

GUIDELINES FOR REFUSING TO PROVIDE SERVICE DUE TO SAFETY OR ILLEGAL ACTIVITY

This practice defines conditions and activities that may create an unacceptable risk and provides guidance to the technician, supervisor and manager for handling an unsafe or illegal situation at a customer's premise.

An employee may refuse to provide service to a customer if:

- (a) an unsafe or hazardous condition at a customer premises creates an unacceptable risk
- (b) illegal or unethical customer activity creates an unacceptable risk

Examples of potentially unsafe / hazardous conditions:

- Presence of unmanaged animal feces and/or strong urine smell in the house. This would not include animal feces which are properly managed and would be considered generally acceptable for household pets (i.e., feces contained in litter boxes, bird cages, rodent cages, etc.). Feces found on the floor, furniture, counters or walls of living areas is not considered acceptable.
- Presence of an excessive number of animals in the house to include dogs, cats and birds. Many counties, cities and towns have local ordinances limiting the number of pets a person may have, and may also restrict or forbid certain pets, such as exotics. If there is no local ordinance limiting the number or types of pets a person may have, other factors must be considered when working at a location with many pets. Indications that the household may be unsafe or unsanitary would include; pets in poor condition, strong feces/urine smell in the house or unmanaged feces as described above, visible fleas, pets showing aggressive tendencies to each other or to people, etc.
- Presence of animal carcasses in the house or yard.
- Hoarding of garbage inside the household - This is more than bad housekeeping.
- Presence of excessive amounts of mold contamination covering walls and other surfaces. Currently, there are no federal standards or recommendations for airborne concentrations of mold or mold spores. It has been documented that individuals with chronic respiratory conditions, allergies or asthma may be adversely affected by mold. If visible mold is noted in a household, in amounts greater than what EPA considers to be a small isolated area (<10 square feet) that may represent an unsafe condition. Employees with chronic respiratory conditions, allergies or asthma should take appropriate precautions consistent with their medical condition.
- Visible insect or rodent infestation inside the house.
- Defects that compromise the integrity of the structure's floors, walls, ceiling or roof.
- Presence of unmanaged biomedical waste. This would include used syringes, bandages contaminated with bodily fluids, dressings contaminated with bodily fluids, etc.

- Customer advises that he/she has a communicable disease which would require adherence to certain Center of Disease Control or Public Health Department protocols, which may include quarantine and/or the use of personal protective equipment (e.g., active tuberculosis, whooping cough, Ebola).

Examples of illegal or unethical activity:

- Assault weapons (knives, bombs, grenades, machine guns) seen in the house or on the property
- Illegal drug use or illegal drugs seen in the house or on the property
 - Including the open use of marijuana in any state where the use of marijuana is considered legal under state law
- Child in need of care due to abuse or neglect
- Homeowner or other adult is unclothed or wearing only undergarments
- Homeowner or other occupant makes sexual advances
- Homeowner or other occupant uses racial epithets or other abusive, inflammatory or harassing language

Process for dealing with unsafe / hazardous condition or illegal / unethical activity:

1. Technician assesses the situation and determines if condition(s) or activities present a risk to him/her using guidelines above. If so, technician advises customer that he/she cannot finish the job or remain on site (and, if appropriate, specifies due to environmental conditions) and that a supervisor will contact customer to discuss.
 - If the technician witnesses evidence of potential child abuse or neglect or other illegal activity, and if the technician in no way feels personally threatened, the technician should finish the job and immediately report to the supervisor what has been witnessed. The supervisor must contact Legal for guidance.
 - If the homeowner or other occupant makes sexual advances or otherwise harasses the technician and the technician can comfortably deal with the advances or harassment, the technician should finish the job and immediately report the incident to the supervisor. The supervisor must contact HR and Legal for guidance.
 - As always, the technician should take any steps which are reasonably necessary to ensure his/her safety and the safety of others. Thus, the tech may need to leave immediately, without finishing the job, if needed to secure help for a child who is in imminent danger or to protect himself/herself from illegal conduct or harassment.

2. Technician leaves home and immediately notifies the supervisor by phone.
3. If visiting the premises presents unsafe or hazardous conditions or there is a risk of contracting a communicable disease (e.g., customer with TB), the supervisor must contact Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) for guidance. If technician reported illegal or unethical activity, APS must contact HR and Legal for guidance.



Note! Information about customer health conditions must be held in confidence and disclosed only to EHS. EHS will determine if customer health condition must be reported to public health agencies.

4. Supervisor conducts a site assessment during a scheduled appointment, in accordance with guidance from EHS, HR and/or Legal, as appropriate.
5. If supervisor determines that conditions warrant refusal of service, supervisor contacts the manager, EHS and Legal to discuss appropriate next steps and response.
6. Appropriate response will include script for notifying customer and *may* include notifying law enforcement authorities, if approved by Legal. If refusal of service is determined, the manager should notify their media relations contact for informational purposes only, in case customer complains.

Guiding Principle

We must balance our customer obligations to provide timely service and to respect their privacy against our obligations to our employees to provide a safe working environment. Although each situation must be addressed individually based on its own facts, we should treat like situations in a like manner.

REVISION HISTORY

Date	Revised by	Revisions
February 2012	Original issue	N/A
January 2013	Jennifer Scarpino	Page 1 – Added use of marijuana in any state where it is legal under state law.
October 2014	Jennifer Scarpino	Page 2 – Provided additional clarity around communicable disease criteria triggering a potential “unsafe” condition.