

# GROUNDS KEEPING

Fair visitors expect that the grounds will be well maintained and clean. Damaged buildings, loose trash or leaking faucets can detract from the fun of the fair but also can be a source of accidents or property damage.

Whether the fairgrounds are used year round or just during the run of the fair, grounds keeping requires planning.

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GROUNDS KEEPING



## WALKING PATHS AND PARKING AREAS

Walkways and parking areas can quickly become cracked and broken, washed out or overgrown. They also may have obstacles or other debris that can present tripping hazards, block the flow of traffic or impede emergency exits or emergency equipment, or may even have sharp or low hanging protrusions into the walking area.



*Keep walking paths and parking areas clear of debris.*

Periodic inspections of both indoor and outdoor walking and parking surfaces and areas should be conducted prior to the fair to identify and address any issues. When conducting a periodic inspection, agricultural societies should look for:

- Sudden changes in elevation in walking surfaces. These are often related to cracks in the floor, drainage or erosion, vehicle use or animal burrows. Entryways and exits can also show sudden elevation changes when property settles or roots grow under foundations.
- Worn carpet seams. Where sections of carpeting meet, such as between rooms or by entrances, the carpet may curl upward and could present a tripping hazard.
- Items stored on stairways, such as at grandstands or other outdoor facilities. These can lead to trips and falls.
- Loose or deteriorating floorboards in grandstands or other elevated platforms. Check for missing or unsecure railings, too.
- Branches, trash or other debris blocking paths or creating potential tripping hazards.
- Nails, glass or other sharp items that could damage vehicle tires or cause injury to feet of people and animals.
- Spills or other wet areas in walking areas, which could lead to slips and falls. These should be addressed in a timely manner. Wet areas could be caused from leaks or from poor drainage.
- If leaks or drainage are causing wet areas or muddy spots, the leaks should be addressed or drain pipes reviewed to direct runoff away from walking paths.
- Muddy areas, potholes or low-lying spots in parking areas. In addition to creating tripping hazards, these can damage vehicles or negatively affect drainage. Consider redirecting traffic around such areas until they can be repaired or addressed.
- Protruding sharp objects, such as nails, twisted metal or rough wooden edges. Pay attention to entryways and other areas where patrons walk. A nail or sharp edge does not have to protrude far for someone to be hurt. Multiple people moving through an entryway, particularly for a show or event, may be shoulder to shoulder and come in contact with sharp edges.
- Inspect benches, picnic tables and bleachers, as wood may have rotted exposing nails or causing splintered material.
- Clearance around entrances and exits particularly emergency exits. There should be clear walking paths to allow people to evacuate buildings quickly in an emergency. This includes clearance on the outside of the building so doors open easily.
- Lighting and emergency lights in walkways or parking lots. These allow people to spot hazards and other objects, and during an emergency can assist with people exiting the building or grounds.
- Clearance around fire extinguishers and electrical panels. Fire extinguishers and electrical panels should be free of obstruction and have clear access.



## Build Awareness to Prevent Slips, Trips and Falls

MCIT's Step Wisely is an all-season slip, trip and fall prevention program that offers multiple resources to help raise awareness about common workplace slip, trip and fall hazards. No-cost Step Wisely resources are available at [MCIT.org/step-wisely/](http://MCIT.org/step-wisely/), or members can contact their loss control consultants for more information at **1.866.547.6516**.

## BUILDING CONDITION

Fairgrounds are made up of many buildings and structures. If left unchecked, they can deteriorate and create opportunities for the elements or vermin to enter the building and cause increased property damage and safety hazards.



*Unchecked buildings could lead to greater property damage and safety hazards.*

Regular inspection and maintenance is essential to minimize the effects of deterioration. Detecting and repairing damage or other poor building conditions early often makes the costs of repairs less than if deterioration goes untreated.

It is important to check the fairgrounds and the buildings regularly but also after unplanned occurrences, such as strong storms. After heavy snowfalls, for example, the weight of the snow can put stress on roofs. The roofs may sag or even collapse, damaging property or injuring people within.

Attention should also be paid to nearby foliage. If trees or limbs appear to be dead or drooping near buildings, storms or other events could cause them to fall and damage the building. This is also a concern around electrical lines, parking lots and walkways.

Trees or limbs that pose a risk should be controlled to reduce the potential for damage. Trimming and removing trees or limbs should be handled by well-qualified individuals or licensed third parties, especially near buildings and power lines.

## VERMIN

Many animals and insects make fairgrounds their home. Holes and burrows from gophers or chipmunks can create tripping hazards to people and animals.

Nests from birds or other animals can damage buildings, and insects can sting and be a nuisance.

Controlling for these pests requires identification and specific measures, depending on the type of vermin encountered.

Prior to the fair, inspections should be made for:

- Holes or burrows in walkways or paths and along foundations of buildings—both inside and out.
- Active wasp nests and ant colonies.
- Bird nests and rodents. Indoor animal droppings may provide indications of an infestation.
- Be wary when cleaning up droppings, as harmful bacteria may become airborne if it is disturbed. If possible, ventilate the area and always wear appropriate personal protective equipment.



*For specific information and recommendations about removing vermin, consider consulting with local animal or pest control specialists.*