

Preparing Your Church Property After Lockdown

Spring is a time of renewal and rebirth. As we return to our houses of worship, churches can use this opportunity to look at their property with a fresh set of eyes. While preparing your property to receive guests again, please take the time to review the checklist provided.

INTERIOR

- Prior to return of operations follow [CDC](#) guidelines. Make sure all areas have been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected: shampoo carpets/clean floors; sanitize pews/chairs, bathrooms (floors, sinks, toilets, faucets), doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, phones, hymnals, microphones, trash receptables, keyboards, offering plates, all items in the children's area, and any other high-touch surfaces. Use products that are [EPA approved](#) for use against COVID-19.
- If possible have a professional cleaning company perform the cleaning. If you are relying on staff/volunteers, develop policies for their protection and provide [training](#). A [protective mask](#) covering the mouth and nose should be worn and disposable gloves/gowns for all tasks in the cleaning process including handling trash.
- Decide how you will ensure sanitization and disinfection of commonly used spaces when you begin gathering.
- Make sure sanitization supplies and spill clean up supplies are available. Restock supplies like toilet paper, hand soap and hand sanitizer.
- Launder all choir robes, even if not being used right away.
- Assess all spaces and intentionally limit seating to encourage appropriate [social distancing](#).
- Consult with manufacturer about cleaning and disinfecting any instruments (hand bells, organ, etc).
- Check condition of all steps/stairs. Ensure they are equipped with secure handrails and slip resistant tread surfaces, and free of stored items.
- Ensure all seating (pews, chairs, etc.) is in good condition.
- Make sure all ceilings are free of sagging/bowing/separation. Ensure walls and ceilings are free of crumbling plaster, stains or flaking/peeling paint.
- Basement walls should be dry and free of mold/mildew.
- Check sink, shower and floor drains to make sure they are clean. Pour water down every floor drain to confirm they are not clogged.
- If you turned off your water supply, turn it back on. Run water/flush toilets to confirm proper leak-free operation. Check pipes/valves in concealed spaces for leakage/seepage.
- Make sure all lighted exit signs are working. Check every light bulb, indoors and outdoors. Replace if needed.
- Carpets/rugs should be in good condition and free of tears or wrinkles that could cause tripping.
- Have the HVAC system professionally inspected/cleaned.
- Check/test and have your automatic sprinkler system, alarms, fire extinguishers and ANSUL fire suppression systems serviced.
- Have the electrical system inspected by a licensed electrician. Address any recurring electrical problems (flickering lights, frequent tripping of breakers).
- Be mindful of how many people are on premises at once to complete these tasks and maintain [social distancing](#). Keep a log of any contractors/visitors/guests coming into your facility.
- All stove tops, grease trays, range hoods, and exhaust filters should be free of buildup.
- Discuss and update your building use agreement to reflect the new realities of COVID-19.

EXTERIOR

- Prune/remove dying trees, branches or other vegetation.
- Have the chimney inspected/cleaned.
- Have a roof inspection. Confirm proper operation of drains, gutters, scuppers, and downspouts.
- Make sure all walkways, sidewalks, stairs, and parking lots are free from damage and potential tripping hazards such as raised or uneven surfaces, potholes, etc.
- Check that stained glass is free of defects.
- Check that fences are securely anchored and in good repair.
- Clean/sanitize any outdoor play equipment.
- Walk your grounds to make sure there is not any trash or debris left behind from uninvited visitors.
- For more information on building inspections visit our [website](#).

