

Winter Safety Checklist

The coldest months of the year are a time to be especially vigilant about protecting your church property, whether your climate is snowy or mild.

OUTSIDE

- Check for the buildup of ice or snow on the roof. Accumulation can place significant stress on the roof and support members as well as cause significant area damage to shingles, gutters, downspouts and flashing.
- Verify that natural drainage is taking place unimpeded as temperatures rise and fall. If necessary, get professional help removing dangerous accumulations or repairing damaged or blocked drainage.
- Visually inspect all walkways, entrances, exits, parking areas for ice or snow accumulations. Make sure handrails are free from ice. You can minimize slips and falls during this season by using sand for traction and salt or similar chemical substitutes for melting ice and snow.

INSIDE

- Check all heating systems for proper functioning. You should do this annually as part of the normal maintenance routine. Risks of fire and release of carbon monoxide and other gasses peak during cold weather if systems are not properly maintained.
- Have a qualified professional evaluate the efficiency and proper functioning of the heating plant, if this has not recently been done.
- Evaluate and take necessary steps to prevent frozen pipes and the plumbing damage they cause. Cold weather water damage problems can be costly.
- Produce, distribute and discuss the report on Risk Management initiatives you have accomplished, as well as those scheduled for a later date.
- Keep candles at least one foot from anything that can burn including material such as tapestry, paper, and wood. Some of these simple procedures can greatly lower the risk of fire:
 - ❖ Use candle holders that are sturdy, won't tip over easily, are made of a material that can't burn and are large enough to collect dripping wax.
 - ❖ Place candle holders on a sturdy, uncluttered surface – away from edges and any place where they could easily be knocked over.
 - ❖ Light candles carefully. Keep your hair and loose clothing away from the flame.
 - ❖ Keep candle wicks trimmed to one-quarter inch.
 - ❖ Extinguish candles when they burn down to within two inches of their holder or any decorative material.
 - ❖ Extinguish candles carefully. Do not leave the area until the wicks have stopped glowing.
 - ❖ Do not leave unattended children in a room with a candle.
 - ❖ During December, there are nearly twice as many candle fires as are averaged during the other 11 months. So please keep candles away from all natural and artificial decorations.