

Safety Short

Facilities Maintenance – Winter Snow Load



As someone responsible for facility safety, you have a lot to do to prepare for winter. Listed below are some helpful reminders to assist you in preparing.

Clear roof drains of debris each fall.

Inspect your roofs in the fall for signs of damage.

Install snow brakes on metal or steep pitch roofs over entrances and exits.

Know how much snow load your roof system can carry.

Snow load chart by town for the State of Maine can be found at;

https://www.maine.gov/decd/sites/maine.gov.decd/files/inline-files/Maine_GSL_Listing_by_Town_2015.pdf

If any new equipment has been installed on the roof have the roof support system evaluated by a structural engineer to make sure it can continue to carry the dead and expected snow loads.

Be aware of any areas on the roof where drifting snow accumulates (snow catch points, and remove the accumulated snow load throughout the winter.

Inspect the snow depth on your roofs throughout the winter.

Have a fall protection plan and documented fall protection training for all municipal employees who are responsible for removing snow from your roofs.

Have a designated area to deposit snow from the roof. If so, are controls in place to keep the public out of the designated area.

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If you have a roof you suspect was lightly constructed or has shown indicators of bowing or sagging from snow load, discuss the installation of a snow load deflection system with a structural engineer to determine if this is a good step to take. These systems detect when snow weight has increased to a pre-determined set-point and should be removed, then the system notifies designated personal.

If you contract roof snow removal;

Get a Certificate of Insurance (COI) from your plowing contractor. The Certificate of Insurance should list your entity as an Additional Insured and it should have a hold harmless clause.