CTSI
TECHNICAL UPDATE
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PREPARE FOR WINTER STORM CONDITIONS

As winter approaches, now is the time to inspect county buildings for areas that could be damaged by freezing temperatures and snowy weather, such as roofs, gutters, and pipes. Proper insulation and weatherproofing can help prevent cold-related wear and tear, reducing long-term maintenance and costly repair costs. Severe winter storms not only disrupt business, they also can impact employee and visitor safety, comfort, and productivity. Here are the essential actions and key reasons you should winterize before a storm approaches to minimize risk:

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Proper winterization can help reduce energy consumption and lower utility bills. By sealing gaps, insulting, and maintaining heating systems, you can prevent heat loss and maintain a comfortable temperature inside the building without overworking your heating systems. Also reducing energy consumption contributes to a lower carbon footprint and demonstrates a commitment to sustainability.

SAFETY

Slippery sidewalks and parking lots can lead to accidents and injuries. Proper winterization includes snow and ice removal protocols, ensuring safe walkways and parking areas for employees and visitors. Being proactive helps ensure businesses operate without interruptions and avoid unexpected downtime and closures.

EQUIPMENT PROTECTION

Extreme cold can harm office equipment, including computers, printers, and other electronics. Maintaining a stable indoor temperature helps protect your technology investment. Winter storms can also cause power outages. Make sure you have backup generators or other sources of power to keep the building running.

EMPLOYEE COMFORT AND PRODUCTIVITY

A well-winterized office building ensures that employees and occupants are comfortable, safe, and can work efficiently. A warm, well-lit, and dry environment promotes productivity and job satisfaction. Also educate employees for winter weather emergencies, such as shutting off the water supply in case of a frozen pipe burst.

CODE COMPLIANCE

Many local building codes and regulations require winterization measures to be in place, such as insulation standards, fire safety requirements, and emergency exit accessibility. Failing to comply with these codes can result in legal and financial consequences.

ICE DAMS

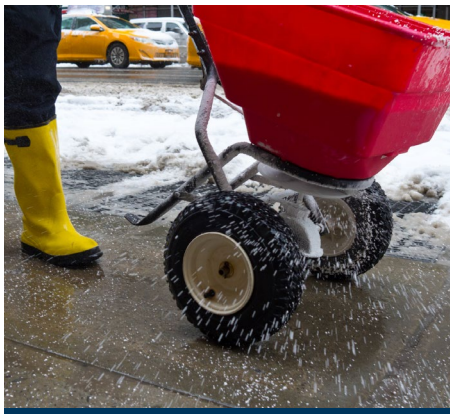
Ice dams occur when water freezes near the edge of a roof or around drains, preventing melting snow from draining properly. The water can back up and leak into a building causing damage to roofs and walls. To prevent ice dams, keep drains, gutters, and downspouts free of debris.

ROOF DAMAGE

Snow and ice can build up on roofs causing structural damage. 10-12 inches of fresh snow or 3-5 inches of packed snow equals one inch of water or about 5 lbs. per sq. ft. of roof space. An inch of ice equals a foot of fresh snow. Snow and ice buildup can stress the limits of roofs, even those designed for winter weather.

FROZEN PIPES

Frozen and burst pipes are a major source of property damage during winter weather. Pipes freeze when the heat in the water flowing through the pipes is transferred to below-freezing air. Pipes at risk of exposure should be well insulated with foam rubber or fiberglass to slow heat transfer. Also, check a building's foundation for cracks or holes near water pipes.



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR COUNTIES

Winterizing county buildings is essential for energy efficiency, maintaining a safe and comfortable environment, protecting your assets, and complying with regulations. Don't let the winter storm season take you by surprise. For more information about preparing buildings for winter weather, contact CTSI at (303) 861-0507.

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