
Concerns of Building Managers:

- 1. Q. Will more people on the stairs make us more at risk for slips and falls and liability suits?**

A. No. In fact, by having more people use the stairwells, the overall building risk management program can be greatly improved. (See following pages for details)
- 2. Q. Should I be concerned that people will be more susceptible to having a heart attack on the stairs if we allow this program?**

A. On the contrary, through gradual increase of exercise, users will decrease the likelihood of heart attacks. Today, building occupants who could be called upon to use the stairway in an emergency situation, may be more at risk from sudden, fast exertion on the stairway than they are from the hazard they are trying to escape. Stairway to Health allows participants to reduce their risk of heart attacks while familiarizing themselves with the emergency exits.
- 3. Q.. Are you planning on placing signs in the stairwell that might distract people and lead to falls?**

A.We would like to place some information in the stairwell to encourage more use of the stairs and to add some enjoyment to the activity. All such information would be attached in a manner that it could not inadvertently fall off or distract participants, and we will certainly get your approval before affixing anything to your stairwell.
- 4. Q. What about any other painting or decorating ideas in my stairwell?**

A. We recognize that it is "your stairwell". Many stairwells could use a "sprucing up" and we understand that they are the last place property owners want to allocate decorating dollars. By brightening up many stairwells they become, not only more user friendly, but also safer. Any such decorating would be done with your input and approval.
- 5. Q. Will participants be listening to music and therefore putting themselves at more risk for falls?**

A.We anticipate that some people will enjoy listening to music while they use the stairwell. The idea that it puts them at more risk for falls is not correct. Drivers listen to music in their truck, car or school bus, and astronauts listen to music while operating space craft.

Someone using the stairs can listen to music without creating unacceptable risk.

6. **Q. Will participants be carrying any food or beverages?**

A. It seems reasonable that some people may use the stairs to purchase coffee, lunch, etc. that they may bring back to their desk. We understand concerns associated with spills or dropped food on stairs and our users will be encouraged to keep the stairs clean. Through the increased use, inspections of the stairwells, and improved efforts reporting concerns, stairwells should be safer and cleaner than ever.

7. **Q. Will the locked access doors on each floor be propped opened?**

A.No. We understand the importance of security in the building. None of us wants to come back from our exercise to find our purse, laptop, or other valuables missing, due to a door left unlocked. Any pertinent information such as key code access, entrance and exit points will be provided to stairwell users to ensure they use the stairs abiding by building rules.

8. **Q. Why should I allow this increased activity in the stairwell?**

A. The Stairway to Health program in your building will provide the building manager with many benefits. Not only will your elevators be less crowded, but the overall risk management program for your stairwells will be dramatically enhanced and your building will be SAFER !

Enhanced Risk Management with Stairway to Health

The *Stairway to Health* program can be used to not only improve the conditioning of those taking the stairs, but also it can provide major enhancements to the building risk management plan.


Through increased use of the stairways, building occupants become more aware of the location of emergency exits and can also assist in making sure that these exits are in good condition and easily accessible.

(The majority of fire deaths associated with high rise fires can be traced to a lack of familiarity with emergency exits and the location of these exits.)

Knowledge of the location of stairwells can save lives, as can the improved fitness of those who could be called upon to evacuate a building through the stairwells. Clearly, increased stairwell use increases the safety of users.

A key to any effective risk management program is the identity of risk exposures. Through the regular inspection of facilities, *Stairway to Health* participants can be extremely helpful by ensuring that any problems or concerns seen on the stairway are brought to the attention of the property manager. With many extra eyes climbing and descending the stairwells on a regular basis, problems such as burnt out light bulbs, debris, slippery surfaces, loose railings....and more, can be much more readily identified and repaired, thus reducing the likelihood of slips, trips and falls.

It is important for *Stairway to Health* organizers to work with their property manager to ensure the stairwells are in the best possible condition before encouraging increased use. It is important to walk through the stairwell with your property manager to point out any hazards such as loose paint or railings, inadequate slip resistant material, burnt out light bulbs and debris before starting. If the stairs do not have slip resistant material that clearly marks each stair (in a colour that is easy to see), then this should be added immediately for safety reasons.

The use of a simple [check list](#)  can go a long way in assisting the building risk management plan. We recommend that *Stairway to Health* organizers arrange to have a check list completed weekly and ensure that any noted concerns are passed on to the property manager. By taking steps to rotate the responsibility for completion of the check list, users can ensure that potential problems will be less likely overlooked and more people will feel the pride of participation in the building risk management plan.

Problems identified on the check lists should be passed along to the property manager the day they are discovered. All other check lists should be submitted to the office of the property manager on a monthly basis. By providing this information to the property manager it allows for a monthly review by that person of all reports. Such a review can assist in identifying problematic trends and assist property owners in the implementation of steps to reduce the risk of accidents from identified areas of concern.

Developed in partnership by:



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