



Audit Condition #4

Temporary School Shut Down Procedures & Cold Weather Alerts

Recommended Board Policy

OSBIE Human Element Loss Prevention (H.E.L.P.) Program

Long weekends/spring break/summer and winter holidays

Most property losses incurred by OSBIE occur in the months of June-August and December through January. Many of these claims could have been avoided if the school board had been following an effective Temporary Shut Down/Cold Weather program. Such things as open windows, small heating appliances operating, running water and poor housekeeping can all result in property loss that could have been prevented. Temporary Shut Down procedures can point out these human element factors before they result in a loss.

Cold Weather alert programs can help prevent and most importantly mitigate water damage losses due to freezing. Planning is the key to preventing a freeze-up from interrupting school operations. Developing policies and procedures to help identify measures to take before and during cold weather can help mitigate the potential losses that may occur as a result.

The following recommendations are made to provide guidance to school boards in developing a policy on Temporary Shut Down and Cold Weather procedures. An audit of board policy, which shows that it meets these recommendations as minimum criteria will contribute towards the HELP risk management credit.

The Temporary Shut Down Program should include:

- ❑ Implement a closure inspection program
- ❑ Implement an inspection list for school check-ups while closed – determine frequency of check-ups based on length of time school is closed and based on weather conditions
- ❑ General good housekeeping practices

The Cold Weather Program should include:

- ❑ A systematic approach to alerting schools to cold weather watches (including electronic monitoring) and follow-up procedures once activated. One point for use of electronic monitoring and one point for documented follow-up procedures once activated
- ❑ Regular inspections of schools during a cold weather watch

TEMPORARY SCHOOL SHUT DOWN

Initial Inspection – Prior To Shut Down

- ❑ Are all windows properly closed sealed and locked
- ❑ Are all small appliances unplugged (portable heaters, toaster ovens, kilns, etc.)
- ❑ Are all tank valves properly turned off in Technical Classrooms (Propane, Butane)
- ❑ All Bathrooms checked to ensure no running water and/or clogs
- ❑ Ensure all combustible materials are not stored in front of heating units or other ignition sources
- ❑ Temperature is regulated to prevent freezing
- ❑ Cold Weather Checklist if applicable

CHECK-UP INSPECTIONS

Recommended Frequency:

- **Long Weekend** – 1 time/weekend – unless cold weather alert (daily)
- **Week Break** – 2 times/week – unless cold weather alert (daily)
- **1 – 4 Weeks (i.e. Christmas break)** – 2 times/week – unless cold weather alert (daily)
 - ❑ Temperature is regulated
 - ❑ School is still Secure (no vandalism/broken windows, etc.)
 - ❑ Bathrooms clear
 - ❑ Cold Weather Checklist of applicable

Before Cold Weather Hits

General Preparations

- Designate a “weather watcher” to monitor conditions and implement procedures. (This can be done via an electronic monitoring and alert system)
- Gather emergency supplies: extra tarpaulins for windbreaks, space heaters (for workers to keep instruments from freezing), and antifreeze supplies for cooling systems
- Prepare snow removal equipment

Buildings

- Ensure building shell is in good condition, and close any unnecessary openings.
- Identify any concealed spaces, such as the space above a suspended ceiling or a crawl space below the floor that may contain vulnerable piping. Consider providing temporary interior openings to allow heat to reach those areas.
- Check heating equipment to be certain it will be able to maintain building temperatures above 40 F (4°C) at the coldest points in the building.

Equipment

- For idle air conditioning systems, remove water from oil coolers and water jackets, and drain condensers of chilling units.
- Make sure fuel supplies will be adequate, particularly if supplied on an “interruptible” contract. If the back-up fuel is oil, verify that the tank is full and the delivery system to the heating unit is fully operational.
- Check pressure vessel vents, relief valves and safety valves to ensure that moving parts are protected from water accumulation or freezing of vapour.
- For Boilers (if applicable):
 - Drain idle equipment completely
 - Elevate low points or provide drain valves on return lines
 - Remove low points and dead ends where possible
 - Install low-water fuel cut-offs with a minimum of exposed pipes
 - Consider heat tracing lines for piping that carries water to the water glass, low-water fuel cut-off column and feed water regulator
 - Provided alarms for important piping systems
 - Provide steam traps on piping or equip it with drain valves

During Cold Weather

General Preparations

- Monitor and record temperatures in hard-to-heat areas that contain vulnerable equipment; repeat every few hours during particularly cold weather.
- Check temperatures in critical areas at night and on weekends, as well as during the day.
- These steps can be done via an electronic monitoring and alert system; with the proper follow up procedures should alarm be activated.

Roofing

- Monitor the amount of snow on the roof and clear it before accumulations reach unsafe levels.
- Keep roof drains open and free of ice.

Equipment

- Check heat-tracing systems to make sure they are working properly
- Drain water cooled equipment that has not been otherwise protected
- If a facility should completely loss heat:
 - Drain the following equipment
 - Process Piping
 - Mill-use lines
 - Heat Exchangers
 - Process equipment
 - Compressors
 - Condensate Piping
 - Boilers
 - Hydraulically operated devices
 - A/C Systems
- Take special care when thawing frozen piping and equipment; avoid open flames.