



# WATCHTOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC.

25 Columbia Heights  
Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY AND TREASURER  
RISK MANAGEMENT OFFICE

Phone (718) 560-5000  
Fax (718) 560-8877

October 1, 2000

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS IN THE UNITED STATES

Dear Brothers:

All of us are concerned for the safety and well-being of those gathering at Kingdom Halls to worship Jehovah God. In recent months the Society has received reports of accident-related injuries and potentially hazardous circumstances at some Kingdom Halls. Since similar situations may exist in other congregations, we are bringing these matters to your attention so that you may take any advisable precautionary measures.

**1. Hazardous chemicals:** The October 8, 1999 *Awake!* article "Protect Your Child From Accidents" advised as follows regarding household chemicals: "Store them out of the child's reach in a lockable cupboard. Keep them in their original containers so that they are clearly identified. Keep strict watch over the products as you use them, and always put them away, even if you leave the room for only a moment." Elders may use these points as guidelines to make sure that children are not harmed by chemicals used in cleaning or maintenance at the Kingdom Hall.

**2. Trip hazards:** Several injuries have occurred when someone failed to notice a step they had to walk up or down. Usually these accidents happen where there are only one or two steps between surfaces such as driveways, sidewalks and entryways. Good construction designs can minimize such hazards but may not eliminate them entirely. Signs and high-visibility color strips along surface edges are two means of reducing accidents caused by such missteps. Any speed bumps and parking space "stops" should be placed and marked in such a way as to reduce the likelihood of someone tripping over them.

**3. Outdoor lighting:** Consideration should be given to providing adequate lighting in all pedestrian traffic areas, including parking lots. In addition to reducing the likelihood of nighttime injuries, good lighting may also enhance security.

**4. Platform safety:** Chairs should not be set up close to stairs or the edge of platforms. Program participants should be able to move their seats back to stand up and otherwise move around as needed without being so close to the edge that one false step might result in them falling off.

We know that you share our concern for the welfare of the friends and guests and will follow through on these matters and in other ways do what is necessary to ensure that all who come to the Kingdom Hall have a safe visit. May Jehovah bless your efforts as you continue to work hard in so many ways in support of His Kingdom.

Your brothers,

*Watchtower B. & T. Society*  
OF NEW YORK, INC.

cc: Traveling Overseers  
Assembly Hall Committees