

The background image shows a winter scene on a university campus. A large, multi-story building with a central tower is partially visible behind a dark, semi-transparent rectangular overlay. The ground is covered in snow, and there are some trees and distant mountains in the background.

WINTER READINESS

Integrated Strategies for
Risk Managers & Facilities Staff



PREPARE YOUR SCHOOL, YOUR CAMPUS OR OFFICE BUILDING FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON





SHARED GOALS & OBJECTIVES

PARTNERSHIP



RISK MANAGERS

Focus on minimizing financial exposure, ensuring regulatory compliance, and managing insurance liability. Priority is protecting the organization's assets and reputation.



FACILITIES STAFF

Focus on operational continuity, physical safety of occupants, and preventative maintenance. Priority is keeping the building functional and safe during severe weather.

THE WINTER RISK LANDSCAPE



LIABILITY

Slip and fall incidents are the most common winter liability. Proper documentation of snow removal is your primary legal defense.



ASSET DAMAGE

Frozen pipes and ice dams can cause catastrophic water damage. Insurance claims for water damage average over \$10,000 per incident.



BUSINESS INTERRUPTION

Inaccessible parking lots or heating failures can force closures, leading to significant lost revenue and productivity.



STRATEGIC RISK MITIGATION

- ✓ **Vendor Contracts:** Review snow removal contracts early. Ensure they clearly define "trigger depths" for plowing and liability transfer clauses.
- ✓ **Known Hazards:** Verify coverage for winter-specific perils like roof collapse or pipe bursting. Check deductibles.
- ✓ **Tenant Communication:** Send winter prep memos to tenants clarifying responsibilities (e.g., keeping heat at 55°F minimum).
- ✓ **Documentation:** Establish a rigorous log system for all weather-related maintenance and incidents.



WINTER PREPARATION CHECKLIST	
Winter can be a harsh season, especially if you live in an area with extreme weather conditions. Here is a checklist of 7 things you can do to prepare for winter:	
☐	Establish an Emergency Plan: Create a list of preferred home service providers, vendors, and emergency contacts before a storm arrives, because when pipes burst or the power lines come down, every second counts.
☐	Water Shut-Offs and Sump Pumps: For any homeowner, a burst pipe is a nightmare scenario. Consider installing a whole-house water shut-off system so that you can easily access it.
☐	Monitor Interior Temperature: Keep the interior temperature of your home at a minimum of 60 degrees Fahrenheit, especially if you are going to be away for an extended period of time.
☐	Conduct an Energy Audit: An energy audit of your home is a simple way to identify any hidden issues that could put your plumbing at risk, including insulation gaps, air leakage, duct leakage, and moisture issues.
☐	Maintain Attic Conditions: Make sure that it is properly insulated and ventilated, and that all pipes and their exposed surfaces are well insulated as well.
☐	Install Smart Home Technology: Installing a smart home system can help you keep an eye on things in case you are away during a severe weather event.
☐	Hire a House Sitter: If you know that you will be away from your home for a prolonged period over the winter, or if your time away from your home overlaps with an impending winter weather event, the best way to make sure your house is safe and protected is to hire a trusted house sitter.

BUILDING ENVELOPE

ROOF & GUTTER INSPECTION

Prevent Ice Dams: Ensure attic insulation is sufficient and ventilated to keep the roof deck cold.

Clear Drainage: Clean all gutters and downspouts before the first freeze. Clogs lead to ice buildup and heavy load stress.

Load Capacity: Know your roof's snow load rating. Have a plan for professional snow removal if accumulation exceeds safe limits.



HVAC SYSTEMS

WINTERIZING MECHANICS

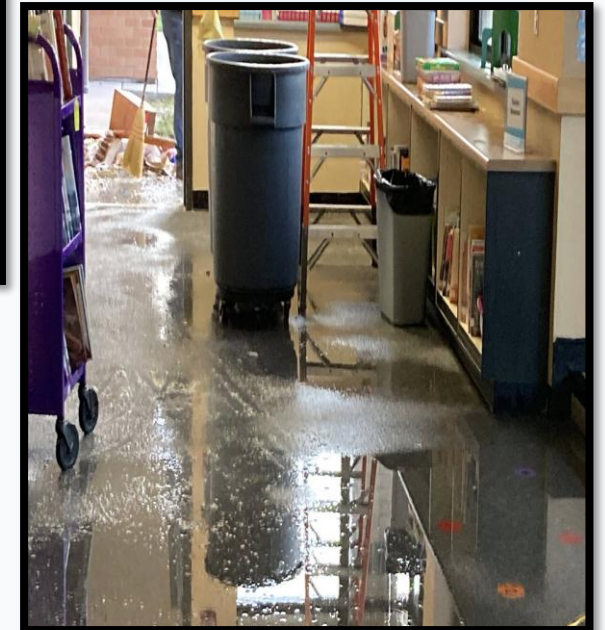
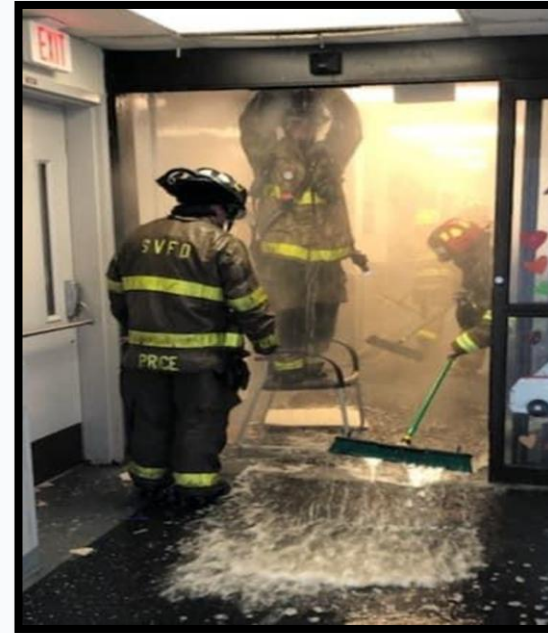
- **HVAC:** Change filters and test heating elements.
Check freeze stats on Air Handling Units to prevent coil freezing.
- **Thermostats:** Lock out set-backs to ensure night temperatures don't drop dangerously low.



HVAC SYSTEMS

DAMPERS AND CONTROLS

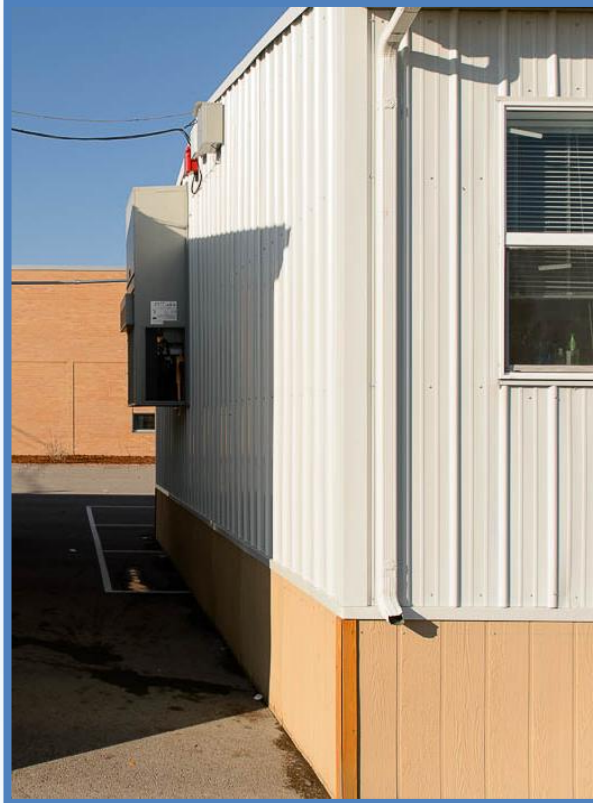
- Damper not working properly, bring fresh air in bring the cold air in on the pipes.
- **Thermostats:** Lock out set-backs to ensure night temperatures don't drop dangerously low.



PORTABLE HVAC SYSTEMS

STAND ALONE SYSTEMS

- Personal Heaters
- Air Vents
- CO2 levels



HVAC SYSTEMS

Thermostats and Controls

- **Thermostats:**

Lock out set-backs to ensure night temperatures don't drop dangerously low.

- **Energy Management:**

They have one goal and that is to reduce equipment running and saving the agency money.

- **Recommended Building Temperature**

Above **60°**



FROZEN PIPE HAZARDS

FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

Dry Pipe Systems: The #1 failure point. You MUST drain the auxiliary drains ("drum drips") regularly.

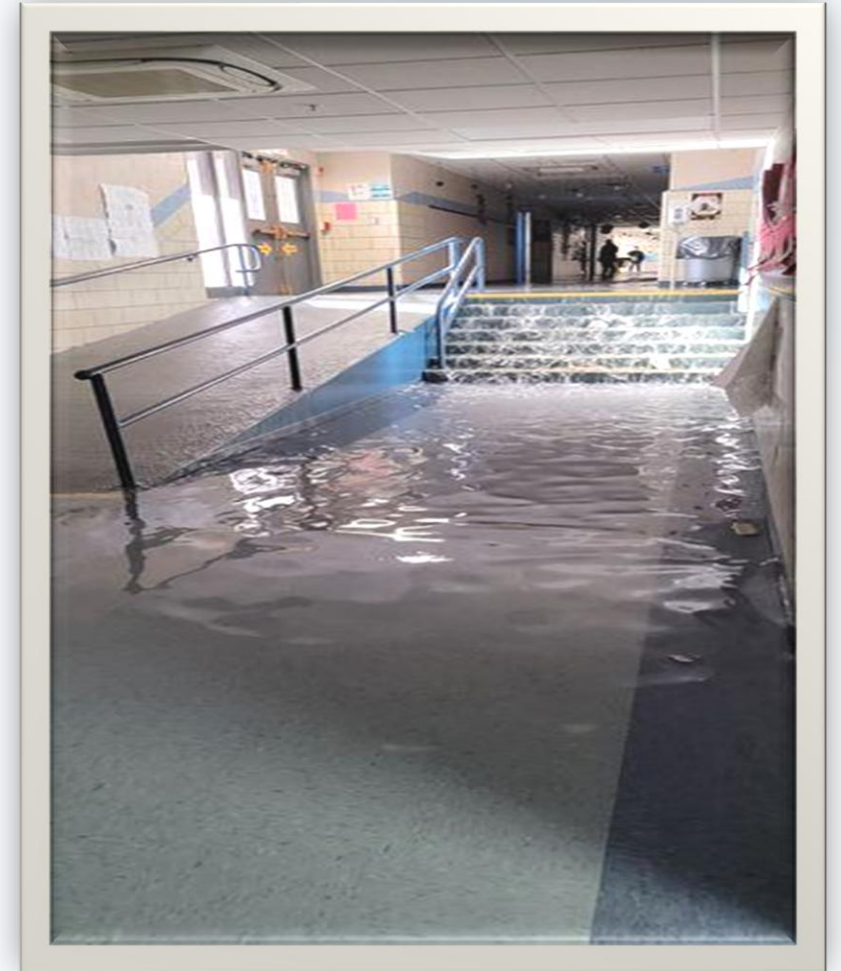
Wet Pipe Systems: Verify the building shell is sealed. A single crack in an exterior wall near a pipe can freeze it.



FROZEN PIPE HAZARDS

FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

Vestibule's: They are often vulnerable sections of the building that may not have heat and often fall short of needed insulation and protection from the outdoor elements.



FROZEN PIPE HAZARDS

DOMESTIC WATER

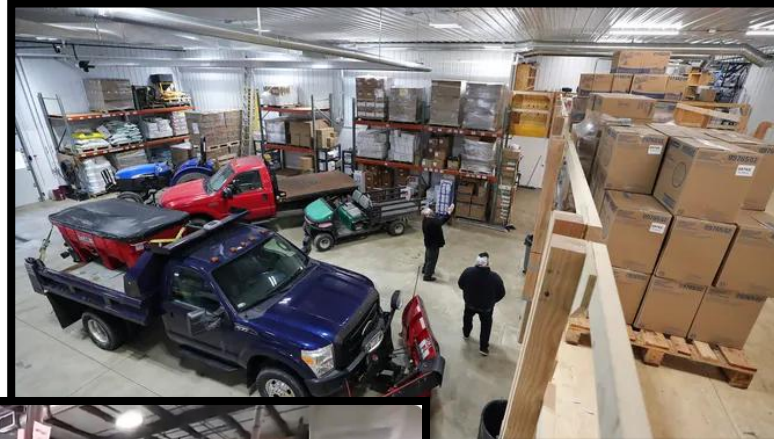
Insulation: Inspect and re-inspect insulation on pipes in unheated spaces (attics, garages, outdoor theaters, etc.). Use thermal devices to find where insulation isn't enough.

Plumbing: Insulate pipes in unheated areas. Drain exterior hose bibs and irrigation systems.



UNOCCUPIED SPACE

- Warehouse's
- Sheds
- Storage units
- Vacant facilities



EXTERIOR SAFETY

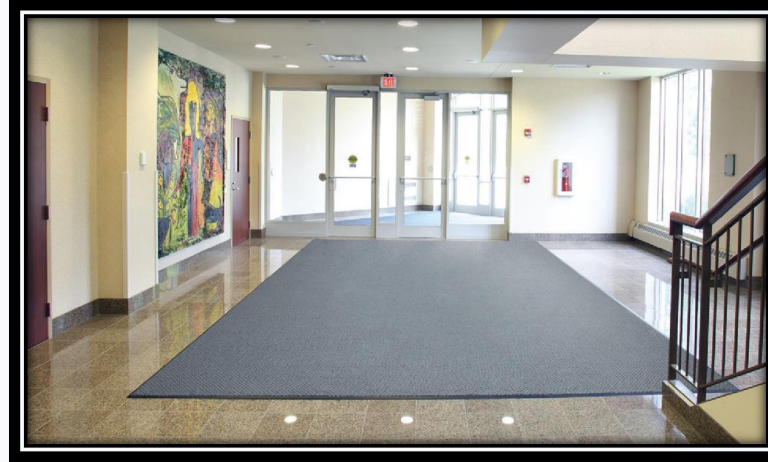
SLIP AND FALL PREVENTION

Winter weather dramatically increases the likelihood of slip injuries. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, over 20,000 workplace injuries in 2017 were linked to ice, sleet, or snow—costing an average of \$47,000 per claim.

Entryways: Deploy heavy-duty walk-off mats (minimum 10-12 feet) to capture snow and moisture before it hits hard floors.

Lighting: Inspect parking lot and walkway lighting. Winter days are short; visibility is your first line of defense against accidents.

Signage: Pre-position "Wet Floor" and "Ice" warning signs at all high-traffic entrances.



SNOW & ICE MANAGEMENT PROTOCOLS

- **The Snow Log:**

Maintain a detailed log: *"Plowed Lot A at 6:00 AM, applied salt to Walkway B at 6:30 AM."*

This is critical for liability defense.



Snow & Ice Removal Log

Date of Storm: 3/3/21

Residential Address: 401 Main St, Brighton, MA 02135

Property Owner: John Smith

Address: 401 Main St, Brighton, MA

Phone #: 330-222-1234

Email: JSMITH@EXAMPLE.COM

Service Location Information: Driveway & Walkway & Sidewalk

Time Arrived	Time Departed	Snow Depth	Driver
6:30am	8:30am	6 in.	Paul Smith

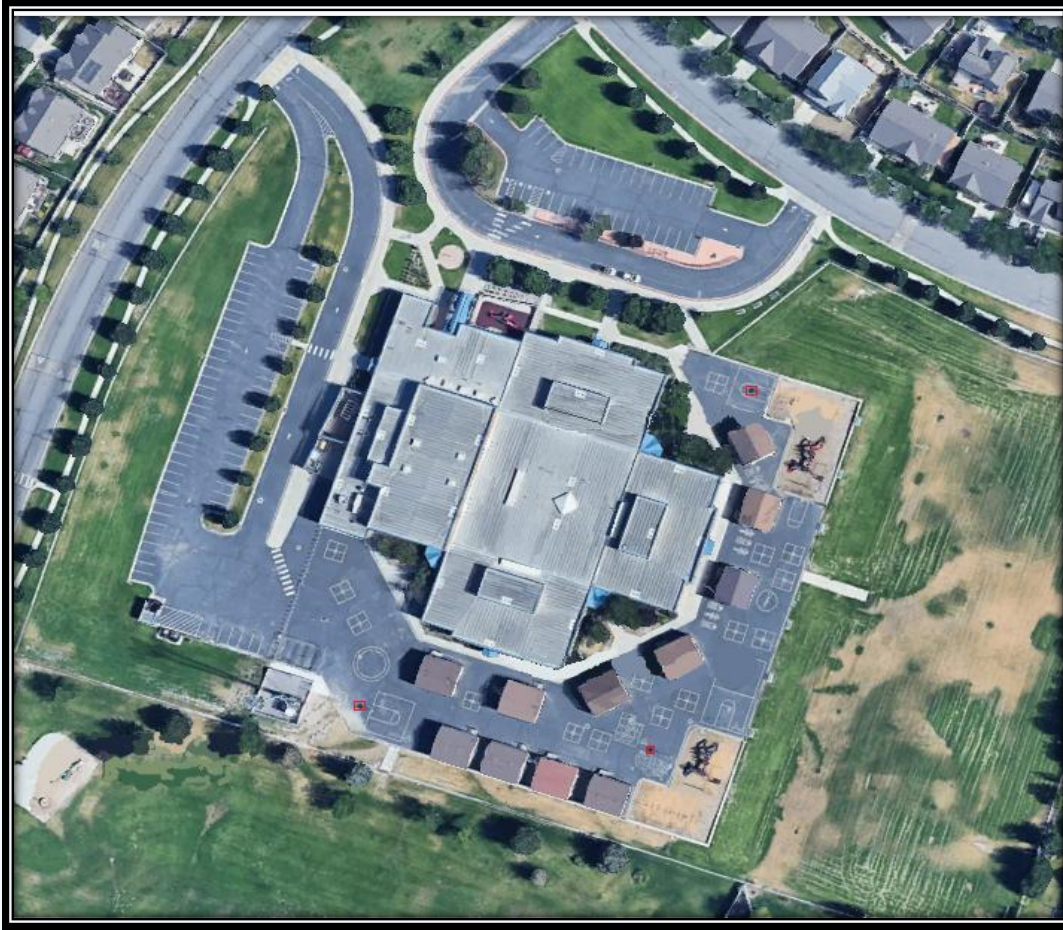
Service	
Driveway Plowed	☒
Walkway Shoveled	☒
Salting/Sanding	N/A
Other	N/A

☒ Plow Truck ☒ Salt/Sand

Challenges/Notes: [Blank lines for notes]

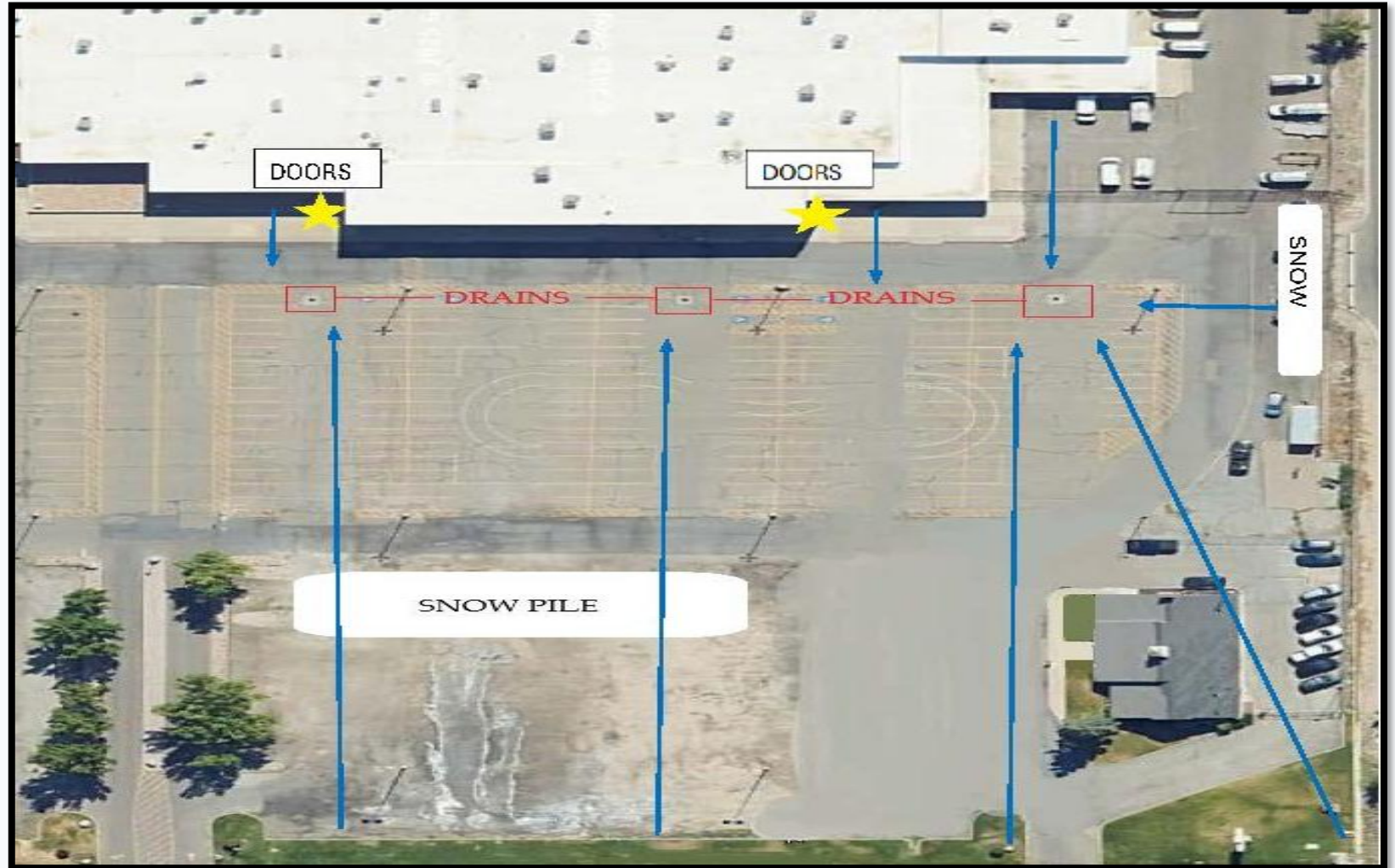


TO PLOW OR NOT TO PLOW



SNOW & ICE MANAGEMENT PROTOCOLS

- **Snow Storage:**
Define designated snow pile zones away from drainage and pedestrian paths to prevent melt-off refreezing.



EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNING



POWER FAILURE

Test backup generators monthly. Ensure fuel contracts are in place for priority refueling during widespread outages.



DEEP FREEZE

If heating fails, have a plan for portable heaters and rapid pipe draining to save the infrastructure.



COMMUNICATION

Maintain an updated contact tree for staff, tenants, and emergency vendors. Practice the call-down procedure.

EDUCATE YOUR EMPLOYEES AND STAFF

1. Slow Down
2. Walk like a penguin
3. Wear appropriate shoes
4. Dress in layers
5. Safety Supply's
6. Work from home



THE "GO-BAG" & SUPPLIES

ESSENTIAL STOCKPILE

Don't wait for the storm to buy supplies. Ensure your facility has:

- **De-icing Material:** Sufficient salt/calcium chloride for 3 major events.
- **Equipment:** Shovels, snow blowers (tested and fueled), and flashlights.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Warm gloves, high-vis vests, and non-slip footwear/cleats for staff.
- **Emergency Tech:** Battery banks for phones and a battery-powered weather radio.



POST-EVENT ANALYSIS



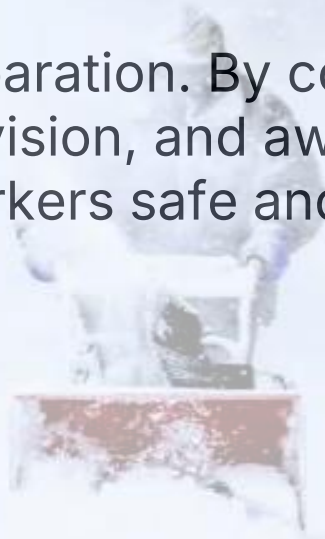
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

After every major winter event, Risk Managers and Facilities Staff should meet to review:

- **What worked?** Did the vendor arrive on time? Did the pipes hold?
- **What failed?** Were there slip complaints? Did we run out of salt?
- **Incident Review:** Analyze any near-misses or accidents to update protocols.
- **Cost Analysis:** specific review of snow removal costs vs. budget.

Conclusion

Winter safety depends on preparation. By combining smart planning, proper clothing, vigilant supervision, and awareness of early warning signs, employers can keep workers safe and productive all season long.





Thank You

GIVE THE PLOWS ROOM TO WORK