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## **Certified Safe**

*Independent safety accreditation is on the horizon for hotels*

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Nearly 94 percent of travelers surveyed say they consider hotel safety to be an important factor when making lodging selections, according to a study conducted by the marketing/consulting firm Harris Interactive. However, only about one in five travelers actually investigates a facility's level of safety—mostly because they don't know how to obtain this information.

Starting this month, a new company called **SafePlace Corporation**, based in Wilmington, Delaware, is setting out to change the way travelers look at hotel safety. At press time, the company was slated to award its first independent safety accreditation to a hotel on May 1. **"Without an independent resource like SafePlace, many travelers rely upon an establishment's brand name to indicate an adequate level of safety, which may or may not actually be the case,"** says John C. Fannin, president and CEO of SafePlace.

**SafePlace will award accreditation primarily based upon the fire protection, security, health, and life-safety provisions of selected uniform codes, standards, and recommended practices. SafePlace accreditation is "an indication as to whether the lodging establishment that travelers are considering is reasonably safe and secure, by meeting nationally recognized standards and practices,"** according to Fannin.

Accredited hotels will be listed on the company's Web site, **[www.safeplace.com](http://www.safeplace.com)**, and eventually the company hopes the accreditation will become a standard element in national travel guides.