

## WINTER HAZARDS

Winter weather brings concerns about heat and maximizing its retention, frozen pipes, and access to your place of business. Also included in this list, but not as obvious, are fire and electrical emergencies, since winter weather can delay emergency vehicles or cause a sudden power loss. For more information about fire or electrical emergencies, please refer to their respective sections of this Guide.

The following checklist is meant to help you identify the areas of your business that are most susceptible to winter hazards and to suggest ways to minimize damage. While you may need to consider additional items for your particular situation, some items on this list may not apply to you.

1. What is your greatest risk potential?

- Loss of heat
- Frozen pipes
- Loss of access due to snow and/or ice

2. Who is responsible for keeping heating equipment in good working order?

- Business owner
- Landlord

3. Who is responsible for snow/ice removal?

- Business owner
- Landlord

4. What equipment needs to be protected from freeze-up?

- Computer
- Telecommunications
- Manufacturing equipment

5. Are portable heaters or other emergency equipment needed?

- Yes
- No

6. If snow and/or ice prohibit access to your business, are there alternative ways to enter your premises?

- Yes
- No

## 7. Some steps to take BEFORE cold weather hits:

\_\_\_\_\_ Seal all openings with caulking and insulation where cold air can enter. This is particularly important where cold air can get at unprotected water pipes.

\_\_\_\_\_ Repair walls and roofs to prevent drafts

\_\_\_\_\_ Make sure windows and doors close tightly to prevent drafts

\_\_\_\_\_ Make sure storm windows are effective, if appropriate

\_\_\_\_\_ Make sure heating and heat-producing process equipment is in good condition and operating efficiently

\_\_\_\_\_ Arrange for snow removal from driveways, doorways, and roofs

\_\_\_\_\_ Inspect roof drains for debris

\_\_\_\_\_ Drain all idle pumps and compressors, making sure jackets are vented

\_\_\_\_\_ Provide proper lubrication for cold weather operation (i.e., emergency generators, snow blowers)

\_\_\_\_\_ Test cold weather equipment

\_\_\_\_\_ Clean and inspect boilers and firing mechanism/controls

\_\_\_\_\_ Maintain automatic sprinkler protection in idle buildings

\_\_\_\_\_ Promptly handle sprinkler system impairments; notify local fire department

\_\_\_\_\_ Monitor building temperature especially in hard-to-heat areas containing vulnerable equipment. Keep temperatures above 40°F.

\_\_\_\_\_ Mark hydrants near your business for ease in locating and clearing after a heavy storm

For specific ways to protect your business from water damage as a result of burst pipes, see the Flood Emergency Section of this Guide.

## 8. Some steps to take WHEN cold weather hits:

\_\_\_\_\_ Position heaters, snow blowers, generators, and other cold-weather equipment where it is most likely to be used

\_\_\_\_\_ Keep driveways, walkways, and doorways clear of snow and ice

Open water faucets slightly to let them drip slowly to keep water flowing through the pipes that are vulnerable to freezing. Ice may still form, but the open faucet helps prevent the pipe from bursting by allowing relief for any built up pressure.

Have easily accessible the names and phone numbers of your heating contractor, plumber, fire department, insurance agent, and building owner, if appropriate

Have someone assigned to check indoor temperatures should your place of business be vacant for long periods of time

9. Do you have a written emergency preparedness plan?

Yes

No

9a. If "Yes," does your emergency plan include:

Master list of the names, home addresses, and phone numbers of all employees?

Plan to move your operation to a location out of the affected area?

Actions to take in response to particular problems and the names of those responsible for taking the action?

Procedure for notifying employees?

Salvage and clean-up operations and the names of those responsible for taking action?

Procedure for restoring electrical services on an item-by-item basis, only after thorough checkout by competent persons?

Procedure for relocating salvageable and undamaged stock and supplies?

Procedure for removing combustible debris?

10. Have you checked your insurance for coverage against winter hazards?

Yes

No

For more information contact: Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)  
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