

# info CITO

Corporation de l'industrie touristique du Québec

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## Insurance

### Do you really need public liability insurance?

No one would think to question the importance of protecting yourself against the risk of fire or theft. Unfortunately, the same is not true when it comes to public liability. Some people feel that this coverage is just a rider imposed by insurers looking to boost their profits.

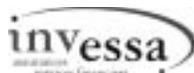
Nothing could be further from the truth! Public liability can lead to huge losses that terrify many insurers, especially in the tourist accommodation field. Providing lodging and services for people of all ages, cultures and customs is definitely a fascinating job – but it comes with responsibilities.

Public liability insurance provides a protection for you and your employees against claims from third parties (such as your customers) following accidental bodily injury or property damage for which you may be held responsible. The Insurer who agrees to provide you with this type of coverage also takes on any lawsuits that could be brought against you and will assume legal defence costs and expenses, regardless of your actual liability. Such settlement processes can often be long and costly, especially when they involve bodily injury to children leading to permanent disability.

The need for coverage and the appropriate limit vary with the size and type of establishment. The \$2 million limit required by the CITO is a minimum benchmark that is sufficient for most establishments. Invesa has exclusive customized programs for most B&Bs and tourist homes and other kinds of establishments.

Special contributor:

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### NEW ADDRESS

Starting March 21, 2005, The CITO's new address will be:



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Longueuil, Quebec J4K 5G7  
(514) 499-0550 1 866 499-0550  
www.citq.qc.ca info@citq.qc.ca

Our offices will be closed on moving day, March 18.



### New design, new contributors

Message from  
the Executive Director

Many of you will probably have noticed the changes in the design of our newsletter. This new face ushers in a new formula, for *info CITO* will now be opening its pages to outside contributors and advertisers. We feel that this will allow us to offer our readers a wider variety of information and, above all, ensure the long-term financial health of the publication, while keeping the CITO a fully independent body.

Although the CITO reserves the right to review the information in our contributors' articles and advertisements, we wish to emphasize that this information in no way represents CITO policies and is in no way to be considered an endorsement. We suggest that you shop around and make the appropriate comparisons before choosing a product or service.

We are convinced, nonetheless, that these initiatives will allow us to meet the expectations frequently expressed by most operators. We are well placed to know that many of you are constantly seeking information on different matters related to your business and on the goods and services available on the market. *info CITO* hopes to simplify things for you and help us all develop quality tourist accommodation and a healthy industry.

We also hope to ensure the long-term financial health of the newsletter through such partnerships. This is another step taken by the CITO to properly manage the funds at its disposal, while providing all operators with the best possible service.

Michel Rheault,  
Executive Director

**ACCOMMODATION IN QUÉBEC 2005**

**A new and less expensive distribution strategy**



The CITQ is obliged to assume all production costs and almost all distribution expenses for the *Accommodation in Québec 2005* directory. These additional expenses come at a time when the CITQ finds itself facing unusual budgetary constraints because of other events.

For these reasons and so as to efficiently manage the funds you have entrusted to it (for instance, we have kept the costs related to classification at the same level since 2001), the CITQ has adopted a less costly strategy for distributing the directory.

Read the attached fact sheet for details on the different ways you can obtain the 2005 edition of the *Accommodation in Québec* directory.

**Suns and stars you can believe in**

Many operators and travellers have asked the CITQ to take different steps to help maintain the credibility of the classification system, by indicating the real levels of comfort and service that customers of the establishments it classifies can expect.



**Surprise visits**

That is why, since January 2005, the heads of hotel establishments and B&Bs are no longer being notified ahead of time that a classifier will be visiting them. This new policy is intended to address any criticism to the effect that unscrupulous operators could “prepare” for the classifier’s visit if they were warned in advance. The CITQ reminds you that refusing access to a classifier without reasonable grounds is equivalent to a refusal of classification and can have serious consequences.

**Anonymous visits**

The CITQ has also set up a program of anonymous visits. The program, introduced in 2004, applies to all categories of establishments classified by the CITQ, and will continue into 2005. The goal of these visits is to check that the levels of comfort, service, cleanliness and safety actually offered by an establishment match

the classifier’s observations at the time of the classification visit.

**Reclassification before the classification certificate expires**

If the CITQ has serious doubts (after several well-founded complaints, for example) or itself observes (during an anonymous visit) that an establishment is no longer maintaining the standards of the classification level it earned, a new classification inspection may be made even before the certificate held by the establishment expires (a certificate is normally valid for two years).

The purpose of these measures, complementing the classification visit to all establishments every two years, is to convince travellers that they can have faith in the suns and stars in Québec’s official classification program. The CITQ is counting on cooperation from all operators to help it reach this objective – which is in the industry’s best interest, after all.



# The ABC's of bedding and linens

As part of their continuing education program, CITQ classifiers call on experts and recognized manufacturers in different fields. Lieberman Tranchemontagne representatives shared their expertise on linens with us. Here are some of their observations.

## Sheets, blankets and bedspreads

- The quality of a sheet is determined by the number of threads per square inch. The higher the thread count, however, the less durable the sheet.
- Three-ounce bedspreads are considered comforters, not quilts.
- Cotton bed covers, which also go over pillows, are an alternative to duvet covers, which have to be washed after every night's stay. These bed covers must be folded at the foot of the bed before the bed is slept in, however.
- Polar fleece blankets, slightly less expensive than nylon ones, are softer to the touch. They are appreciated by customers, but not as much by housekeeping staff, who feel that nylon covers give a bed a nicer finish.

## Mattress covers

- Fitted mattress covers give the best finish. They are costly, however, and difficult to fold.

- Plastic mattress covers or those with one plasticized side are not recommended. They are noisy and prevent the mattress from breathing.
- In rooms occupied on a regular basis, mattress covers should be washed once or twice a week.



## Towels and washcloths

- The quality of towels is determined by their weight. For instance, 12 towels measuring 24" x 50" weigh:
  - 8 lbs for low-quality products,
  - 10 lbs for medium-quality products and
  - 17 lbs for high-quality products.
- The softness of linens also depends on the amount of soap used and the number of towels per load.
- Linens have a lifetime of about two years in establishments with regular clientele.
- About 20% of linens are lost to theft.

CITQ

## Advice from classifiers



Some quality synthetic fibres are as comfortable as down and avoid allergy-related problems. In any case, whether you use down or synthetic fibre, it is best to always use quality anti-allergenic covers and eliminate all dust. It seems, in fact, that many people who believe that they are allergic to down are actually just allergic to dust.

Answers

**to your questions:**



**Is breakfast an important factor in the classification of B&Bs?**

**YES** - Breakfast and everything associated with it, from food to presentation, place settings (tablecloth, dishes, etc.), the dining room and entrances, and the visual aspect of all these elements, counts for about 20% of the classification mark for B&Bs. In fact, breakfast appears to be a major concern of B&B customers, since it is the main subject of complaints regarding B&Bs.

**Can an establishment offer a breakfast of lower quality than the one declared when it was classified?**

**NO** - ... unless the client specifically asks for it. The terms and conditions relating to the classification of an establishment (which are an integral part of the *Application for a classification certificate* form signed by operators) clearly stipulates that operators agree to maintain the conditions necessary for the classification level obtained when the establishment was visited. This applies to breakfast, just as it does to all other elements evaluated.

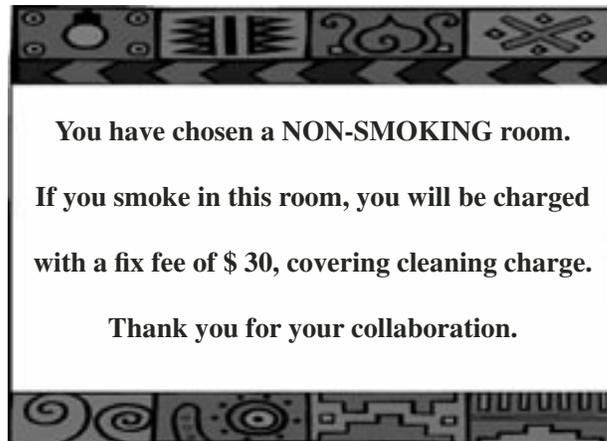
Consequently, an establishment cannot offer a breakfast of lower quality than the one declared at the time of classification. If the CITQ has doubts (after complaints or an anonymous visit) about whether the operator is maintaining the quality of breakfast, a new classification visit may be made even before the certificate held by the establishment expires.



**Customer service tips**



**Seen in a hotel in the Quebec City region, a message to keep non-smoking rooms smoke-free!**



AUBERGE L'AUTRE JARDIN

The management of the hotel has found this message quite effective. Many establishments want to offer non-smokers rooms that contain no trace or smell of smoke. The CITQ encourages all operators to take this approach.



Administrator of the official accommodation classification program



Corporation de l'industrie touristique du Québec

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The masculine gender is used merely for simplification. No discrimination is intended.

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