Snow and Ice Procedures

Program Elements

1. Program statement: This program is intended to aid facility managers in developing a plan for winter operations protocols related to snow and ice. Each section includes content reflecting best management practices and should be tailored to your specific facility’s protocols, conditions and practices.

2. Assign program responsibilities: One person should be provided with the management resources needed to accomplish the goals your organization established. That person should coordinate the monitoring of weather conditions, maintain communications, track inspection reports and initiate removal procedures. Someone in the buildings and grounds or public works department, such as a maintenance supervisor, is a likely candidate.

The reason for implementing the program should be communicated in writing to all employees. Duties and responsibilities should be outlined as well. Success depends on the professionalism of your contractors and the training of your personnel so they can effectively monitor, maintain and remove snow and ice from all designated walking and driving surfaces.

3. Pre-winter survey: This survey provides information that is vital to a successful winter maintenance process. The survey process should include the following steps or procedures:
   • Inspect designated walkways and parking areas for uneven surfaces.
   • Evaluate the lighting provided for walking, parking and approaching building entrances. Is the lighting operational and adequate? An architect or other lighting professional will come in handy for this step.
   • Identify the edges of parking areas, curbs, fire hydrants and sprinkler controls. Mark these areas with snow poles that have high visibility paint and are typically at least 6 feet high.
   • Verify the drainage of designated walking and driving surfaces and ensure that parking areas are clear.
   • Designate areas for piling snow. Be sure that the piles and drainage paths are kept away from buildings.
   • Verify that the snow grids at building entrances are in good condition. These may require additional cleaning.
   • Verify that all building entrance non-slip floor mats are in good condition. You may have to consult with your service representative if this service is contracted out.
   • Verify that there’s an adequate inventory of mops or wet vacuums for interior snow and melt cleanup activities. Snow and slush means more cleaning, so be sure to stock enough supplies to keep walkways safe.
• Verify that snow and ice removal equipment is operational and in place. Test your equipment. Replace or repair damaged units.
• Verify you have an adequate inventory of plows, snow blowers, shovels, ice chippers and roof snow removers where applicable. Test your equipment. Replace or repair damaged units.
• Verify you have an adequate inventory of fuel, repair or replacement parts, and supplies for your power equipment. Your inventory should include the materials required to properly maintain and operate your tools.
• Test communications equipment. Repair or replace damaged units. Maintain daily monitoring of weather forecasts and emergency weather bulletins. Maintain and test the employee notification/communication network.
• Verify that protective clothing has been provided to snow and ice removal personnel. Replace worn-out or damaged items of clothing. Snow and ice removal procedures could expose employees to the cold for long periods of time. Employees should be wearing protective clothing such as gloves, hats, boots and coats.

4. Process implementation:
• Weather forecasts should be monitored on a daily basis. Formally assign this responsibility to an individual. That person should then monitor and distribute weather updates as needed.
• Implement a process for receiving emergency weather bulletins when they are issued. This may be accomplished by monitoring cell phone alerts, internet- or radio-based weather broadcasts provided by the National Weather Service, or other reliable sources.
• Perform physical checks of your facilities prior to normal operating hours. Formally assign this responsibility to one individual. That person may also deem it necessary to identify one individual per site who will then be responsible inspecting their assigned locations. It should be performed before, during and after a snowfall or when temperatures cause snow and ice to melt and then refreeze.
  - Sidewalks and walkways: They should be included in the physical check process. Walking surfaces should be checked for accumulated snow and ice. The main goal is to try to effectively eliminate all slips, trips and falls. Any hazards should be immediately reported and documented. Remediation action should be performed in a timely manner.
  - Parking areas: They should be included in the inspection process. Designated driving and walking surfaces should be checked for accumulated snow and ice. Any hazards should be immediately reported, documented and addressed.
5. **Roof control evaluations:** These evaluations provide information that is vital to a successful roof maintenance process, providing workers with a map of each rooftop area. These maps help when accumulated snow has obscured the roof’s details. The roof control evaluation process should include the following steps or procedures:
- Identify and chart the locations of all roof openings.
- Identify and chart the locations of rooftop safety line securing points.
- Verify the use of environmentally safe ice removal techniques.
- Verify that ladders used for accessing roof areas and gutters are in place and undamaged.
- Verify the use of roof safety lines, edge and marking equipment.
- Verify that roof drains and gutters are open and free of obstructions and that water is routed away from buildings.

6. **Establish and maintain an emergency action response plan:**
- Form an action team and identify its members.
- Identify the location of the command center.
- Verify that emergency communications equipment is in place and operational.
- Verify plans for backup communication systems.
- Verify that backup electric generation systems are operational.
- Create an online resource directory containing emergency contact names and telephone numbers. Distribute the directory to action team members.
- Develop a list of approved contractors who can be hired for emergency snow removal, with their contact information.

**Program Activities Calendar**
- Daily monitoring of weather conditions, forecasts and emergency notifications
- Daily monitoring of walkways, parking areas and building entrances and exits
- Fall – pre-winter survey
- Annual plan review

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