

Helping your club tackle winter

When winter is on its way, the onset of the cold weather is likely to bring with it the usual problems for you and your club premises. This risk guidance offers you practical advice for some of the most common issues.

Minimising winter risks is about effective preparation and regular inspection. For instance, before the winter weather sets in, check your drainpipe's valleys, gutters, hoppers and downpipes for blockages. Make sure they can carry water away quickly and efficiently. If they are not maintained, blockages will occur and the accumulation of water will eventually cause damage.

It is also important to keep an eye on your roof as loose or missing slates and tiles may allow water into the roof space. Arranging for a professional to replace a loose or missing slate or tile is much cheaper than repairing or replacing roof timbers.

Then, of course, there is the ubiquitous burst pipe. Check the insulation on your water pipes and cold water tank – those in the attic or other vulnerable spaces should be lagged or similarly protected. Make sure any external taps are turned off, and disconnect any hoses.

If, during a cold snap, you can ensure someone visits the club everyday so that if you do suffer from a burst pipe, it will be detected as soon as possible and any damage caused can be minimised.

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Other simple actions you may wish to consider:

- Regularly check power and telephone cables for the build-up of ice and plan a safe method to remove it.
- Provide fire hydrants, sprinkler valves and fire brigade sprinkler connections with markers visible above potential snow piles.
- Provide a stock of salt or grit for keeping car parks, paths and traffic routes free of snow and ice.
- Ensure thermostats and frost-stats are working correctly and set appropriately. In severe weather, or if severe weather is forecast, consider putting the heating on for a period each day.
- If portable heaters are required, ensure they are adequately maintained, staff are trained to use them safely and that fire risk assessments are updated to reflect the additional hazard.
- Store all stock off the floor to prevent damage by flooding.
- Inspect your buildings after a period of freezing weather, looking for damage by frost or by the weight of ice or snow.
- List the telephone numbers of the people you may need to contact for assistance, for example, your insurance company, emergency plumber and electrician.
- Make sure key people in the club know where the stopcock is and check you can turn it on and off.



Kick the risk

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As winter approaches, it is also worth remembering that risks are not limited to those affecting the clubhouse. Winter conditions including ice and snow increase the likelihood of accidents so make a plan for dealing with pathways, car parks and entrances, which could become hazardous in winter.

Clearly the full list of preventative measures is more detailed but these easy low-cost tactics will go some way to reducing the winter risks affecting your club.

Call **0345 872 5060**
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