

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses



Risk Management Office
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October 15, 2002

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS IN THE UNITED STATES

Dear Brothers:

“Is there something we can do to prevent a serious injury at our Kingdom Hall?” This is a question that each body of elders should ask, in view of the number of accidents that occur on congregation property. Please include the following points in your consideration of this subject:

Snow and ice – Last winter we received numerous reports of broken bones and other serious injuries resulting from someone slipping on ice or snow at Kingdom Halls. To help prevent such accidents, please ensure that snow and ice are removed promptly from paved surfaces and that ice does not reform near melting piles of snow. De-icing compounds may be needed. In bad weather we might drop off and pick up passengers at the door, rather than having them walk to and from a parked car.

Ladders and roofs – Working even a few feet above ground greatly increases the risk of injury. A number of brothers and sisters were seriously hurt in falls from ladders and elevated surfaces during the past year. Even experienced workers can fall if they do not follow good safety practices, such as those outlined in the *Awake!* of August 8, 1999.

Lawn mowers – Several persons were seriously injured recently during grass-cutting operations at Kingdom Halls. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions, including taking steps to prevent passersby being hurt by projectiles hurled from the mower. Check the lawn for debris beforehand.

If an accident does occur, please carefully follow the instructions in the **revised T-5-E Accident Report** of 2/02, which accompanies this letter. Please give special attention to step #4, which emphasizes that the Risk Management Office should be contacted promptly by telephone in every instance where an injury requires medical treatment beyond first aid. In some cases elders have incorrectly concluded that the branch did not need to be informed of an accident unless help was needed to pay medical bills or other expenses. Then several months later, when unexpected complications have arisen, we have been contacted and asked to handle matters. In order to ensure the best outcome for injured persons and at the same time protect the congregation's interests, we should be informed promptly whenever medical treatment beyond simple first aid rendered on-site is required.

If all involved give proper attention to safety and cooperate in preventing accidents and properly handling them when they do occur, many serious problems can be avoided. We thank you for giving your attention to these important details. Please accept this expression of our love and of our best wishes for Jehovah's blessings on all of your efforts to care for His sheep.

Your brothers,

*Christian Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses*

cc: Traveling Overseers
Assembly Hall Committees
Regional Building Committees