

# Risk Management Bulletin

Keith Thomas, Risk Manager

e-mail: kthomas@mast.mb.ca

## SCHOOL FIRE SAFETY

The City of Winnipeg Fire Department, Manitoba Fire Commissioner's Office and Manitoba Association of School Trustees Risk Management are working together to make this a fire safe year in all schools. There are school fires each year in Manitoba, but fortunately no injuries or fatalities. Well run school fire drills have definitely been a contributing factor in student and employee safety.

There is one major concern for firefighters and loss prevention personnel and that is the amount of paper and decorative material displayed in many schools, particularly some elementary schools.

The Manitoba Fire Code allows for no more than 5% of wall area in corridors to be used for display purposes and all materials shall be fastened at all corners and placed on a bulletin board. Figure 1 shows an acceptable method of display.



Figure 1

Classrooms should have no more than 20% of wall area covered with artwork and paper and entrance doors must not be used to display any combustible materials. Figure 2 shows artwork fastened correctly at all corners in a classroom setting.



Figure 2

Please keep in mind that smoke can build up in just a few minutes and the darkness can make it nearly impossible to see your way out. Practice fire drills by counting the number of steps to an exit. Hopefully you will never need to exit in an emergency but such preplanning could save someone's life.

Visit MAST's website for additional risk management information at [www.mast.mb.ca](http://www.mast.mb.ca)