



David G. Sayles Insurance Services

899 LINCOLN AVE.
GLEN ROCK, NJ 07452

PHONE:
(201) 652-0407
(800) 439-0292

FAX:
(201) 652-0721



Response to Workplace Trauma

While any reference to “workplace trauma” typically brings to mind violence, according to the University of California at Berkeley, there are many types of events that can deeply stress your employee community:

- Natural disasters
- Man-caused events, such as explosions, fires, violence, robbery and stalking
- Deaths, including on-the-job, accidental, disease-caused and violent
- Downsizing/layoffs, mergers, buyouts and reorganizations.

A traumatic event may directly affect only one employee, or it can be large enough to be experienced directly by all employees. An employer needs to develop a risk management response to identify and assess risk for potential events and begin a planning



process to respond accordingly. For example, if an employee develops post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the healthcare costs borne by the company will be extensive, and depending upon

the state, there could be an expensive workers compensation claim and a possible lawsuit. Often there will be increased physical health costs secondary to an emotional response that will also affect absenteeism.

When you conduct your next risk management review, make sure to include a trauma response

plan. You might also want to consider insurance options that cover workplace violence and other trauma-related events. Many business insurers now offer coverage in this area that can be tailored to the size and special needs of your firm.

Rescheduling Premium Due Dates

Many businesses are struggling with credit and liquidity problems these days. Juggling payroll and accounts payable isn't easy, and sometimes bills get put on the back burner. It's important to remember, though, that insurance premiums must be paid on time to keep coverage active.

For those businesses that find cash flow strained at certain times of the year but are awash in money other times, it might be beneficial to look into some changes in the way your insurance premiums are paid. Many insurance due dates were originally established almost at random: Whenever

the need for the policy originally arose, the purchase was made, and that policy has been renewed at that time of year ever since.

But if your cash flow and ability to make payments are seasonally affected, did you know your insurance premiums and policy due dates can often be adjusted to coincide with the times of year your financial ability to meet the expenses is at its highest? If it would make sense to move your insurance premium due dates to a different time of year to be more in tune with your business cash flow, talk to your agent today.

Flood Insurance for Contents and More



Should you be concerned about flooding for your business? You don't have to be located alongside a river, lake or ocean to need flood coverage. In fact, over 30% of all flood claims occur in areas designated as low-risk zones.

Commercial insurance policies typically exclude coverage for flood, which includes surface water, waves, tidal water, the overflow of any body of water, or spray from any of these. The policies also usually exclude sewer, drain, sump pump, well and drainage backups or overflows. Even water that seeps in from under the ground isn't covered. To get flood insurance for your business, you'll have to purchase a separate policy.

If you don't own your building, you might opt for a contents-only policy. If your business place is in a moderate or low-risk area, you may qualify for coverage at a preferred rate. Those in high-risk areas will probably have to go with a standard policy, which offers separate building and contents coverage. Premiums are calculated based on the age of your building, its occupancy and number of floors, the location of the insurable contents, the flood zone it's in (according to NFIP maps), and the deductible selected.

Many policies are very affordable, so contact your agent about your risk zone and your flood insurance options.

Manage Your Reputational Risk

You've worked hard to build your reputation in your community. But what if a disgruntled customer publicizes his discontent with you all over the Internet.

The key to managing what is now known as "reputational risk" is prevention. When prevention isn't enough, you need an immediate contingency plan.

The biggest threats to a company's reputation include regulatory compliance failures, failure to deliver quality products or services, the exposure of unethical practices in the company, an unhappy labor force, and environmental breaches, say risk managers.

To identify reputational risks, analyze media such as blogs and message boards

and research various company stakeholders. But be prepared in case your prevention strategy fails.

Since information may appear almost immediately following an incident or unhappy customer reaction, you might not have time to clear things up before the complaint has "gone viral."

Some of the costs associated with product defects, environmental damages or other failures in business service or operations are covered under various insurance policies, so take a look at the insurance products you have. You may find some coverage, but keep in mind the old adage: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Uninsured Motorist Coverage for Business Auto

Uninsured motorists coverage (commonly referred to as UM), is a valuable, yet often misunderstood, automobile insurance coverage available on both your business and personal auto policies. While in a few states it also covers physical damage to your car, its primary purpose is to provide bodily injury coverage for medical bills, loss of income, and pain and suffering.

Here's how it works. You are involved in an accident, and the other driver is at fault. You would normally collect your bodily injury bills from the other driver's auto insurance. Except in this case it turns out he doesn't have any. That would leave you without any coverage for your injuries, even though you were the innocent victim. If you have UM coverage on your own policy, your insurer would step in and provide you the same benefits you would have received from the at-fault driver's policy.

Exactly how much coverage you can collect under your UM coverage is subject to various state laws and policy terms. Some policies only pay up to what the other driver's insurance would have paid at the state-mandated liability limits. Coverage can also vary if the other driver has some liability insurance but not enough to cover your injuries.

Uninsured and underinsured motorist insurance may offer benefits that medical and disability policies don't. Coverage may be broader (your health insurance will not cover pain and suffering, for example), and there are typically no deductibles or co-insurance provisions.



Some Summer Fun

Businesses far and wide take advantage of long summer afternoons and balmy evenings to sponsor office picnics, fairs and outings.

They build morale and give employees an opportunity to introduce family and special clients to the rest of the company while enjoying food, fun and sometimes alcohol.

These events require proper planning, and most businesses take the menu, the venue and the comfort of their guests seriously. What's often missed, though, is the additional protection the business itself might need when hosting one of these special events.

What if one of the kids falls in the sack race and breaks his arm or your sales manager hits a top client in the back of the head with an errant softball throw? Worse, what if one of your employees over-imbibes and causes a fatal car accident on the way home? Suddenly, your previous fears that rain



and ants would wreck the event seem like nothing.

The simple reality is that any company-sponsored activity, be it the regular duties on the job or social activities at a recreational area, creates responsibility for the employer to provide a safe environment and protection from harm. From workers compensation issues arising from whether or not the

social occasion is considered part of employment, to liabilities for injuries to guests, companies need to evaluate the risks stemming from company actions, employ methods to minimize them, and insure the business against costs resulting from any problems that occur.

Proactively address issues such as attendance (employees only, or guests and volunteers), liquor availability, dealing with injuries or misbehavior, and proper insurance for organizations hired to cater or facilitate the festivities. Your general liability and workers compensation insurance might cover some of these issues already, but there may be gaps. If you intend to host a company event this summer, check with your agent about filling any special needs such a gathering might create.

Securing Hazardous Areas

Keep out! That sign says it all, but there are other methods that might offer better security for hazardous or private work areas in your business place. The motivation for keeping others out might be maintaining their safety, or it might be the protection of proprietary or personal information. In any case, it is important that the barriers you erect are not only clear in intention, but effective in execution. Far too many businesses have discovered, much to their chagrin—and significant financial loss—that supposed safeguards served more as a display than an actual security barrier.

Here are a few effective tools and tips to consider:

Locks: A simple tool to put in place,

a keyed lock is one of the most common means of restricting access. However, be careful about what types of keys are used. For example, an easily duplicated key is not optimal, especially if former employees were issued keys when they worked for you. If you have a duplicable key, consider periodic changes of the lock.

Keyless lock or electronic code entrances: These systems require a user to input a code to gain access through a doorway. The obvious vulnerability with these systems is that, if the code never changes, the entire staff may eventually know it. When that occurs, there might as well be no door at all. Be diligent about changing the access code. If possible, provide different codes to different employees.

That way, if someone leaves the company, you can de-activate his or her access code.

Access control cards: The most robust means of protecting entrance to off-limits areas is an access control card system. Such a system is integrated into a building's structure and grants or denies a set of rights to each card (which is assigned to a person). These kinds of systems allow facilities to handle special situations, changing staff, and distributed environments most effectively. Access control card systems provide superior flexibility, but they're expensive. Some of the more cutting-edge variants of these technologies include human interface devices to work in connection with card systems.



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Protecting Your Business at Trade Shows

For many businesses, trade shows represent an effective marketing and networking venue. But don't forget, when you are packing the banners and booth, to make certain your insurance protection follows you to the show. Here are a few possible issues to keep in mind:

- General liabilities, such as prospect injuries at your booth
- Other liabilities related to automobiles and damage to property, and third-party property damage your associates might cause
- Loss or destruction of rented or owned equipment
- Losses from event cancellation
- Adverse weather that causes decreased attendance and/or revenues
- Workers compensation insurance that travels with employees and volunteers.

Check with your insurance provider on these and other possible exposures to loss that can turn what should be a positive marketing opportunity into a painful lesson in loss.



FAX (201) 652-0721

Have we got you covered?

Fill out this form and fax it in.

Or give us a call today.

We'd like to provide you with further information about your business insurance needs and other special coverages. And don't forget your friends! We'd be happy to provide them with the same great service.

Name of someone you'd like us to contact: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____



Business to Business

My name: _____

E-mail: _____

My preferred number: (____) _____

Best time to call: _____

Please call me about:

- ☐ Insuring improvements and betterments
- ☐ Business interruption coverage
- ☐ Disaster planning
- ☐ My business insurance policy
- ☐ Employment practices liability coverage