

# Exceeding Expectations Everyday

A newsletter for Precept clients and friends

Spring 2010

## 5 Tips for Business Owners

Managing risk through insurance can protect the financial well-being of any company, large or small. Each company must develop a risk management philosophy that balances the amount of risk the company holds in-house versus the amount they transfer to an insurer. The key to successful risk management is to keep the loss frequency (# of claims) at a manageable level to avoid exorbitant premiums or unavailability of the insurance product.

Here's how you can keep your insurance portfolio healthy:

### Increase Deductibles

By increasing deductibles, business owners can save money on premiums and reduce the temptation to utilize the policy as a maintenance contract. When choosing a deductible, determine what dollar amount you would be comfortable paying on your own and set your deductible accordingly.

### Motor Vehicle Abstracts

Business owners should obtain motor vehicle abstracts on all personnel operating company vehicles annually. While accidents do happen, choosing drivers with proven track records will cut down on frequency of incidents.

### Maintenance Logs

Business owners should keep detailed maintenance logs of all

vehicles, equipment, and buildings. As the economy struggles, the general populous may become more litigious. Proper documentation can disprove negligence and help avert a claims situation.

### Increase Liability Limits

As society becomes more litigious, court awards are increasing. Are you sure your current limit offers adequate protection? An Umbrella Liability Policy is a cost effective way to increase liability limits under all policies. This policy acts exactly as it sounds - it provides another tier of Liability Insurance that is triggered once the underlying limits are exhausted.

### Backup Surety

Contract surety (bonding) is crucial to some businesses, as it allows them to avoid tying up working capital. However, if something goes awry, it can seriously impede the business owner's ability to perform. Let us arrange a backup surety in case issues arise during the course of the bidding season. We are business insurance experts. If you've got a question, we've got the answer.

Contact us at 1-800-881-5581 for more information.

Source: CNI



## Sunlight Music Festival

Save the date...

August 14th  
Riverside Park,  
Guelph



Featuring  
**Danny  
Michel**

PHOTO CREDIT: PHOTO BY DUSTIN RABIN

### Admission is by donation

**\*\*All donations will be given to Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis\*\***

For more information visit,  
[www.sunlightmusicfestival.com](http://www.sunlightmusicfestival.com)

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## Commercial Insurance

### Protect Your Home from Water Damage

Whether the cause is prolonged rain or heavy snow, you may be all-too-familiar with water in your basement or leaks in your ceiling. And while Mother Nature can take her toll on your home, there are other sources of water that can also damage your property, such as old appliance hoses, frozen pipes, or even clogged drains.

#### Consider the Cost

Water damage is not only inconvenient, but also costly – both financially and emotionally. Cherished possessions can be damaged by just a few drops of water. A slow drip can eventually lead to rotting that compromises the structural integrity of your home. A tiny leak may be a precursor to a catastrophe that releases several hundred gallons of water. Potential buyers may ask about these events if you plan to sell your home.

#### Avoid Water Damage

Routine inspection and maintenance can help you keep water where it belongs. Use the following checklist to identify potential problem areas in and around your house. While you can not control Mother Nature, preventative measures can minimize the possibility of water damage.

#### Protect Your Home's Interior:

**Water Shutoff Valves.** Know where shutoff valves for the main water supply, certain appliances, sinks and toilets are located. Shut off your main water supply if you will be away from home for a week or more.

**Plumbing Pipes.** Inspect your plumbing water lines and waste lines for leaks, damage or corrosion.

**Water Heater.** The average life span of a water heater is 7-10 years. If you notice puddles around your water heater, it should be replaced.

**Appliance Water Hoses.** Washing machines, dishwashers, icemakers, air conditioners and garbage disposals all use water to operate. Inspect them for leaks.

**Sump Pumps.** Most sump pumps last about 10

years. Follow the manufacturers instructions for testing and optimal operation.

**Humistat.** Keep indoor moisture low (ideally between 30-50% relative humidity).

**Bathrooms.** Check caulking around tubs and shower stalls to ensure that a watertight seal is maintained.

**Basement.** Periodically inspect your foundation walls and floors for cracks that might allow water seepage.

**Attics.** Ensure there is adequate ventilation in all attic and overhang areas.

#### Protect Your Home's Exterior:

**Roof.** Missing, worn or broken roofing materials may allow water to penetrate and deteriorate the roof structure. Inspect your roof periodically and make sure to check the roof flashing for ice damming.

**Gutters/Downspouts.** If you live in a wooded area, falling leaves may clog the gutters and lead to water backup that could damage your exterior siding. In late fall, clear your gutters.

**Grade of Property.** Soil should be graded away from the foundation.

**Window Wells.** Check basement window wells to ensure that they are clear of leaves and debris.

**Windows/Doors.** Inspect windows and exterior doors for proper caulking and weather stripping.

#### Act Quickly if Water Intrusion Occurs

Label shut-off valves so that the water supply can be easily closed in the event of a plumbing leak. If water intrusion does occur, you can minimize the damage by addressing the problem quickly and thoroughly. Immediately remove standing water and all moist materials, and consult with a building professional.

To learn more about potential water damage risks for your home, contact Precept Insurance & Risk Management at 1-800-881-5581.

*Taken from Chubb Group of Insurance Companies.*

## Financial Services

### Money Skills 101

Study after study has shown that many Canadians lack basic money skills, but how exactly do you get people interested in setting up a family budget, wrestling down debt or mapping out their retirement?

**Here are 5 tips to help with basic financial literacy:**

#### **Create a personal budget**

Many people would like to have more money at their disposal. The first step to achieving this is pinpointing where the money you make actually goes. Tracking expenses and developing a budget can help you identify spending habits that you may want to change in order to save.

#### **Set a savings goal**

Once you identify what you can trim from your daily spending, set a target of how much you want to save weekly. Every little bit counts. You may, for instance, avoid buying a morning coffee and instead make your own, saving about \$10 a week.

#### **Use credit cards wisely**

Borrowing can be a positive investment toward your future if planned and managed wisely. To avoid problems, learn about how interest is calculated, the grace period, annual fees, transaction fees, cash advances and balance transfers. Fight the temptation to use a credit card to live beyond your means.

#### **Tap public savings programs**

In addition to the **Tax Free Savings Account**, there are other government products designed to help people save. Through the federal **Canada Learning Bond**, families who have an income below \$36,378, who are receiving the National Child Benefit Supplement and have a child that is born after 2004 can access up to \$2,000 to invest in their children's **Registered Education Savings Plan**. RESPs qualify for a government grant of up to \$500 a year per child, to a lifetime maximum of \$7,200.

#### **Find independent financial information**

Becoming money savvy is a lifetime quest. There is no shortage of excellent information available out there - websites, workshops, seminars, books, courses. Frankly, the volume and complexity of it can be overwhelming. The key to locating what may be useful to you is to have a solid understanding of your own situation. Some people can get what they need from a book or website, while others prefer a workshop experience or one-on-one advice.

Contact us at 1-800-881-5581 for more information.

*Source: The Globe and Mail*



**Buying a House, Renewing or Refinancing your Mortgage?**  
**Looking For a Competitive Mortgage Quote, Right Product and Expert Advice?**  
Call Dawn at First Avenue Funding at **905-328-8002** or apply online using the application form at

There are many benefits associated with having an insurance broker on your side.

*For more information contact Precept Insurance and Risk Management at 1-800-881-5581.*

**Your Best  
Insurance  
Is An  
Insurance  
Broker**



# Exceeding Expectations Everyday - Precept Insurance and Risk Management

At Precept, we appreciate your business and thank you for your referrals! Please call us or visit us at any of our locations, call us toll-free at 1-800-881-5581 or visit our website at [www.preceptgroup.net](http://www.preceptgroup.net).

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Please e-mail us at: [newsletter@preceptgroup.net](mailto:newsletter@preceptgroup.net) with your comments, suggestions, requests for additional copies of the newsletter for family and friends or to unsubscribe.

## OUR HISTORY

Precept Insurance and Risk Management was formed in 1998 with the merger of three well established insurance brokerage firms with roots going back to 1912. Since that time, we have grown into a Financial Services organization providing Insurance, Investments and Banking Services.

## OUR VISION

We are a dynamic, natural talents organization that drives results through relationship building, exceeding expectations everyday, and commitment to excellence. Our culture embraces the delivery of great value added solutions for our clients, exceptional results for our business partners, outstanding growth

opportunities for our people, and a tangible ability to contribute to our communities.

## OUR GOAL

*"Our goal is to protect and grow your assets by providing innovative risk management solutions and value added services."*

*Jim McGregor, CEO*

## Community Involvement

### Take The Precept Pledge

Precept recently launched a campaign to end texting while driving and dialing a cell phone while driving. Each year too many accidents and deaths that are attributed to distracted driving could have been prevented.

We encourage everyone to take the Precept Pledge:  
*"I promise to never text or dial the phone while driving".*

Current statistics show that 81% of the population has admitted to texting while driving and 4 out of every 5 accidents (80%) are attributed to distracted drivers. This is an alarming statistic and Precept Insurance & Risk Management is dedicated to spreading the "Precept Pledge" message. Each time someone takes the pledge they are awarded with a, "I took the Precept Pledge" certificate and sticker. Please join us and take your own pledge against texting and driving.

### Grand Home & Life Show

Precept Insurance & Risk Management was pleased to be an exhibitor at the *Grand Home & Life Show*. Everyone who passed by our booth was encouraged to take "The Precept Pledge". In support of the pledge, Precept made a draw for a BlueTooth, valued at \$100.

### Women in Crisis - Auction and Dinner Raises Much Needed Funds

Precept Insurance & Risk Management is a proud supporter of Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis. Recently, Women in Crisis hosted a dinner and auction. Precept CEO, Jim McGregor, purchased a table for the event, and participated in the silent auction. All money raised from the event will help women and children in our community live safer. Last year, Women in Crisis was able to support over 1500 women and children.