



QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

ROOF SNOW REMOVAL

Winter is on the way, and regardless of where you live in Oregon, there is always the risk of snow. While snow is fun to play in and pretty to look at, it can also cause havoc to your roofs. Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for us to receive claims from water leaks, roof damage or even collapsed roofs.

Before you decide to remove snow from your roof, you will want to know what the structural load is. This can be found on your Built As document, or you can have a structural engineer look at your roof and tell you. This will help you determine when and how often you will need to remove the snow. Removing snow from your roof can prevent ice dams from forming. Regardless of when you decide to remove snow from your roof, don't wait until it's too late, such as when water is already leaking in your building.

Here are some best practices to think about when clearing snow off your roof:

- Consider contracting out snow removal to a third party.
- Create a checklist or log of when and where snow has been removed.
- Set a schedule based on your local forecasts.
- Ensure safety equipment is used like fall protection, and discuss risks before going on the roof.
- Have a plan to remove excess snow away from buildings.
- Train staff on proper equipment to use and how much snow to remove (remember it is alright to leave a few inches on the roof to help prevent roof damage).
- Be sure to know where any skylights, vents or other items are located so they are not damaged.
- Enlist at least two people for this task, one on the roof and one on the ground to help keep others out of the way and for the safety of the person on the roof.
- Limit your time on the roof to prevent frostbite or hypothermia.



Below are the DO NOTs you should be aware of:

- Do not use metal shovels as they can cause roof damage.
- Do not shovel upward (bottom to the top) as this can damage roof shingles.
- Do not wear shoes that have spikes.
- Do not use snowblowers to remove snow from roofs.
- Never use a pickax to break up ice dams or snow.

To help you prepare for winter, it would be a good idea to start planning in October by doing the following:

- Inspect the roof for clogged drains and identify any areas that have pooling water.
- Make sure you have fall protection, shovels, ice melt, etc. before they are in high demand.
- Identify any ground level areas where snow drifts are common.
- Identify the area where excess snow will be placed.

If you have any questions regarding the removal of snow from your roofs, please do not hesitate to contact the risk management department at 800-285-5461 or riskmanagement@sdao.com.