

4/2004

Health Care Facility Safety Solutions

**A Pedestrian Safety System to Increase
Facility Safety and Reduce Liability**



Commercial Products

Increase Profits by Reducing Liability

*Those over 65 are hospitalized for fall-related injuries **5 times** more often than they are for injuries from all other causes.*

Costs of Fall Injuries Among Older Adults

Guests will slip and fall. These falls can cost health care facilities millions of dollars per case if a jury determines that the guest's injury was caused by the facility's negligence. These facilities must take reasonable measures to keep their guests safe from foreseeable dangers.

What are reasonable measures? A health care facility's first line of defense against expensive

litigation is the installation, documentation and use of a comprehensive pedestrian safety system. Most slip and fall cases lack direct evidence to prove the facility's liability. Injured guests must, therefore, frequently rely on circumstantial evidence to prove their case. A facility's failure to have a written pedestrian safety system in place with basic records and inspection logs may support the injured guest's claims in the eyes of a jury.

65% of all lost workdays are due to slip-fall accidents

Source: Liberty Mutual

How can facilities reduce exposure to this type of liability?

- Implement and use the Rubbermaid Commercial Pedestrian Safety System
- Maintain records of employee safety training on use of the system
- Immediately investigate any incidents and document findings:
 - Ensure that guest obtains proper medical evaluation and care
 - Take photographs as soon after the accident as possible
 - Obtain witness statements
 - If appropriate, seek legal counsel



Statistical Trends in Health Care Litigation

Worker's Compensation and liability insurance rates are increasing on the average of **30%** per year.
 Source: Jury Verdict Research, Insurance Information Institute

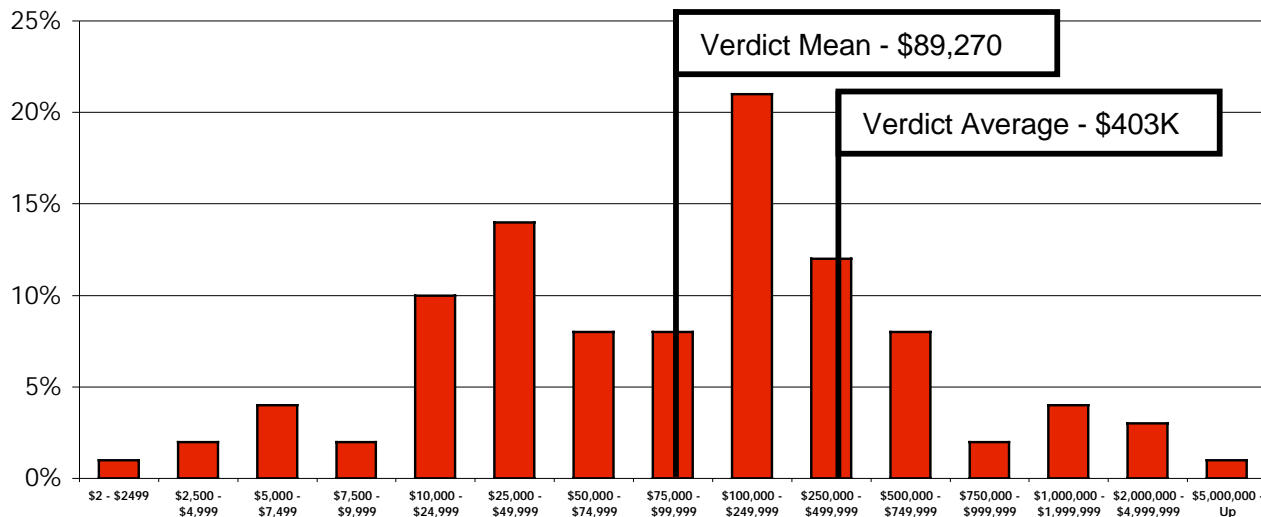
Case Study*: Average savings over 5 years with prevention of just one slip and fall accident using Rubbermaid safety products

Initial cost of Rubbermaid safety products:	\$5,672
Annual replacement cost (20% per year):	\$4,537 over 4 years
5 Year total product cost:	\$10,209 for 5 years
Median cost of 1 accident (see chart below):	\$89,270

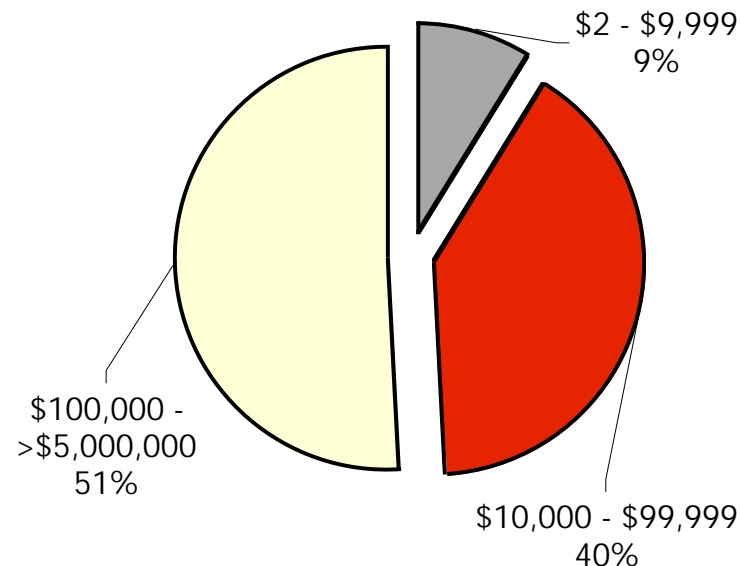
Savings with prevention of 1 accident: \$79,061

*Facility Used for Study: 1 story, 120 room Extended Care Facility

Award Distribution, Health Care Claims Involving Premises Liability



Majority of Health Care Premises Liability Verdicts are Greater than \$105,000



Charts: Personal Injury in the Hospitality Industry, JVR 2000

Lobby/ Building Entrance

FACTS: Lobbies are very susceptible to slip and fall accidents. The floors are frequently polished surfaces (very slippery when wet), with a high volume of traffic. Patients / guests are not always in the best of health. Guests track in water and dirt on rainy / icy days.



Stable Safety Sign



Mobile Barrier



Audio Guard with 36" Safety Cone



Site Safety Hanging Sign



Over-the-Spill Station Kit



Main Lobby Entrance

PROBLEMS:

- Water & dirt tracked in
- Going from interior to exterior walking surface
- Guests distracted

SOLUTION:

Audio Guard with 36" Safety Cone: audible warning catches guests' attention and alerts them to hazards. 12 second message can be recorded.

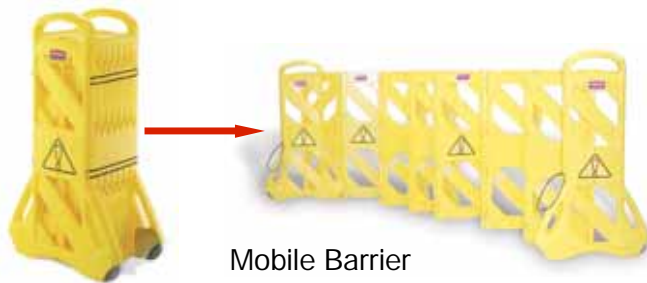
Location	# in Building	Multiplier	Total Needed	Item #	Description	Placement Notes
Lobby Main Entrance		2		6289	Audio Guard with 36" Safety Cone	For wet / icy days & cleaning
Outdoor Entrances to Lobby (note 1)		1		9S11	Mobile Barrier	For maintenance work & cleaning
		1				For bad weather & cleaning
Interior Entrances to Lobby (note 2)		1		9S09	Stable Safety Sign	For bad weather & cleaning
Main Floor Restrooms		2				Store in restroom / janitor's closet
		1		9S16	Site Safety Hanging Sign	Blocks doors when cleaning, store conveniently
Reception Desk		1		4251	Over the Spill Station Kit	Quick Spill Response

Note 1: Outdoor Entrances include main entrances and all doors leading in from outside

Note 2: Indoor Entrances include all hallways entering lobby. Also includes all escalators & elevators. Count each elevator separately

Cafeteria / Restaurant

FACTS: By their nature, cafeterias and restaurants are key areas for slip and fall claims in a health care facility. Guests spill drinks and food which are not promptly cleaned up. Also an aging population and the higher frequency of falls in this age group coupled with their more frequent visits to health care facilities results in a higher likelihood of accidents.



Wet Floor

PROBLEMS:

- Pedestrians ignore wet floor and section closed signs and walk across floors being cleaned, then slip, fall and sue.

SOLUTION:

Mobile Barrier: Cleaning crew can barricade a section of the cafeteria being cleaned to prevent entry of pedestrians.

Location	# in Building	Multiplier	Total Needed	Item #	Description	Notes
Restaurants & Cafeterias		12		9S07	Folding Safety Cone	Easy to reach locations, front & back of house
		6		4254	Over the Spill Tablet Pads	Mount behind / on waste containers
		2		9S11	Mobile Barrier	For cleaning / to close off areas of dining room

Patient Halls

FACTS: There are many hazards on guest halls in health care facilities from rolling beds to wet floors. The real challenge in a health care facility is the fact that it is open and in use 24 hours per day.



Mop and Finish Floors

PROBLEMS:

- Hallways must remain open, even when being stripped and finished
- Current solution: floor sign with "walk left/right" ineffective. Pedestrians walk right through

SOLUTION:

Mobile Barrier: easy to store and deploy barricade solutions. Prevents pedestrian access to areas of facility.



Mobile Barrier



Site Safety Hanging Sign



Stable Safety Sign



Folding Safety Cone



Cleaning Patient Rooms

PROBLEMS:

- Preventing guests from entering rooms during cleaning

SOLUTION:

Site Safety Hanging Sign: Blocks entrance, vinyl sign rolls up for easy storage

Location	# in Building	Multiplier	Total Needed	Item #	Description	Placement Notes
Fire Extinguishers		1		9S07	Folding Safety Cone	Mount beside / over fire extinguisher
Janitor / Maid carts		2		9S09	Stable Safety Sign	Carry on cart
		2		9S16	Site Safety Hanging Sign	Carry on cart
Janitor's Closet		1		9S11	Mobile Barrier	Use for maintenance

Elevators, Stairwells and Service Areas

FACTS: Elevators, stairwells and service areas are frequently overlooked when calculating safety needs. Service areas, in particular, are easy to overlook since they are not used by patients. Workplace injuries, however, are a real problem for employers. Properly notifying employees of safety hazards is essential for maintaining a safe workplace.



Employee Break Room

PROBLEMS:

- Difficult to store traditional plastic signs
- Spills in break room
- Track up clean floors, slip on wet floors

SOLUTION:

Folding Safety Cone: Cone is large and eye-catching when deployed, yet folds up and is stored in an compact 8" diameter shell.



Folding Safety Cone



Stable Safety Sign



Hanging Safety Sign



Stairwells/ Doorknobs

PROBLEMS:

- No good way to effectively sign stairs
- Falling on stairs is more dangerous than falling on flat surface

SOLUTION:

Hanging Safety Sign: Safety sign hangs on stair rails to alert pedestrians of hazard.
•Also hangs on doorknobs

Location	Qty per Floor	# Floors	Multiplier	Total Needed	Item #	Description	Placement Notes
Stairwells	x		4		6110	Hanging Safety Sign	Hang on railing & door knobs
Elevators	x		1		9S09	Stable Safety Sign	Use when cleaning
Location	# in Building		Multiplier		Item #	Description	Placement Notes
Kitchens & Services			1		9S07	Folding Safety Sign	Mount in easy to find location
Employee Break Rooms			1				Mount in easy to find location

Barricades for Maintenance Projects

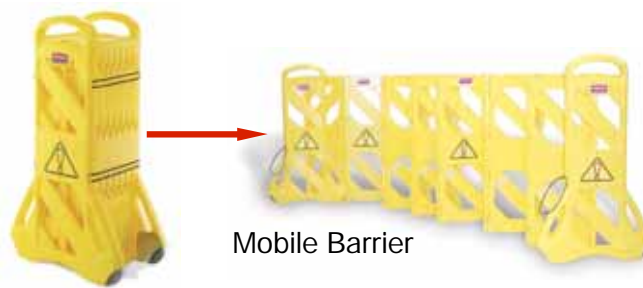
FACTS: Anytime there is a maintenance project in the facility, safety signs alone just aren't enough. Whether its replacing overhead fluorescent bulbs, repairing elevators or pressure washing the building and sidewalk, barricades should be used. Barricades don't just warn, they prevent access to the area.



Indoor Maintenance

PROBLEMS:
 •Ceiling tiles and light bulbs need replacing requiring use of ladder

SOLUTION:
Mobile Fence: Maintenance crew can barricade area.



Elevator Repair

PROBLEMS:
 •Elevator needs repair
 •Pedestrians try to use elevator









SOLUTION:
Mobile Barrier: Repair person can block off elevator to prevent use.

Location	# Patient Rooms	Divide By	Total Needed	Item #	Description	Notes
Indoor Maintenance Projects		60		9S11	Mobile Barrier	13' long
Large indoor / outdoor maintenance		120		9S13	Mobile Fence	24' long

Safety Equipment Audit

Average savings with prevention of 1 accident:

\$79,061

<u>Products</u>	<u>Number</u> From previous pages	<u>Have</u> Products already own	<u>Total</u> Products recommended
 Audio Guard with 36" Safety Cone Item # 6289	()	- ()	=
 Mobile Barrier Item # 9S11	()	- ()	=
 Stable Safety Sign Item # 9S09	()	- ()	=
 Site Safety Hanging Sign Item # 9S16	()	- ()	=
 Over-the-Spill Station Kit Item # 4251	()	- ()	=
 Folding Safety Cone Item # 9S07	()	- ()	=
 Over-the-Spill Tablet Pads Item # 4254	()	- ()	=
 Mobile Fence Item # 9S13	()	- ()	=

Probing Questions to Ask:

1. Do you have a consistent pedestrian safety training program with standardized products in place? Yes No
2. How many slip and fall incidents did you record last year?

3. Are you separately tracking all of the costs associated with safety? Yes No
4. What is the most hazardous area of the facility?

5. How long are spills on the floor before being cleaned? _____
6. Do you have a program to walk the facility to monitor spills/hazards? Yes No
7. Who is responsible for cleaning up spills in the facility?

8. How do you handle hazardous/body fluid spills?

9. What is your current process for cleaning halls that can't be closed? _____
10. How many house cleaning crews do you have?

11. Are there unique safety concerns in your facility?
