



The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA

Department of Enterprise Risk Management

First Quarter Newsletter: January 2024

WINTER WEATHER PRECAUTIONS

The following guidance comes from State Risk Management. While many of the duties listed below reside with service departments, like Facilities Management, we wanted to share these insights to help keep our People and our Buildings safe. If you have questions or concerns about the winter preparation of your building, please contact 405-325-2490.

Colder weather is right around the corner. Severe ice and snow storms are a significant contributor of insured catastrophic losses. While we cannot control what the forces of nature may bring us this winter, it's important to not overlook the importance of building maintenance.

Buildings and Structures

With the combination of sustained extremely low temperatures, snow, and strong winds, the risk for frozen pipes is at an all-time high, especially

for plumbing located on north facing walls or attic spaces. It is extremely important to be sure all buildings have the heat set to **a minimum of 65 degrees** and that all doors and windows are sealed to protect against the strong winds.

Heating Equipment

Boilers, furnaces, and other heating equipment must be inspected and maintained in accordance with regulatory and manufacturers' guidelines. Winter storms frequently cause electrical power failure, which may deactivate your heating system. If this occurs, water-filled piping (i.e., sprinklers, domestic water pipes and air conditioning systems) may freeze and rupture.

Mechanical and Process Equipment

Equipment located outside or near exterior walls is vulnerable in cold weather. Check all outside tanks and indoor pipes for moisture or condensate and proper operating condition. Remember to secure outdoor equipment against strong winds.

Fire Protection Equipment

As with other equipment, fire protection equipment— from water mains, to extinguishers, to hydrants—can be highly vulnerable to drops in temperature during a severe weather situation. If a fire emergency does occur, you might find yourself without sufficient means to contain it. Remember to verify that all fire protection equipment is operating effectively [Note: Campus Safety/Fire Marshal's Office can help with concerns]

Sprinkler Systems

Sprinkler systems are a vital part of fire protection, and can be the best means of containing an outbreak.

****Sign up for our Newsletter! Visit ou.edu/risk and click on the request link****



The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA

Department of Enterprise Risk Management

First Quarter Newsletter: January 2024

Sprinkler Systems cont.

As such, you should make sure that all systems are functioning properly in advance of a severe winter weather event.

Snow Removal

Make sure that snow and ice removal equipment and manpower are readily available. Keeping active walkways, driveways, and parking lots clear will help minimize slips, falls and motor vehicle accidents. Designate a safe area for dumping snow. Remember that melting and freezing will occur until the snow pile is gone. Your snow removal plan should also address situations and conditions that require additional equipment or manpower (lack of manpower due to illness or strike, extreme snowfall or icing that may require special equipment or ice melting chemicals).

Employee Awareness

Advise employees of your emergency plans. Make sure they know how to obtain closure information. Remind employees to carry emergency supplies such as blankets, shovel, flashlight, and jumper cables in their vehicles in case they are stranded during a storm

Reminder About Your Property

Please remember that incidents related to personal property due to weather or other "Acts of Nature" that happen to your own vehicles/property are the responsibility of the owner and their personal insurance. Be mindful during winter months of potential weather-related conditions that could affect your property and act accordingly. Some helpful vehicle tips are: Keep it Covered, Get Snow Tires and Prepare for the Unexpected with an emergency car kit.



Building Safety Checklists

- Emergency Doors and Exits Clearly Marked
- Doors and Exits Free/Clear of Obstacles
- Do Not Prop Open Security Doors
- Handrails and Stair Treads Secured
- Awareness of Fire Extinguisher/Alarms Locations
- Floors Free of Trip Hazards, Liquid, Debris
- Stairwells Free of Stored Items
- Keep Drawers Closed
- Store Cables in Protective Covers
- Report any Broken/Need of Repair Items to Facilities Management via their website:

<https://www.ou.edu/facilities>

CONTACT US

In the event of an accident or incident, the need for risk assessment, or if you just want to know more about risk management, contact us or come by anytime. Our office is open weekdays between 8 AM to 5 PM.

You can reach us at: (405) 325-2490
norman-riskmanagement@ou.edu

Check out our Website: ou.edu/risk
Book a RoadShow: tinyurl.com/Schedule-a-Roadshow
Quick Reporting: ou.edu/risk/quick-reporting-aid

****Sign up for our Newsletter! Visit ou.edu/risk and click on the request link****