

CAMP ADMINISTRATION 101

PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE



Whether you own and operate your camp facilities or have a user group agreement, we all have the responsibility to ensure those facilities are safe and last the test of time. Maintaining these facilities properly is the key to make sure this happens. Unfortunately, a lot of the time user groups or organizations do not have adequate budgets to provide sufficient ongoing maintenance to meet and exceed the life span of the facility, causing things to become unsightly and run down quicker than expected. Most all of these concepts can be applied to your indoor and outdoor facilities. Regardless of your budget there are things you can do to help with the longevity of your facilities.

HAVE A PLAN

A preventative maintenance plan is essential to keeping up with your facility use. The plan should include all your preventative maintenance duties and tasks, how much time each task takes, who is responsible for the task and the frequency of each task. If you know these things about the maintenance of your facility, it makes it much easier to maintain.

PRIORITIZE TASKS

Maintenance is time consuming and can be expensive. To prioritize maintenance tasks, use the following guideline on which ones to accomplish first:

- ◆ **Liabilities and Hazards:** Anytime a liability or hazard is identified within your facility it should be addressed immediately. If you cannot accomplish the task in a timely manner, close off the area so no one can get near it.
- ◆ **Mandates:** If it is a mandate from the City, County, or higher up in your organization, you need to attend to those items next to ensure you are in compliance.
- ◆ **Preventative Maintenance:** When you have rectified your liabilities and mandates it is time to go back to your preventative maintenance plan and upkeep your facility on a regular basis.

PROVIDE THE NECESSARY TOOLS

If you are asking your volunteers or front line staff members to assist with maintaining your facility, give them the tools they need to succeed. Make sure your staff and volunteers have access to cleaning supplies, mops, brooms, and basic tools. They don't need access to any large equipment or machinery but the basics will go a long way to make sure they are able to maintain the facility on a daily basis.

SEEK ADDITIONAL TRAINING

Most of us that use these facilities on the camp side are not facility experts. That does not mean we should be clueless on how these facilities should be kept up. Look for training opportunities online or in your area to gain basic knowledge of how to properly maintain your facility.

TRAIN USER GROUPS AND VOLUNTEERS

If you are the owner/operator of the facility take it upon yourself to train your user groups on basic maintenance. Attend their board meetings or and put material together they can reference when they are out using your facilities. If you are the user group, make sure this information gets to your staff or volunteers on site. Make it a point to address this before every program because if your staff or user groups are not trained in keeping up with your facility, they can do more harm than good.



HERE ARE SOME BASIC MAINTENANCE TIPS TO PASS ON TO YOUR STAFF, USER GROUPS & VOLUNTEERS THAT CAN GO A LONG WAY IN KEEPING YOUR FACILITIES IN GREAT SHAPE

- 1. Have an opening and closing checklist.** During camp you should have clear processes and expectations for opening and closing your facilities on a daily basis. Sometimes this can be a lot to remember for staff. Have a checklist of everything that needs to be put away, cleaned, and maintained after opening and prior to closing your facility. Have staff or volunteers follow the checklist each day and sign off on each task on the list. Rotate duties among staff each week so they all play an equal part in maintaining your facility. This will help ensure that all the measures you are taking to upkeep your facilities during camp are getting done daily.
- 2. Have a procedure in place to report maintenance issues.** When a maintenance issue is identified make sure you have a procedure in place for staff to report the issue. Once an issue is reported tackle it immediately to rectify the issue. Putting it on the back burner opens the door for it to get worse or forgotten. If the maintenance issue is a liability hazard secure the area right away.
- 3. Have guidelines in place for wet surfaces and inclement weather.** The one thing that can tear up your outdoor green spaces is rain. If a play area is too wet it poses a safety issue for campers and will also turn your green grass space into mud. On top of that all that water and mud will get dragged throughout your indoor facility when the campers come in. Be diligent on watching the weather and keeping campers inside during inclement weather to increase the longevity of your outdoor facilities.
- 4. Clean up and organize after every activity.** Removing trash, cleaning tables and play areas, putting away equipment, keeping up with craft supplies, and organizing storage areas are essential in the upkeep of your facilities. It will not take long for maintenance and cleanliness issues to arise if these things are not done multiple times throughout the day. Counselors and campers should know they cannot leave an area to go to the next activity until their area is clean and equipment is organized. Make this a habit from day one and your operations will run much smoother.
- 5. Have off season maintenance tasks and procedures each year.** The off season is when you have the time to catch up on your facility needs and get your facility back up to standard after the wear and tear camp puts on it. Don't take this time for granted as the next camp will be here before you know it. After camp, have an off season maintenance plan in place along with an equitable timeline to ensure everything you need done, gets done.



Apply any applicable guidelines above to any facility you operate for your programs, indoor or outdoor. Take your preventative maintenance serious while training, educating, and supervising your staff, volunteers, and user groups. Your maintenance plans and procedures will go a long way to maintain the longevity of your facilities on any budget.



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