

August 2022



Winter Storm & Freeze Preparedness Plan



It is essential to plan for the possibility of freezing weather and winter storms on an ongoing basis that will be reviewed and updated annually.

This plan sets forth guidelines to help properly plan a coordinated and timely response to freezing weather conditions.

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Preventative Actions Inside the Facility

Temperature & Water Sensors

- Are they properly connected and functioning?

Thermostat

- Set the interior temperatures no lower than 55 degrees Fahrenheit regardless of whether the building is occupied.

Insulation

- Help prevent burst pipes by insulating the building including attic space and attic penetrations such as partition walls, vents, and plumbing stacks.
- Add insulation sleeves or wrapping to all water lines or pipes that travel through poorly heated areas.
- Check ceilings and attics for pipes that are in uninsulated areas (such as on top of insulation).
- Wrap pipes or add insulation to these areas.
- Make sure to check the sprinkler pipes.
- Take extra precautions to protect pipes that have frozen in the past.

Excess Flow Valve

- Consider having an automatic excess flow valve installed on the main incoming domestic water line to monitor and provide early detection of a broken pipe or valve.
- Excessive flow valves automatically shut to stop the flow of water when preset normal flow settings are exceeded.

Emergency Kit

- Prepare an emergency kit(s) for use in the event of a freeze and/or power loss.
- Include items such as batteries, flashlights, first aid supplies, blankets, water, nonperishable foods and a weather radio.

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Preventative Actions Outside the Facility

Caulking

- Seal cracks and seams on the outside of the building that may allow air and moisture to pass through.
- Use caulking around windows, doors and any openings cut for faucets, gas, and electric services.

Weather Stripping

- Use weather stripping around doors and windows to seal them against moisture and cold air.

Backup Power Source/Generator

- If not already in place, consider purchasing a backup power source or generator in case of power loss.
- Inspect backup power sources for proper functioning prior to winter.
- Generators should be placed outside for proper ventilation and to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.
- If operating a portable generator, ensure it is not left running unattended.
- Portable generators must be cooled down before refueling to avoid fire.
- If it is snowing, periodically clear snow from accumulating on the generator.

Building Exterior

- Have a qualified contractor check exterior roof, walls, and footings to ensure your building is prepared for winter temperatures and weather.
- Keep ice and snow away from any drain areas on your roof to prevent ice dams.

Irrigation Systems and Exterior Water Faucets

- Shut off and drain irrigation systems.
- Disconnect hoses from exterior faucets
- Shut off the water valve leading to exterior faucets and drain the exterior section of the pipe by opening the exterior faucet
- Consider installing freezeproof outdoor faucets with anti-siphon valves. Alternatively, protect the faucet with a foam insulation cover.

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In the Event of a Freeze

(Temps drop below 20 degrees F for more than 24 hours)

If power and/or heat to the building is lost, shut off water in the facility and drain water from pipes.

- To do this: Locate the main water valve in the building (often found near the water meter) and shut it off.
 - Starting from the topmost floor, open all sink faucets in the building to a trickle to allow air into the system.
 - Open tub or shower faucets and flush all toilets.
 - Leave faucets in the open position, no water should be coming out except for the occasional drip.

Once freezing temperatures have passed, keep faucets about 1/3 open as you turn the main water valve back on SLOWLY, keeping an eye out for any leaks.

- Once water is flowing smoothly, the faucets can be closed.

If shutting off the water to the facility is not an option, faucets should be opened to a drip to prevent burst pipes.

If power to the building is lost and your building relies on electronic security systems, arrange for alternate security.

Periodic inspections of the building and its pipes should be performed:

- More frequent inspections should be performed if uninsulated water pipes exist, or there is a lack of a reliable backup power source on the premises.
- Less frequent inspections will be performed with the presence of a reliable backup power source on the premises.
- Check multiple faucets around the building. Are they all off or just one?
- Open doors to cabinets, closets and any other unheated rooms containing water pipes.
- Remove ceiling tiles to expose ceiling pipes to warmer air from the room.

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In the Event of a Frozen Pipe

Turn up the heat in the building.

Turn on the hot and cold faucets fed by the frozen pipe.

- If the pipe is accessible, apply heat with heating tape, an electric hair dryer, hot towels or a portable space heater until water running through the faucet returns to full strength.

Keep heat sources away from flammable materials and monitor as you thaw the pipe(s). DO NOT use open flames such as a blowtorch or candles.

If the frozen pipe is not accessible or you are not able to thaw it, contact a licensed plumber.

If a frozen pipe bursts: Make sure water to the building is turned off. Contact your insurance company.

Responsibility for Implementing Plan

[Name or Title] is designated as the individual responsible for implementing the organization's winter storm and freeze preparation plan.

They report to [Title or Board/Committee] and will keep that individual/entity informed of activity surrounding implementation of the plan.