

Extreme Weather Preparedness Tips for Schools:

Even with all the latest technology we still never know when extreme winter weather is going to hit. Extreme cold, ice, sleet, and snow can be dangerous for students and faculty alike but also for buildings. Below are a few tips on being safe and preventing damage during winter conditions:

Running a small amount of water from faucets will help to prevent pipes from freezing during cold temperatures.

Having a licensed professional inspect all Heating units prior to and during the cold season to prevent breakdowns and keep up on general maintenance.

Having a licensed professional inspect sprinkler pipes/lines and add insulation, if necessary, to prevent pipes from freezing and/or bursting.

Inspections and repairs need to be done by a licensed professional to roof structures, roof drains, gutters, downspouts, and storm sewers prior to the cold season to prevent further damage. Most roof work cannot be completed during low temperatures.

Having a licensed professional inspect, repair, and perform routine maintenance on generators, electrical lines, and panels to prevent loss of power during extreme weather conditions.

Keeping up on routine maintenance like caulking of windows, doors, roof connections, masonry gaps and expansion joints, etc, will help save energy and prevent water from entering the building and causing more damage especially during extreme weather conditions.

Education of all staff on the location of all emergency shut-off valves/switches is extremely important especially during extreme weather conditions.

Having a plan for faculty/staff to routinely maintain and check your school buildings, especially during winter and summer breaks when extreme weather may still happen and no one is occupying the building.

Review, exercise and update your School Emergency and Crisis Response Plan. The School Safety Drill Act requires a minimum of one annual review meeting at which each school building's Emergency and Crisis Response Plan is reviewed and updated by the school's Annual Review Team. After drills or actual events, debrief with the Annual Review Team to evaluate results, identify gaps or shortfalls, and document lessons learned.

For further information on extreme weather preparations follow the link below on the Illinois Emergency Management Agency's website:

http://www.state.il.us/iema/disaster/pdf/iema333_winter_storm_preparedness_guidebook.pdf