to claims for breach of fiduciary duty; especially if it is found that financial losses have accrued because of failure to manage finances. Church embezzlements of very large sums are more common than one might think, particularly if ministries lack financial controls and permit a single person to have exclusive access to financial transactions with little oversight. View this [webcast](#) on considerations for best financial practices for your ministry.