



WINTER COLD SNAP PREPARATION

Below are severe winter weather preparation tips you can take to ensure your world is protected during a cold snap.

Freezing Pipes & Water Damage Prevention

- **Insulate your pipes.** Insulate pipes in attics, basements, and along exterior walls. Seal cracks and holes near pipes with insulation or caulking.
- **Confirm heating fuel levels.** Before the cold weather sets in, check your fuel levels, and schedule a refill if needed.
- **Locate your water shut-off.** Locate your water shut-off for ease of accessing in the event of an emergency, such as pipes freezing and bursting. If a pipe does burst, shut your water off immediately and call a qualified plumber.
- **Service sprinkler systems.** If your building has a sprinkler system, ensure it is properly serviced, and consult your sprinkler service contractor for freeze prevention recommendations.
- **Open indoor cabinets for airflow.** Open indoor cabinets to increase warm air circulation around pipes.
- **Open faucets.** Open faucets to allow water to drip or trickle to help prevent pipes from freezing.
- **Turn up your thermostat.** Set your thermostat to a minimum of 60 degrees.
- **Thaw pipes safely.** If pipes do freeze during a cold snap, never use an open flame to thaw pipes. Instead, use a space heater, hair dryer, or other non-open flame method to warm pipes.
- **Business owner precautions.** Business owners, periodically monitor buildings to confirm heating systems are working and prevent issues before they become emergencies.

Snow Load & Ice Dam Prevention

- **Snow removal.** Remove snow from at least the bottom four feet of your roof as well as around valleys and chimneys. This will help prevent ice dams and water backups. Use a roof rake to safely clear your roof when possible.
- **Be aware of hazards.** Before shoveling your roof, locate skylights, roof vents, electrical wires, and other hazards, and navigate carefully around these areas when removing snow.



- **Ladder safety.** Before climbing a ladder to clear your roof, confirm the ladder is securely positioned on level ground and away from ice and snow.
- **Safety harnesses.** If you must access your roof to clear the snow, consider hiring an insured professional to do the job. If you opt to clear the roof yourself, utilize a safety harness when clearing areas with a steep roof pitch.

Additional Severe Cold Weather Preparation Tips

- **Stock up on emergency essentials.** Stock up on emergency essentials such as blankets, batteries, power sources for cellphones, flashlights, drinking water, and non-perishable food.
- **Check your detectors.** Confirm your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are battery operated and test to confirm they're working properly.
- **Avoid travel.** Avoid driving during severe cold weather, but if you must travel, carry an emergency kit with items to keep you warm in the event of a breakdown.
- **Power loss.** If you lose power, contain your home's heat by keeping exterior doors and windows closed and seal any drafts.
- **Keep children & pets inside.** If you need to take your pet outside, only do so for very short periods of time.
- **Use appropriate heating systems.** Do not utilize open flame appliances such as a gas oven or portable grill inside your home to produce heat. These appliances produce toxic fumes, including carbon monoxide, and are combustible without proper ventilation.