

Risk Alert

November 2011

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Have Questions?

If you have any questions regarding winter preparation, or if there is anything we can do to help you with your winterization process, please contact your local agent or us direct at 800.407.2027 or visit www.ciaw.us.

Did You Know?

In September, the Climate Prediction Center (CPC) released a "La Nina Advisory" and is forecasting a relatively cool and wet winter for Washington State.

With winter on its way, now is the time to prepare for the impending ice, snow and freezing temperatures. Historically, the winter season results in an increase of property damage and a higher frequency of premise injuries. Our goal is to help ensure that the appropriate preventative measures are in place to protect your facilities and those who utilize them. The following is a checklist of some preparatory and maintenance measures you can take to prepare your entity for the impending weather conditions:



Building Preparation

- Test your heating system to ensure it is up and running properly.
- Backup power sources need to be inspected and meet approved alternative heat sources as defined by the Fire Marshal.
- Ensure water and/or drain pipes are well insulated. Make sure ends join tightly and joints are wrapped and taped. Heated cables or tapes that heat pipes should be professionally installed.
- Inspect buildings regularly and maintain an inspection schedule for all buildings, including unoccupied buildings or facilities.
- Make certain unoccupied spaces receive adequate heating to keep pipes from freezing.
- Check that crawl spaces, roof hatches, and attic accesses are all closed and properly insulated.
- Identify water shutoff valves and make sure staff is aware of their locations in the event of an emergency.
- Inspect gutters and down spouts, checking for any leaking connections, excess debris or obstructed flows. Also check that the water drains away from the building.
- When freezing temperatures hit, check temperatures in buildings at least twice daily.

Snow and Ice Removal

Develop a plan to complete the following actions during regular business hours, after hours, weekends and holidays:

- Remove snow from parking lots.
- Clear snow and ice from all walkways and apply deicer if needed. Continue to regularly monitor walkways.
- Remove any ice overhangs from buildings. Falling ice can be a hazard to pedestrians.
- Clear snow and ice from your roofs as needed. The excess weight of snow can damage roofs, gutters and down spouts, and wind-blown snow can create problems with HVAC systems.
- After heavy snowfall or immediately following storms, examine foundations for ground shifts, water damage or leaks. Also inspect ceiling and walls for stained drywall or ceiling tiles, musty smell, mold or mildew and/or bubbles under paint.

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