Non-maintenance of church property is money wasted.

Unless the Parish Maintenance Committee assures the regular inspection and maintenance of church property, it will deteriorate and minor problems will become major maintenance problems costing much more to rectify.

We recommend that your Maintenance Committee conduct an organized maintenance check on your church property twice a year, in early spring and in the fall. A checklist system will assist you with the inspections of your property and is included in Appendix 205B – Maintenance Inspection Checklists.

You must remember that once you have identified problems, you must immediately plan corrective action. Most problems may be easily resolved. Other problems need more consideration and study.

Please remember that when you are asking for new construction, repair or replacement you should demand quality material, quality workmanship and good supervision by the consultants (engineers, architects, specialists, etc.).

Over and above the semi-annual inspection suggested in the following pages, please check the church property after every unusual storm.

INSPECTION CHECKLISTS - SPRING AND FALL

Important points to remember:

- The money invested in the church and rectory buildings is considerable and care and effort are required to safeguard this investment. To obtain the best possible life from the materials and structure, a programme of preventative maintenance is required.

- The task of maintenance can be simplified if it is done systematically instead of haphazardly. Preventative maintenance involves regular checking on those parts that are liable to get out of good working order. Regular attention to the condition of the property and early correction of possible defects will extend the life of equipment and materials as well as save time and money.

- No one is to attempt structural changes or repair of operation equipment, electrical systems or plumbing unless he/she is skilled and obtains the advice of a consultant.

- The parish office should keep all the guarantees, service agreements and instructions that come with various appliances in one safe place. The instructions should be read carefully before any appliance is operated. If anything goes wrong that cannot readily be corrected, the local utility company or servicing agent should be called.

- The checklists should be made the responsibility of several people on the Maintenance Committee and a report made to the Committee when it meets. All notes, observations and discussions should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

EXTERIOR CHECKLIST

1. Grounds

The soil surface should be graded to slope from all buildings so that all surface water and rainwater from the walls and roof of the building can flow away from the building and its foundation.

It is advisable to check the surrounds whenever there is a storm or heavy rainfall to see if the grounds drain as required. Failure of water to drain away properly may cause wet crawl spaces, basements and potential problems with buildings settling because of softened soil, or freezing and thawing soil, at the foundation level.

2. Infestation

Chemical treatment of the structure and adjacent soil will drive insects away. Good design also helps. Wood parts of the building must be separated from the ground by solid masonry with no cracks. No matter what protective measures are taken, a periodic inspection should be made at least every six months if the building is in an area where infestation is common.

3. Windows and Doors

Examine closely all doors, opening and closing them several times, to see that they fit well. They should all close and latch properly and not be warped out of shape. Wooden doors and window frames tend to swell and shrink with climate changes. Sometimes a warped door will straighten in hot, dry weather. If this occurs, painting the sides and edges of the door will keep it from warping again. Try opening and closing all windows to see they operate properly and especially whether or not they close tightly to keep out the weather.

4. Roof

The roof generally receives the hardest wear of any part of the structure because of rain and sleet, wind, hot sun, and alternate freezing and thawing temperatures. As a result, it will develop leaks. A roof leak is most likely to occur in the flashing where the roof joins the chimney or in the valleys where two roof slopes meet. These areas are protected by metal flashings that prevent water from leaking into the building. Such flashings should be inspected for signs of rust at least once each year and sealed if needed.
If the valleys of a roof become filled with snow and ice, a temporary roof leak may result from water backing up under the shingles. Clogged down spouts or gutters may also cause roof leaks, and they should be clean of leaves, trash and other materials.

INTERIOR CHECKLIST

1. Foundation

Foundation walls are subject to a wide variety of stresses and strains that cause concrete and other masonry to expand and contract. This sometimes results in cracks, leaks, or condensation problems.

2. Basement-Crawl Space

If the building has a basement, check it carefully. A dry basement is important to comfortable living. A wet basement can be easily detected. Check the walls for black mold or for a white powdery substance called efflorescence. Look for rust or water stains on wood, walls, under stairs, and in the furnace casing. The drainage of rainwater by good outside grading and by the use of swales is important. In humid areas, condensation will take place. Good ventilation of the basement or brief periods of turning on the heating system may well eliminate such dampness. Dehumidifiers are also helpful.

3. Floors

Floors that have been exposed to water for a short time may warp and bulge-upwards, and require refinishing. There are other reasons for floor troubles. Perhaps the floor joists are too small or lack support from adequate bridging (wood blocking between joists) thereby causing sagging or sloping. Wide-cracks between the floorboards are a sign of poor workmanship, or shrinkage caused by wood that was improperly dried or not stored at the time of installation.

4. Decoration

Peeling and blistering of paint finishes are signs of trouble which has been caused by incorrect initial application or moisture in the wood. Peeling wallpaper likewise may be caused by poor initial application or moisture in the wall. To prevent recurrence of the problem, the source of moisture must be located and corrected, and then paint or paper may be reapplied. Bulging plaster on the ceilings is dangerous and should be repaired. When suspected, it can often be detected by pressing a broom handle against the ceiling and observing if there is any give in the plaster.

Floors should be firm and level. A finished floor can be spoiled by neglect or use of strong cleaning materials. Fortunately, floors that are rough, stained, discoloured, blemished, burned, and gouged usually can be cured by refinishing.

5. Attic

Condensation occurs in the attic principally because of easy pathways for moisture to migrate from the living quarters, or because of inadequate ventilation. The louvers (ventilators) in the attic should remain open to provide circulation of air throughout the year. Closing these ventilators can produce excessive condensation, and the resulting moisture may cause rapid deterioration of parts of the roof, wall or ceilings.

6. Plumbing

There are two plumbing systems in most buildings. One provides water for kitchen, bathroom, laundry and other uses. The second plumbing system vents and drains waste water from all fixtures. Plumbing suffers from the two major problems of leaking and being clogged with rust and deposits. Leaks are easy to spot and low water pressure can be seen when you flush toilets with a few faucets open. In older buildings, galvanized and brass piping will mean that eventual replacement must be anticipated because of pipe clogging and joint leaks.

7. Heating and Air-Conditioning

Poor heating is a major complaint. The causes may be insufficient insulation, a poorly functioning system, and/or undersized unit. All of these items are easy to check and expert help is available. With proper use and maintenance, the air-conditioning unit will provide efficient cooling for many years.

8. Electrical

Ascertain that there are sufficient power circuits to run whatever appliances or equipment is to be used. Are all exterior plugs fitted with ground fault connectors? Has an electrician periodically checked all aluminium wire connections? Are there ground fault interrupters on all exterior, kitchen, and bathroom circuits? If not, have an electrician install them. If any lights flicker or fuse blow or breakers trip often, call in an electrician to examine the circuitry. Have an electrician check all aluminium wire connections periodically.

Warning: A person without any knowledge and experience of electricity should not be entrusted with the knowledge of this checklist.

Locate the fuse box or circuit breaker and inquire about its operation from an electrician. These devices are the safety valves in the electrical system. When an electrical outlet fails to work it often indicates a blown fuse or a tripped circuit breaker. The cause of failure should be located and corrected before a new fuse is installed or the breaker reset.

9. Safety - General

Room doors should swing into rooms, not into a hallway. Hinged doors on closets must open outward. A door that provides access to a down stairway should be hinged to open away from the stairs, even if it opens into a hallway. (Building Code Requirements).

For each room without an exterior door, plan at least one window large enough, low enough, and easy to open to provide an exit in case of fire if other escape routes are blocked. Stow a rope ladder nearby to use if the window is high off the ground.

Always find ways to improve your safety in a church and rectory. Some hints to consider:

- Install grab bars or handrails in the bathroom.
- Use skid proof mats in tubs.
- Do not leave cakes of soap in the tub or shower.
- Anchor down all throw rugs.
- Keep flammable articles away from fire.
- Stairways should be clean of boxes, luggage and other objects.
- A light at the top of stairways or at the bottom step will provide sufficient light at night and reduce the possibility of accidents.
- Check gas burners often for leaks.

The kitchen can be the most dangerous area of the rectory or church. It has more equipment than other rooms, and activities tend to be concentrated there. Keep all appliances in good repair.

Insulate any hot water pipes under the sink so that touching them will not result in burns.

10. Safety - Burglary

Most professional thieves will get into a building no matter what kinds of locks are installed or other precautions are taken. However, many robberies are not performed by professionals, and good hardware with locks that are difficult to pick will often act as a satisfactory deterrent. An automatic burglar alarm system provides maximum burglar protection. Electric, gas and water meters should be outside the church and rectory to eliminate the need for strangers to enter in order to read them. The utility company will move meters outside for a minor charge.

There are many things which can be done to discourage a thief. It is important to remember that most burglars are quite cautious. One of the most common ways a burglar enters a home is through unlocked doors or poorly locked doors and windows.

Sliding glass patio doors are particularly vulnerable break-in points. The doors can often be removed by lifting them from the grooves they slide in. Spacers or protruding screw heads can be installed in the grooves over the door to prevent this type of removal. Most patio doors have weak latches that can easily be broken by prying the door away from the frame. Placing a piece of pipe in the bottom grooves can prevent the door from being opened if the latch is broken. There are special sliding door locks that are both strong enough and of such a design as to prevent removal of the door.

When considering the installation of a new exterior door keep in mind the following: install a front door peep-hole and chain guard so that you can be sure of the caller before you open the door. More expensive indoor-outdoor intercoms and monitors provide maximum protection. Be careful not to install mail slots within reach of the inside door knob or lock. It is easy for burglars to open doors through such openings.

If the primary lock is the key-in-the-knob type, it is easily detached and should be replaced with a stronger lock or an additional lock should be installed. Exterior doors should be equipped with either a dead bolt or a self-locking dead latch. The term ‘dead bolt’ refers to the fact that the bolt cannot be moved except by turning a knob or key. Be careful when buying locks. All too often what appears to be a good brass lock is nothing more than brass-plated soft metal that breaks very easily and offers little protection against forced entry.

When recommending the installation of locks to the buyer keep the following in mind. Change all exterior lock cylinders in the house. Lock garage doors. Check basement security. Unlocked basement windows and basement doors can provide a perfect entry. Provide locks for all windows and doors. Lock basement doors leading into the house. All windows to which a burglar can gain access should have key locks which are easy to install and not expensive. Too many locking devices can create a fire hazard by interfering with an emergency escape. This is a major concern when a double cylinder lock is used. Be sure the key is accessible.

Burglar alarm systems range from inexpensive battery operated units that protect a single door or window to sophisticated systems which secure the entire house and alert the police or a private protective service. For maximum protection, all doors and windows should be part of the alarm system. Sophisticated electronic alarm systems are now available to signal the arrival of unwanted persons. Crossing the field of surveillance trips an alarm.

The majority of burglars are unwilling to enter a house when someone is in it, so any steps taken to create the illusion that the rectory is occupied will help to prevent forced entry. Adjust the window shades or blinds as if someone were at home. One way to suggest that someone is at home is to leave a radio on or an air-conditioner running and to leave several lights burning. Use port lights, patio lights, garage lights, and garden lights, and leave some or all of them on all night.

Consider the following suggestions:

- Contact the local police department and request a home security check.
- Inquire whether they provide etching equipment for marking of valuables.
- Demand credentials before admitting salesmen or repairmen.
- Do not leave ladders outside – lock them up securely.
- Do not leave the door unlocked if you are just out momentarily, or are expecting someone.

- Do not try to hide an extra key anywhere on the outside of the house, and do not leave a note telling a friend or relative where you have gone and when you will return.
- Last, but not least, never hide valuables or large amounts of money in the church or rectory.

No protection is perfect, and it may happen that a burglar will gain entry. Should that happen, there is another rule police believe in. Your best protection against violence is simply to say, "Just tell me and I will give you anything you want." Your personal safety is far more important than some lost valuables.

11. Safety - Fire

a) When the alarms start ringing, never attempt to put out the fire unless you can see it is confined and have an extinguisher on hand. **Do not waste time.** Get out of the church and rectory as rapidly as possible. Do not stop to call the fire department; your phone may already be inoperative and you may lose your chance to escape. Pull the fire alarm quickly. After your escape, do not risk your life to go back into the church or rectory. The fire personnel are better trained and equipped to make rescues.

b) Escape Plan: Make fire protection a regular consideration of the maintenance committee. Discuss the subject of fire and its prevention. Develop a sound fire preventative program, along with an escape action plan in case of fire. Discuss this with the local fire department and obtain their literature.

c) Fire Detectors and Extinguishers: There are two basic types of fire detection systems - heat sensing and smoke detecting types powered by a battery or electricity. Smoke detectors will work even if you cannot smell the smoke, and their acute sensitivity makes them more dependable than the heat sensing units in detecting smouldering or remote fires. Install smoke detectors in the basement and on each floor.

There are four types of fire extinguishers, commonly designated as A, B, C and D. Type A is for ordinary combustibles, such as wood. Type B is designed for use on flammable liquids, such as grease or paint. Type C can be used on electrical equipment, and type D is for use on metal fires. Obtain general advice from the fire prevention unit of the local fire department.

d) Lightning Protection: Lightning protection can prevent or greatly reduce this danger to life and property. It should be considered. Lightning protection reduces the cost of fire insurance. Lightning protection systems should be designed to provide a direct path for the bolt to follow to ground and to prevent damage or injury as the bolt travels the path. If there is not protection during a storm then stay away from metal fireplaces, stoves, water faucets, appliances, telephones, and metal windows. Stay inside during an electrical storm, preferably in an inside room.

If caught outdoors, lie down in a low protected spot. Stay away from high trees, hilltops, wire fences, and poles. Remain in an auto or truck during an electrical storm.

12. Safety - Emergency

a) Main Electric Service Box: Service boxes will have either fuses or circuit breakers. There will be either a main disconnect switch or individual switches or breakers to shut off power. Be sure all circuits are labelled to locate them easily in an emergency. Determine what caused the circuit to fail and take appropriate action. Next reset the circuit breaker or replace the fuse. Lighting and convenience outlet circuits are usually designed for 15 amps – not for 30 amps. Do not increase the size of the stated fuse since such over fusing may cause fires.

b) Electrical Shut Down in the Community: To help the power company, shut off all light switches and be certain that all major appliances are in the OFF position. Knowledgeable action can save money and prevent damage to your equipment.

c) Gas Meter: Near the gas meter is a main cut-off valve that does not have a handle but a square end on the valve stem. To shut off the valve it is necessary to have a wrench that should be hanging nearby. Use a monkey wrench or make a wrench from a piece of 3/8" x 2" steel. Just cut a slot in the end to fit the end of the valve stem.

If you smell gas, check the pilot lights of the various gas appliances. Stove burners may have been turned on but left unlit. If you cannot locate the source of escaping gas immediately and suspect a gas leak, turn off the valve at the appliance. Call the gas company. Never attempt to fix a gas leak yourself. While waiting, do not light matches or flames and be sure to open all windows.

When the emergency is over and the gas is turned back on make sure that all pilot lights are immediately relit, after insuring that the gas to the pilot light has been off long enough for air currents to carry away any remaining gas to the room.

If pilot lights malfunction, the gas company may provide a free adjustment so that they burn correctly. Otherwise, a qualified repairman will do this for a fee. Pilot lights of furnaces and water heaters should be left burning throughout the year to prevent condensation and rusting.

d) Main Water Valve: The main water valve that shuts off all water coming into the home is located near the water meter or near the basement floor where the pipe enters the house. Ensure it is well marked and everyone knows its location in the event of an emergency.