

## Background

This T3 project brought together expertise in health and the built environment (Maddock), tourism, health and hospitality (Suess) and legal issues in sports, recreation and play spaces (Spengler).

Our initial goal was to recruit resorts, conduct a comprehensive assessment of the health and safety and interview guests of their perceived health and safety at resorts.

Resorts were reluctant to allow their guests to be surveyed and believed that asking them about health and safety issues may negatively affect their experience at the resort.

We modified the study design to create an instrument to audit health and safety features at resorts and begin collecting pilot audit data. The rest of this poster will present these findings.

We are also collecting a nationwide panel survey of guest experience of health and safety issues at resorts. This has been modified to look at health and safety issues around travel during and after the COVID-19 pandemic and will be fielded this fall.

## Methods

The team developed an audit tool to assess thermal comfort and safety in outdoor recreation settings in hospitality venues. The audit tool, the Comfort, Operation and Maintenance of Facilities with Outdoor Recreational Themes (COMFORT) tool was developed based on guidelines and standards promulgated by federal regulatory agencies, professional associations, validated protocols, and industry standards. Examples of information sources consulted in development of the tool include the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), safety risk management texts, American Red Cross Swimming and Water Safety Manual, and validated protocols for heat vulnerability and thermal comfort.

Research teams tested the audit tool in hospitality settings in six resorts in the southern US. Variations in facilities and settings provided valuable information for revisions to the audit tool. Improvements and modifications to the measurement scale were made, as well as item revision based on improved knowledge of facility characteristics and item type upon piloting the audit tool in diverse hospitality and recreation settings. Observations were made in pairs with scoring compared to determine whether inter-observer reliability was adequate. Initial estimates favor adequate inter-observer reliability.



## Conclusions

Support from the T3 grant allowed our team to develop and pilot an innovative thermal comfort and safety audit tool that can be used in hospitality and recreation settings.

Next steps include enlisting a Delphi panel of experts to help further refine the audit tool, and then to seek extramural funding to assess thermal comfort and safety in hospitality and recreation venues. This is a novel audit tool and would be beneficial to managers of hospitality venues, as well as park and recreation managers. Also, as safety and comfort are associated with participation in active play and active lifestyles, subsequent studies will seek to use the fully developed tool to conduct studies that inform policies and environments conducive to physical activity.