Lessons Learned

Title: Faulty Clothes Dryer Control Causes Fire

Loss Amount: $86,000

Situation:

A fire in the laundry room of an animal hospital damaged much of the building and the hospital's equipment. An investigation revealed that the fire was caused by a clothes dryer that was left unattended after business hours and failed to shut off automatically. It overheated and caught fire.

Lessons Learned:

The operation of equipment when nobody is around is always a potential hazard if something goes wrong. The following steps should be taken to reduce the risk of similar accidents:

- Perform laundry activities well before the end of the workday so washers and dryers are not operating and have been allowed to cool down.
- Designate an employee to confirm that all laundry equipment is shut off and clothes removed before leaving the premises.
- Dispose of lint that accumulates inside and around dryers. Lint buildup due to poor housekeeping, especially from the area behind dryers, is a common fire hazard.
- Conduct scheduled maintenance on laundry equipment. Such maintenance could have identified the faulty shut off control and prevented this loss.

For Further Assistance in the Prevention of all Types of Losses:

- Call VISC at 888.762.3143
- Call the Fireman's Fund Loss Control Help Desk toll-free at 888.527.6872

“Lessons Learned” is a monthly feature provided by the CVMA Insurance Program and is designed to promote practice safety, which contributes to employee well-being, morale, increased productivity, controlling insurance costs, and potentially enhancing your bottom line.

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