



Adventist Risk
Management, Inc.

WINTERIZING YOUR FACILITY

Properly protecting your property, home, church or school building from the elements is just as important as protecting your person. Use the following checklist to protect your facilities.

1. CLEAN THOSE GUTTERS

To handle the weight of ice, snow, or heavy rain, make sure all gutters and downspouts are securely attached, cleaned and properly designed so melting snow and ice or heavy rain will drain down and away from the building.

2. CHECK YOUR ROOF

Water damage is sometimes a result of poorly maintained roofs. Check your roof for cracks and make sure all shingles or tiles are in place and in good condition. If you live in an area prone to high winds, various products are also available to protect roof edges, skylights, vents, chimneys and valleys against “wind-driven” rain. Have a licensed roofing contractor inspect your roof and make any repairs

3. WRAP THOSE PIPES

A large percentage of water damage is caused from broken pipes, which burst because of freezing temperatures. If you have faucets and pipes running outside the building or through unheated areas, such as attics, garages, crawlspaces, cupboards or closets, protect them with heat tape or insulate them with specially made insulated wrap. A local plumbing contractor can assist with determining the actions needed to provide adequate insulation for these pipes.

4. SHUT OFF EXTERIOR FAUCETS

If there are cut-off valves to exterior faucets, shut them off. Remove garden hoses from outside faucets. Water in the hose can freeze and expand. This can cause faucets and connecting pipes inside the home to freeze and break.



SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE CAN OCCUR IF A VACANT BUILDING HAS A BURST PIPE AND IT GOES UNDETECTED. CHECK BUILDINGS DAILY AND MORE FREQUENTLY DURING COLD WEATHER. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE WHEN TEMPERATURES REACH EXTREMELY COLD LEVELS (15 TO BELOW ZERO F OR 0 TO BELOW 20 C).

5. SEAL WINDOWS AND JOINTS

Use caulking to seal under windowsills and other joints, such as around fireplaces, chimneys, or steeples. Check windows in doors for drafts, torn seals and cracked or dried glazing material. Replace as needed. Do not just try to refill cracks and the areas without glazing. Remove the old glazing and seal the entire windowpane.

6. INSULATE ALL AREAS IN YOUR BUILDING

Additional insulation can easily be blown or rolled into attics if necessary, but use caution. Do not cover electrical junction boxes that protrude into the attic. Keep insulation three inches or more away from recessed light fixtures or other heat sources. A four-inch, four-sided rigid metal box can help maintain this distance and can support the insulation. A licensed contractor should install any additional insulation.

7. KEEP YOUR FACILITY WARM

Keep facilities warm enough to prevent indoor pipes from freezing. Leave heat on and set no lower than 55 F (12.78 C). Set the temperature higher for areas that do not get as warm as others. Prop doors or cupboards open, and use a ceiling fan if necessary to achieve even heating throughout. When expecting extremely low temperatures, leave the cold-water running continuously

to prevent freezing pipes. A stream of water slightly less than a pencil width is recommended.

8. SERVICE YOUR FURNACE

Test the furnace routinely. An initial strong odor is normal when the furnace has been off for an extended period of time, but if the smell lasts too long, turn off the furnace and call a professional heating contractor to check your furnace. Replace the furnace filter throughout the winter season and have a professional clean and service your furnace once a year.

9. CHECK THE BATTERIES

Check all carbon monoxide detectors, smoke detectors, emergency lighting and exit sign bulbs to be sure they are in good working order. If your facility does not have carbon monoxide detectors, install them. Carbon monoxide and smoke detector units should be tested every month and replaced after 10 years. Batteries should be replaced twice a year in early spring and late fall.

10. BE PREPARED

If necessary, have a snow removal plan for your facility. This may include having the facility snow blower or tractor serviced and ready or contracting snow removal services for the winter season. Have adequate supplies of snow and ice melting product and shovels ready and train deacons or staff on their responsibilities when snow falls.

REGARDLESS OF THE CURRENT TEMPERATURE, NOW IS ALWAYS A GOOD TIME TO PROTECT YOUR FACILITIES. FIND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AT ADVENTISTRISK.ORG.

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