

Take a proactive approach to loss prevention!

HIDDEN DANGER AT THE SPA



It's no news that spas, and other places that provide esthetic care and wellness services, are popular these days. People go there to relax and enjoy a break from the non-stop demands of daily life. They want to leave their worries at the door.

It's all about low stress. But to keep from disturbing this calm environment for the body and mind, a spa manager needs to observe and enforce certain rules of safety and hygiene.

It's important to take a few precautions to keep things safe for the premises, your customers and your employees. It can mean the difference between tranquillity and disaster.

One of the underrated dangers in the spa business is the oils and grease that can become soaked into clothing, sheets or towels and create a fire hazard. In the past few years, some of the spas we insure have had fires, and in at least two cases, the investigation has convinced us that spontaneous combustion was the cause.

HOW DOES SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION OCCUR?

Massage therapists use various products that include oils and grease. These come in contact with the fabric in sheets or towels, and if left for a long time they can cause a chemical reaction called exothermic oxidation. Cotton is especially sensitive.

This gradual chemical reaction gives off heat, which in turn accelerates the reaction. The temperature can increase so much that the fabric spontaneously bursts into flames, which can spread through a room and turn into a full-blown fire.

For example, a pile of wet towels that have collected massage oils and thrown into a basket could, in the worst case, spontaneously combust in the space of a few hours. To avoid this risk, it is best to wash all used towels a short time after use. Unfortunately, ordinary laundry detergents do not have enough degreasing power to remove all residues that could cause a fire in the dryer or even in a hot stack of towels that have come out of the dryer.

Our recommendations

To avoid the risk of an accident, we advise spa managers to follow these rules:

- Never let used towels or sheets pile up; wash them as soon as possible, and always on the same day;
- Use a commercial laundry detergent with a degreaser to better remove oils:

- Wash in hot water on a heavy-duty cycle;
- Do not fill the washer to full capacity;
- Dry at low temperature (delicate setting), and use the cooling cycle, if the dryer has one;
- Remove towels from the dryer immediately and let them cool off.

CONCLUSION

This is a serious risk, but one that is relatively easy to avoid if you, as manager, make sure staff adhere strictly to these few safety rules. You'll be ensuring your customers' full enjoyment of your health and relaxation centre.



If you have any questions about maintenance in spa centers, please contact your insurance broker.

