

info CITO

Corporation de l'industrie touristique du Québec

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Customer safety

ADVERTORIAL

Customer Safety: Your Top Priority

As you know, you have to take many factors into consideration to meet customer needs and keep them coming back. There is one need that is often neglected, however, although it should be a priority. Even if you offer excellent service quality, there is always a chance that a visitor could choke while eating or take a fall on the stairs. Customers have every right to expect that your employees can provide first aid.

What would you do in an emergency? Would all your employees know how to react? There are different kinds of training available, from fire prevention to water safety, first aid, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Customized training and simulations are other ways of better preparing your employees for any situation.

Investing in customer safety is too often wrongly seen as a waste of money, yet it should be a top priority for your business – and you should be proud of it! For example, you should post a notice at your front desk and in all rooms that all your employees have first aid and CPR training, and that a first-aid kit is available at the front desk. This tells your customers that you consider their safety as important as their comfort.

As stipulated in the *First-Aid Minimum Standards Regulation*, every establishment must have an adequate number of first-aid kits meeting regulatory standards. Don't wait for an emergency to happen! Get professional training and you can improve your classification, too.

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Back from a Classification Tour

Message from
the Executive Director

Over the past few weeks, I had the pleasure of meeting many of you and getting out "in the field" as I took part in or conducted classification visits in a number of Quebec regions. This was another chance for me to experience first-hand one of the most important challenges facing the CITO, year after year.

Covering thousands of kilometres in just a few months, to visit and classify thousands of establishments (many of them seasonal operations), while properly managing the resources involved is a challenge that calls for discipline, openness and flexibility.

So it was with great satisfaction that I witnessed, on my recent classification visits, the extraordinary spirit of co-operation shown by most operators. Let me take this opportunity to extend my particular thanks to everyone who allowed us to visit their establishments even when they had customers there. I would like to reassure all operators, incidentally, that our classifiers are always most discrete and sensitive when doing their work while there are customers present in an establishment.

I also wish to thank all those who understand that since we need to limit our travel, in the interests of sound management, we sometimes have to conduct classification visits later or earlier than two months before classification certificates expire. (We are allowed to do so by the Department of Tourism.) For more details on this topic, I invite you to read the *Answers to your Questions* column on page 4 of this issue.

It is thanks to the co-operation of most operators and our strict management of the funds entrusted to us that we have not had to raise classification fees since 2001 – and will be keeping them at the same level in 2007. Few organizations can boast this kind of performance in a context in which prices everywhere are rising, starting with the price of gas, a major part of our budget.

I thank you once again for your co-operation and invite you to send me your comments and suggestions in this regard.

Michel Rheault

PLEASE NOTE

The CITO is not responsible in any way for the information in our contributors' advertorials and advertisements, and they are in no way to be considered endorsements. Although these articles and advertisements are intended to provide you with useful information on operating tourist accommodation establishments, we recommend that you shop around and make the appropriate comparisons before choosing a product or service.

Quality of bedding/linens in hotel establishments and B&Bs soon to be evaluated with greater precision

Once the new classification grids for hotel establishments and B&Bs* have been approved by the Minister of Tourism, the quality of bedding and linens at these establishments will be evaluated with greater precision. Weight will be an essential part of the evaluation, as indicated in the table below:

QUALITY OF BATH LINENS **

LEVEL 5	Over 7.7 kg (17 lbs) The weight is for 12 bath towels measuring 68 cm x 137 cm - 27 in x 54 in
LEVEL 4	6.4 kg (14 lbs) The weight is for 12 bath towels measuring 68 cm x 137 cm - 27 in x 54 in
LEVEL 3	5.5 kg (12 lbs) The weight is for 12 bath towels measuring 60 cm x 132 cm - 24 in x 52 in
LEVEL 2	4.8 kg (10.5 lbs) The weight is for 12 bath towels measuring 60 cm x 127 cm - 24 in x 50 in
LEVEL 1	3.6 kg (8 lbs) The weight is for 12 bath towels measuring 60 cm x 120 cm - 24 in x 48 in
LEVEL 0	Less than 3.6 kg (8 lbs) The weight is for 12 bath towels measuring 60 cm x 120 cm - 24 in x 48 in

BEDDING **

LEVEL 5	Quilted bedspread, duvet or comforter, with bed skirt Quilted bedspread, duvet or comforter weighing at least 310 g – 11 oz • Excellent quality sheets and pillowcases • Blankets • Pillows • Bed skirt
LEVEL 4	Quilted bedspread Quilted bedspread, duvet or comforter weighing at least 310 g – 11 oz, covering the full bed • Good quality cotton or cotton-polyester sheets and pillowcases • Blankets • Pillows
LEVEL 3	Quilt • Couverture de lit ouatée et piquée • Quilted bedcover • Blankets • Pillows
LEVEL 2	Comforter • Comforter weighing 150 g – 5 oz or less • Cotton-polyester sheets and pillowcases, less than 200 threads per inch • Blankets • Pillows
LEVEL 1	Fabric bedspread • Properly fitting bedspread covering the full bed • Sheets, blankets, pillows and pillowcases
LEVEL 0	Sheets, blankets, pillows and pillowcases

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* In December 2005, following a broad-based industry consultation, the CITO submitted new classification grids to the Minister of Tourism for the seven classes of establishments it classifies. The grids will take effect as soon as they have been approved by the Minister.

** Excerpts from the *Classification Guide for Hotel Establishments* and the *Classification Guide for Bed & Breakfast Establishments* submitted by the CITO to the Minister of Tourism in December 2005. These guides have not yet been approved by the Minister.

HOUSEKEEPING

A New Approach: *Team Cleaning*

According to an article in the *globe-veilleur* column of the *Réseau de veille en tourisme*, studies seem to show that a new housekeeping approach, *team cleaning*, can produce interesting results.

Team cleaning is based on the assumption that an employee specializing in a given task is more efficient, and suggests that the work be divided up by function rather than by section of the establishment. Housekeeping is done by teams, with each one generally consisting of three people: one for bathrooms, one for bedrooms and a third for the pick-up and supply cart. This also means that they can share more demanding tasks like turning mattresses and changing duvet covers.

Team cleaning advocates cite a number of benefits, including much improved results, customer satisfaction and productivity (up to 30%), greater customer and employee safety and greater employee satisfaction. "Some hotel operators feel

that introducing team cleaning has allowed them to cut employee turnover by more than half, translating into substantial savings in recruitment and training." These results depend greatly on the ability to form efficient teams, needless to say.

Source : Chevrier, François-G. (2006) "L'hôtellerie cherche à dépoussiérer l'entretien ménager," on-line, *Le globe-veilleur* column, May 25, 2006, <http://www.veilletourisme.ca>

Housekeeping

ADVERTORIAL

Training Is Available for Housekeeping Teams Take Advantage of It!!!!

Few people know that housekeeping is truly the heart of a hotel, accounting for almost half of all staff and about 50% of annual expenses. In addition, since cleanliness is customers' main concern, the performance of your housekeeping staff will determine whether customers come back or not.

Consequently, proper training in the different aspects of this service is essential, ranging from personnel management to inventory control and communications with departments that have a direct impact on housekeeping. Continuing development is really the key to success. So it is important to keep your housekeeping staff up to date on the latest trends in bedding and hospitality products that are constantly being added in rooms, while maintaining the same productivity.

Team members must also receive regular training, for instance on equipment or new cleaning products. It is important to ensure regular communication with assistants, who are a real asset to proper housekeeping operations, to help them properly manage employees while ensuring that they teach them the standards and procedures specific to each banner, chain or network.

Well-trained employees, properly informed about their work and the services offered to customers, are sure to be profitable employees for your business. For more details, feel free to contact us at 514 282-5115 or visit our site, www.ithq.qc.ca.

Marie France Pigeon,
Adviser and Trainer, ITHQ

Institut de tourisme
et d'hôtellerie
Québec

ADVICES FROM CLASSIFIERS

- Offering a selection of pillows is an excellent way of improving customer comfort. Some establishments already offer their customers a wide range of pillows with a choice of natural or synthetic fillings (down, horsehair, wheat, foam rubber, etc.), different degrees of firmness (hard, medium, soft) and adapted to special needs (cervical, anti-stress, anti-allergenic, beauty, etc.).
- Make sure that customers can see that bathrobes have been thoroughly washed between uses, by taking care to empty the pockets before laundering them. Bathrobes will be more inviting if they are wrapped in plastic after washing, placed carefully folded at the foot of the bed or hung in a closet.

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Environment

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Respect, an Added Value

What's the difference between a pleasant stay in your hotel and feeling at home in your hotel?

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Answers

to your questions

Are bedding/linens rated in the same way for all classes of establishments classified by the CITQ ?

NO... Since bedding/linens do not have the same importance from one class to the next, they are rated differently.

For hotel establishments and bed & breakfast establishments, for instance, the number of pieces of bedding/linen, their quality and upkeep are all classification criteria evaluated from many different viewpoints.

For educational institutions and hospitality villages, only the appearance of bedding/linens is a classification criterion evaluated from several viewpoints.

For tourist homes and youth hostels, only the lack of bedding leads to demerit points.

For resorts, only the presence of bedding, whether or not it can be rented, earns bonus points.

N.B.: The lack of mattress covers and pillow protectors leads to demerit points in all classes of establishments classified by the CITQ, with the exception of resorts, where only the lack of mattress covers is considered.

Is there a deadline for carrying out the visit to renew an establishment's classification?

YES... if possible. Generally speaking, the CITQ must revisit each establishment no later than two months before its classification certificate expires. A classification certificate is valid for 24 months, with the exception of educational institutions, for which it is valid for 48 months.

Some conditions, such as the seasonal operation of the establishment and the size of the territory to be covered, can lead to establishments being visited long before or long after this deadline, however. If the classification renewal visit is to take place after the classification certificate expires, a temporary certificate, based on the results of the previous visit, will be issued by the Department of Tourism.

Satisfying operators' needs while meeting the demands of properly managing the funds entrusted to it is a challenge that the CITQ must meet year after year.

ARE YOU REGISTERED CORRECTLY?

In the coming weeks you should receive a letter from the Department of Tourism, asking you to update certain information in your file. Make sure the address, telephone and fax numbers and e-mail and Website addresses for your establishment are correct, along with the posted prices, number of units and dates of operation.



Update your information without delay, since these data will be used to promote your establishment in the 2007 Accommodation in Québec directory!

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Administrator of the official accommodation classification program



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

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