



## **Help Your Clients Spot “Red Flags” in the Boiler Room**

### **Where’s the certificate?**

In general, jurisdictional boiler operating certificates are required to be posted near the equipment, similar to the certificates that you see in most elevators. If it has expired, BI & I can inspect a boiler without additional charge (in those Provinces that accept insurance company inspections.)

### **Open control panels**

A key indication that something may not be quite right is to see any of the following;

- a) an open boiler control panel
- b) the boiler access panel removed
- c) the electrical junction box covers missing
- d) the boiler circuit wiring in disarray

### **Wet Floors**

Water may come from storm water runoff or drain backup and not be caused by an equipment or system leak. But it points out there is a high moisture concentration. Keep floor drains clear. The drier the area, the more likely someone will care for the boiler.

### **Cobwebs everywhere**

There may be so many cobwebs and so much dust on and around the boiler that you know instinctively that no one is looking at the equipment. Poorly maintained boilers probably won’t provide the service you expect.

### **Discarded parts**

Do you see discarded parts such as old controls, valves and cans of chemicals on the floor or on top of the boiler? That can be an indication of poor quality make-up water, dirty or rusty piping, leaks or other poor maintenance practices.

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## How to “sense” trouble

Use all five senses to check for red flags. Does the boiler sound strange or different? Are there unusual odors in the boiler room, such as the smell of gas or oil? Is the air extremely dry or moist, or have a sulfur, sooty, or smoky “taste?”

Do you feel excessive vibrations in the machinery, or is the motor too hot to touch? Look for indications of poor maintenance, housekeeping or operation.

## Logs and manuals

Ask maintenance personnel for a look at the boiler logs and operating manual. Are they unable to produce them? If they are embarrassed, they should be. Maintaining equipment logs help to avoid being surprised by slowly developing conditions.

**By recognizing these “Red Flags”, you may avoid expensive repairs, save yourself from a large insurance claim as well as business downtime.**

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