



Snow and Ice Removal Guidelines

The accumulation of snow and ice on walkways, stairs, parking lots and driveways presents unsafe conditions which can lead to slip and fall injuries. The employer, property owner or manager must make every effort to control the impact of any weather condition affecting these surfaces to reduce the potential for injury to employees.

Developing an action plan up front to react to these weather conditions in an expedient manner will improve an employer's ability to control claims related to snow and ice

Developing formal procedures in advance of the winter season helps ensure prompt snow and ice removal. To create consistency in this approach, develop a snow removal plan, clearly communicate the scope of the plan and identify responsibilities for employees charged to carry out the plan.

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Things to consider:

- Develop and implement a written plan. Determine responsibilities for those carrying out the plan, including backups for staff not available to carry out their responsibilities.
- Designate someone to monitor weather conditions and forecasts, the condition of walking surfaces, and the effectiveness of the snow and ice removal practices.
- When weather conditions warrant, communicate the required snow and ice removal activities to employees or contractors. When potentially dangerous conditions exist, communicate to employees entering or leaving the facility about possibly hazardous conditions being present on outside walking surfaces.
- Provide training to employees who will be executing the snow and ice removal plan. Training should encompass specific duties and responsibilities, tools and equipment needed for snow and ice removal, proper clothing and footwear needed to work in the climate they will encounter.
- Part of an effective snow and ice removal plan is tracking when snow and ice removal activities occur. A snow and ice removal log should be used to document the date, time, condition, location of removal activities, people performing such activities, and types of treatments utilized to control snow and ice.

Tools of the trade for snow and ice removal will vary based on weather conditions. Something as simple as ice-melting compound may be all that is needed to improve walking surfaces. On the other hand, the use of snow plows and snow blowers may be needed to remove significant snow accumulation. Appropriate training should be provided in the safe and proper use of these tools and equipment, as well as the proper application of snow and ice treatments (ice-melting compounds).

The use of appropriate tools and equipment is possible only if they are readily accessible. Consider staging shovels, ice scrapers and ice melting compounds near entrances and doorways. Make sure snow blowers and snow-plowing equipment is properly serviced, operational and readily accessible when needed. Consider your inventory of snow and ice removal tools, making sure you have an appropriate number and quantity available to effectively deal with any and all weather conditions.

The following are examples of appropriate snow and ice removal tools:

- Snow shovels
- Ice chippers
- Ice-melting compounds
- Snow blowers
- Snowplows
- Maintenance of interior door mats or nonskid runners

Other items to consider when developing your organization's approach to snow and ice removal activities:

- Consider your work force — those tasked to carry out the snow and ice removal activities.
 - Consider their physical condition; encourage them not to overexert themselves and to take appropriate rest breaks in a warm location.
 - Employees who may have cardiac problems should consult their physician before exerting themselves with snow shoveling.
- Consider the buildup of snow and icicles, which may be hanging from the roof near entrances or walkways. These can create hazards to pedestrians — consideration should be given to methods of removal or how to properly secure walkways in the vicinity of these hazards.
- Consider emergency areas such as fire hydrants, fire lanes and emergency exits. These must remain clear and accessible in the event of an emergency.
- Consider the location or staging of snow piles. These should be located in an area that does not block the view of pedestrians or vehicle traffic.

