

National Hotel Insurance Program Informant

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THOUGHTS OF SUCCESS

The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude to me is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than success, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, gift, or skill. It will make or break a company... a church... a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past... we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10 percent what happens to me and 90 percent how I react to it. And so it is with you...we are in charge of our attitudes.

-Charles Swindoll



FROM THE OFFICE OF MICK COTTOM:

How do I Keep My Insurance Costs to a Minimum?

One question I continually hear is: "How do I lower my insurance costs?" or "Why did my insurance premium go up, I didn't have any claims?". Or maybe a variation is this if someone has had a claim, "That's what I buy insurance for". All of the above are valid questions or statements.

I'll try to address the broad picture in the next few minutes. ***Keep in mind that there are many, many factors that go into the rate you pay for insurance.*** Assuming that your property and your revenue haven't changed since the previous year, then the biggest factor in your rate has to do with your losses and / or the losses the company as a whole has experienced. As you know, insurance is a "shared risk" proposition. Even if you haven't had a loss, if a lot of other hotels have suffered losses and the company has paid out more dollars in claims than it collected in premium, something has to give.

An insurance company may suffer a loss for a few years without taking drastic action. However, as we've seen with Philadelphia, Argonaut Great-Central and a number of Lloyd Syndicates (and others) there is a time they either drastically increase premiums or completely quit writing hotels. Due to the high number of wind and hail storms the past few years, we have seen this happen increasingly in Oklahoma.

So, how do you, as an individual hotel owner keep your rates to a minimum? Obviously, there's not much you can do about wind or hail losses. However, many other types of losses: property, liability, crime, work comp, etc can be minimized with an effective risk management program.

Risk management is just a fancy term for identifying potential losses and how to minimize them. What are some very simple risk management techniques that everyone can utilize?

Here are a couple of thoughts:

- *Start with a thorough hiring process, to include 3rd party background check, previous work comp claims, and check driving record (MVR). This may uncover previous dishonesty incidents, driving under the influence, previous sexual assaults or assaults of any type. This is pretty important information to know about anyone that has contact with guests. Is there anyone at your hotel that doesn't have contact with guests?*

- Once you have the employee on board, have an ongoing training program. Think of your 4 C's and you'll quickly see that your employees are critical in all four.
- Are they aware of appearance, both the property and themselves?
- Do they take pride in the cleanliness and customer service of the property?
- Are they concerned about the comfort and safety of guests?

We could go on for days, even weeks with ideas and areas to look for at your property. Check out our website for more information. Also, we'll be doing some seminars later this Spring to give you more ideas and information. In the meantime, give us a call if you have questions or comments. Our team here at RCI is always available to help you with any challenge you face as it relates to insurance.

Regards, *Mick Cottom*

****RCI Insurance Group is the Exclusive Agent for the National Hotel Insurance Program. We have been serving hoteliers insurance needs since 1982. We serve hoteliers in Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri and throughout the United States.*

Attentiveness

Character of the Month

Showing the worth of a person or task by giving my undivided concentration.

Burglar vs. Homeowner

Submitted by: Amber Helmuth

Burglar:

- There are well over 2 million burglaries in the United States each year.
- Only 13% of the nations' burglary reports are solved by the police.
- Only 15% of property stolen is returned to the rightful owners.
- Every 15 seconds, a home is being burglarized.
- 66% of burglaries are residential, and 62% happen during working hours (9am – 3pm).
- 60% of burglaries occur while a home is occupied.

Homeowner:

- Get an alarm system, one that's monitored by an outside company.
- Install solid doors to prevent a burglar from kicking in the door
- Get deadbolt locks.
- Secure your windows. Make sure you secure and lock your windows when leaving your house.
- Use proper lighting and create a line of sight to your neighbors
- Use your alarm system and your locks. The first step is getting an alarm system & good locks. The second step is actually using them.

Soup Recipes for a Winter Day *Submitted By: Nicole Lewis*

Mexican Corn Soup

- 4 C. fresh corn kernels
- 1/2 C. chopped onion
- 2 T. butter
- 2 T. flour
- 2 C. chicken broth
- 2 C. milk or cream
- 1 C. grated cheddar cheese
- 1 (4 oz.) can chopped green chilies
- 1/2 C. crumpled crisp bacon
- salt and pepper to taste
- tortilla chips

Sauté corn and onion in butter. Cook over medium heat until onion has softened. Stir in flour.

Gradually add in broth and milk and stir until thickened. Do not let boil. Stir in cheddar cheese and green chilies. Cook until cheese melts over low heat.

To serve, add 4 or 5 tortilla chips and sprinkle with bacon.

FEBRUARY IS:

Bake for Family Fun Month

Canned Food Month

Celebration of Chocolate Month

Great American Pies Month

National Cherry Month

National Hot Breakfast Month

National Potato Month

National Snack Food Month

Return Shopping Carts to the Supermarket Month

National Bird Feeding Month

In January 1994, Illinois 10th District Congressman John Porter read a resolution in the Congressional Record making February National Bird Feeding Month. The observance was established because it's one of the most difficult months in much of the U.S. for birds to survive in the wild.

**Submitted By: Karen Phillips*



Is your business ready for a disaster?

Information submitted by: Rhonda Bennett

As the winter season comes to an end, we know spring is right around the corner. But with the spring season comes Mother Nature and all her glory. We can expect anything from snow to hail to tornadoes to flooding rains. So if your hotel is completely destroyed by floods, are you ready? Will your business survive?

The best way to make sure your business will survive is to put together a Business Recovery Plan. Make sure all your employees know the emergency response plan and they know how to carry it out. If they don't know where the lists of the emergency numbers are, your business could be losing valuable time. Does your business run on computer systems? Back up your data with a data storage firm offsite. They can help you protect your data and computer systems. And keep duplicate records. Not only should you back-up computerized data, but any important documents, keep a duplicate copy in a safe deposit box. That way if a fire destroys your property, you have copies of important documents. Regularly review your business recovery plan. Edit it to fit your business and what you need. Find out what works best and stick with it. It could save your business!

WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF A CLAIM:

1. Know what's covered on your policy. If you don't, ask your agent.
2. Be Prompt. File your claim as soon as you can. Don't wait!
3. Gather Documentation. Any inventory lists, police reports, photos, or receipts, have those ready for your agent and adjustor.
4. Work with your adjustor. The better your work with your adjustor the faster your claim can be handled.
5. Keep Records. Keep copies of your receipts. You may need to show your adjustor.
6. Prevent Further Loss. This is crucial. If you don't do everything you can to prevent further loss, and more damage occurs, it may not be covered under your policy.

RCI Insurance Group clients now have access to a full line of over 30 companies for Medicare Supplements/Medicare Advantage Plans and Part D (drug plans).

We also have solutions for your Long Term Care/Nursing Home and Assistant Living concerns. For more information, contact Amber at 1-800-753-5797.

