

Severe Weather Preparation for Buildings

Before the storm:

Many of the activities suggested are more than likely standard preventative maintenance items, which have their own assigned performance frequency. However, with impending severe storm conditions forecast, all items should be completed again. They are:

- Ensure that all roof drains and gutters are free of all debris, as well as downspouts and the grates on storm drains.
- Close and secure all windows and doors in buildings.
- If possible, move all loose items that might become airborne in high winds, inside the building.
- Standby electrical generators should be test-run, and their fuel tanks topped-off.
- Test all sump pumps to ensure that they are operational, and verify that their hoses are properly connected.
- Prepare a list of emergency response contractors with 24 hour contacts. These should include restoration/cleanup companies, plumbers, electricians, glass companies, etc.
- Have staff on call and available to respond to a situation immediately.

During and after the storm:

Buildings should be checked throughout the storm's duration, in order to find problems as soon as possible. If damage is detected, the following steps should be followed:

- Call in staff/contractors immediately to remediate and make emergency repairs as soon as possible, keeping track of hours and materials used. Though most custodial staffs do an excellent job of extracting standing water, professional restoration contractors have the knowledge and equipment to thoroughly dry buildings and contents to prevent damage.
- Check for standing water in basements, HVAC systems, under roof eaves, gutters, and window wells. This can lead to mold and mildew situations within 48 hours. Remove water and dry areas as required.
- Take photographs of damages before, during and after cleanup.
- Do not discard damaged items for which a claim will be made. Set these items aside, in a location that is away from occupied areas so an adjuster can view them.

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