

Winter Readiness Checklist

Administrative & Documentation

- **Review Vendor Contracts:** Confirm snow removal contracts are signed early; ensure "trigger depths" for plowing are clearly defined.
- **Verify Insurance:** Check coverage for winter perils (pipe bursts, roof collapse) and review deductibles.
- **Establish Log System:** Create a detailed log for all snow/ice removal and maintenance to defend against liability claims (e.g., "Plowed Lot A at 6:00 AM").
- **Update Contact Tree:** Ensure the emergency contact list for staff, tenants, and vendors is current and practice the call-down procedure.

Building Envelope & Exterior

- **Roof & Gutters:** Clean gutters and downspouts before the first freeze to prevent ice dams and heavy load stress.
- **Snow Storage:** Designate specific zones for snow piles away from drainage and pedestrian paths to prevent refreezing.
- **Lighting Inspection:** Check all parking lot and walkway lighting to ensure visibility during short winter days.
- **Entryway Safety:** Deploy heavy-duty walk-off mats (minimum 10-12 feet) at entrances to capture moisture.
- **Signage:** Pre-position "Wet Floor" and "Ice" warning signs at high-traffic entrances.

HVAC & Temperature Control

- **Thermostat Settings:** Lock out "set-back" modes to ensure night temperatures do not drop dangerously low.
- **Minimum Temperature:** Maintain indoor building temperature above 60°F.
- **System Maintenance:** Change filters, test heating elements, and check freeze stats on Air Handling Units.
- **Damper Inspection:** Ensure dampers are functioning properly to prevent freezing cold air from blowing directly onto pipes.

Plumbing & Fire Suppression

- **Dry Pipe Systems:** Drain auxiliary drains ("drum drips") regularly; this is the #1 failure point for sprinkler systems.
- **Wet Pipe Systems:** Inspect the building shell for cracks near pipes to prevent freezing.
- **Insulation:** Inspect and add insulation to pipes in unheated areas (attics, garages, vestibules).
- **Exterior Water:** Drain all exterior hose bibs and irrigation systems.

Emergency Prep & Supplies

- **Generator Testing:** Test backup generators monthly and verify fuel contracts for priority refueling.
- **Stockpile Supplies:** Ensure you have salt/de-icer for at least 3 major events.
- **Emergency Equipment:** Verify snow blowers are fueled and test operation; check flashlights and battery banks.
- **PPE Check:** Provide staff with warm gloves, high-vis vests, and non-slip footwear/cleats