

Winter is coming...

Did you know Councils with commercial property have an obligation to maintain safe conditions for employees and occupants?

During the winter season, your walkways, stairs, driveways, interior roadways and car parks can become hazardous for slips and trips as snow falls and ice forms. Do you have a strategy to address some of these issues?

A thorough winter programme should:

- Include an equipment plan (e.g. gritting, shovels etc)
- Identify who is responsible
- Detail your follow-up procedures for snow removal
- Layout your communication plans

It is important to **periodically review your winter programme** to ensure that it is fit for purpose and you are ready to manage the risks ahead.

Winter Checklist

To aid your Council this winter, we have created a handy Winter Checklist. This checklist is merely a guideline, but can assist you in preparation for bad weather. You can consider implementing a snow removal programme using the checklist provided.

Pre-season procedure

- ▶ **Establish a plan** for how you will remove snow and ice and when this will take place (i.e. snow fall in the middle of the night – clean up by 5am etc)
- ▶ **Place weather mats at all entrances to the building.** These mats should be placed in both directions to catch snow/water when entering and exiting.
- ▶ **Check weather mats** to ensure they are in working condition and have not started to curl (this presents additional tripping hazards).
- ▶ **Encourage reporting of snow and ice-related hazards** - send out a newsletter/post on a communal noticeboard asking residents, employees and visitors to report.
- ▶ **Consider hiring a snow removal/gritting service** if required. Remember to investigate the quality of their work, how long they take and obtain references if necessary.
- ▶ **Create contracts for your snow removal/gritting service.** This should be signed before you need them and ensure they sign it too. The contract should include:

- Provider adheres to high quality and safe working practices
- Provider to have relevant insurance cover

*This checklist is merely a guideline. It is neither meant to be exhaustive nor meant to be construed as legal advice. It does not address all potential compliance issues with current legislation or relevant regulations. Consult your contact at Clear Councils to address possible compliance requirements.

If an accident occurs

If an incident should occur, make sure this incident has been recorded in line with your Health & Safety policy. This will help determine what occurred and will help when submitting a claim.

Photograph the incident scene with a digital camera. Capture the exact area where the accident occurred—such as on a step, concrete slab or pavement—and the areas leading up to the spot of the accident.

Get in touch

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