

# ROOF SNOW REMOVAL

Winter is here 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. You can have a structural engineer examine your roof or find the information on your Built As document. Knowing the structural load 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 remove snow from your roof, don't wait until it's too late.



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

- Consider contracting out 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 you should be leaving 4-6 inches on the roof so you don't damage the roof with your tools)
- Be sure to know where any skylights, vents or other items are located so they are not damaged
- Encourage 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
- Do not ever use a pick axe 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 - identifying any areas that have pooling water
- Make sure you have fall protection, shovels, ice melt, etc. before it's in high demand
- Identify any ground level areas where snow drifts are common

If you have any questions regarding the removal of snow from your roofs, please do not hesitate to contact the SDAO Risk Management Department at 800-285-5461 or [riskmanagement@sdao.com](mailto:riskmanagement@sdao.com).