

Pinal County Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Latest Snow and Ice Accumulation Can Create Problems for Your Home

FLORENCE, AZ – It's a subject not thought of in this area of the state, but our recent winter storm has brought up the subject of the dangers of snow and ice to your home.

We do not have many high pitched "A" Frame homes in Pinal County with many of them flat or slightly pitched roofs. Home owners with those flat or slightly pitched roofs should understand that their roofs are at the greatest risk of buckling under heavy snow and ice accumulations. If heavy snow and ice accumulation occurs, it is important to try to get the ice and snow off the roof before it becomes a safety hazard.

Here are some general safety tips if you find yourself in this situation. (Remember safety first, don't climb on your roof if you don't have the proper safety equipment.)

Many of these ideas can be found on the following websites:

<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA-3513roof-snow-hazard.pdf>

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/roof-collapse-and-snow-removal-safety-information>

DO

- Metal tools may cause damage to your roof. Try a plastic shovel or push broom instead.
- Have someone outside with you to assist.
- Wear protective headgear and goggles when performing any of these tasks.
- Start from the edge and work your way up the roof, only as far as you're able to do so safely.
- Try to shave the snow down to 2 or 3 inches on the roof instead of scraping the roof clean, which will risk damage to your shingles or other roof covering.
- Keep all ladders, shovels, and roof rakes away from utility wires.
- Keep gutters and drains clean and free of ice, snow, and other debris, and keep downspouts clean at ground level.
- Carefully remove large icicles if they're hanging over doorways and walkways.
- Clear snow away from furnace and dryer exhaust vents to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Make sure you have working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms on every level of your home.
- Clear snow from fire hydrants near your home or business.

DON'T

- Don't stand on or place heavy equipment on the roof unless approved by a registered professional engineer.
- Don't use a ladder, since ice tends to build up on both the rungs of the ladder and the soles of your boots. If using a ladder, be extra cautious during cold and icy weather.
- Don't use blow torches, open flames, or electric heating devices like hair dryers or heat guns to remove snow and ice.

Warning Signs of Structural Roof Problems

- Sagging roofs
- Severe leaks
- Cracked or split wood members
- Bends or ripples in supports
- Cracks in walls or masonry
- Sheared-off screws from steel frames
- Sprinkler heads that have dropped down below ceiling tiles
- Doors that pop open
- Doors or windows that are difficult to open
- Bowed utility pipes or conduit attached at ceiling
- Creaking, cracking, or popping sounds

What to Do if You Have Structural Damage

- If you notice any signs of roof damage, or suspect a gas leak from falling ice or snow, leave the building immediately without touching light switches and call 9-1-1 from an outside location.

Enjoy the snow, before you know it summer will be here.

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