



WINTER WEATHER PREPARATION

Cold snaps and freezing temperatures are common for Michigan's winter season. Not taking the proper precautions can be very costly for your district. To ensure the safety of your students and employees it is important to prepare your district and have a plan in place.

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES:

- Install a lockbox to hold a master key on the boiler room or storage room door for emergency access to the main water/gas/electrical shutoffs.
- Diagram location of all water shutoffs for easy access.
- Install a transfer switch for generator hook-up, if needed.
- Use closed-cell spray foam to insulate plumbing.
- Open water faucets slightly to let them drip to keep water flowing through the pipes that are vulnerable to freezing and bursting.
- Use safe, portable heaters when necessary.
- Leave bathroom and cabinet doors open for heat transfer.
- Remove ceiling tiles with fire sprinkler systems or water lines for heat transfer.
 - Wet fire sprinkler systems are not designed for cold areas.
- Remove snow loads on roof, this will also prevent ice dams.
 - Follow MIOSHA requirements to access roof.
 - Take care not to damage roof surface when removing snow.
- Conduct routine walk-throughs of buildings even when school is not in session.
- Keep gas tanks in vehicles and equipment filled.

WINTERIZE YOUR DISTRICT:

- Shut off and drain water to buildings and areas without proper heating, including:
 - Field houses
 - Concession stands
 - Press boxes
 - Storage facilities
 - Irrigation systems
 - Pumps
- Remove hoses from exterior hose bibs.
- Make sure all non-frost-free hose bibs are maintained.
- Add anti-freeze to all traps and water lines as needed.
- Inspect roof drainage system and remove debris and direct water away from building.

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MINIMIZE FREEZE DAMAGE:

- Identify cold zones where pipes are located.
- Use an imaging camera to identify:
 - Piping systems in concealed or unheated areas
 - Frozen plumbing
 - Cold or heat loss areas
 - Electrical hazards
- Inspect areas where prior issues have occurred.
- Inspect plumbing located on exterior walls.
- Inspect plumbing exposed to direct venting (roof and room heaters).
- Have pipes insulated and seal air leaks.
- If pipes in your building burst, shut water off immediately and take precautions to avoid electrical shock from being in or near standing water.
- Prop open interior doors of vestibule entryways that have hydronic heating and/or sprinkler heads during extreme cold weather.
- Make sure outside make up air dampers on all HVAC systems work properly and close tightly.
- Make sure on-site generators are fueled and ready to run before an extended break and during winter months.

TRACK EXTREME WEATHER:

- Increase monitoring of areas of concern during school, off hours, weekends and holidays.
- Increase heat to buildings 24/7, if needed.

IMPLEMENT EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

- Check your procedure for restoring electrical service on an item-by-item basis.
- Have a generator backup, or locate a company in your area that rents generators, if needed.
- Have the contact information available for all emergency measures.
- Train staff annually on all emergency protocol and keep records of all employees trained with their signature.

This document provides information of a general nature. It is not intended to be fully comprehensive, nor to provide legal advice or opinions relative to specific facts, matters, situations or issues. A member school district is encouraged to seek legal advice for their specific purposes.