

Fides Insurance Group / Office of Risk Management
RISK ALERT
No. 2021-01

RE: Extreme Cold and Wind/Frozen Pipe Alert

January 28, 2021

Extreme cold temperatures with lows in the single digits and sub-zero wind chills are expected tonight through Saturday evening. Winds could reach 15 mph with gusts up to 28 mph and should settle down by Sunday. There is a significant risk of frozen and burst pipes, which can result in millions of dollars in property damage.

With more buildings unoccupied due to reduced operations under COVID-19, it's important to remain vigilant while taking measures to prevent frozen pipes.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS:

- Although we usually recommend setting the thermostat to 68° F during cold spells, in light of the record-breaking severity of this cold, we recommend keep the thermostat set at 70° – 72° F all weekend long. This may temporarily increase your heating costs, but it's a small price to pay to avoid more costly damage and inconvenience caused by frozen pipes.
- Maintenance personnel should check facilities, **ESPECIALLY UNOCCUPIED BUILDINGS**, in the morning and evening each day.
- If you lose heat and are unable to restore heat before the low temperatures begin, shut off the water supply and drain pipes. This will prevent water from freezing and bursting the pipes. If you are unable to drain the pipes, open the taps a little to allow water to trickle out. If you choose this option, please monitor the taps on a regular basis.

Previous cold snaps resulted in over \$8 million in property damage from frozen pipes alone. Frozen pipes can be prevented!

PROPERTY DAMAGE

If you experience property damage as a result of the storm, you may report a claim by going to our website: <https://rcabrisk.org/property-claim-report/> or by contacting Alicia Gray at 781-664-3990, Alicia_gray@rcab.org or Madeline Ostdick at 617-866-9942. For a list of service vendors, go to: <http://rcabrisk.org/vendors>.