4 tips to prevent damage from snow and ice dams.



When winter weather arrives, you're used to shoveling, snow blowing, salting the sidewalks, and scraping windshields. But beyond those building and vehicle precautions, there is an additional winter threat to watch for. Ice dams can appear on a roof over time as snow and ice melt and refreeze during the winter months. The resulting ice masses on your gutters or roof's edge aren't just a threat to your home or business, they can also be dangerous for anyone standing below them.

Learn how to prevent ice dams and protect your home or business all season long. Follow these four tips.

1. **Stay informed on how they form.** The number one factor that leads to ice dams is uneven heating across a roof. The roof over an attic can get warm enough to melt snow and ice. However, the edge of the roof, often not over the physical structure, can remain cold. Snow and ice runoff can refreeze when it hits this section, and the blockage can gradually build up over time.
   A formed ice dam can stop melting snow and ice from properly draining off your roof. Instead, that water can leak into your home or business and cause mold, mildew, and even structural damage.

2. **Spot them quickly.** Your home or business may be susceptible to ice dams if you see icicles hanging off your gutters, a buildup of ice along the top of your gutters or roof edge, ice in your soffit or soffit vents, ice or water on your siding, or ice around your windows. If you discover any of these issues during the winter months, call a professional immediately to stop further interior or exterior damage like collapsed gutters.

3. **Take action and hire a professional.** You can help stop ice dams from forming in the future with a few preventive steps. First, clear gutters of all leaves, sticks, and debris before snow and ice appear and throughout the winter months. Then, have a professional evaluate the insulation, venting, and airflow in your attic to better regulate the temperature across your roof.

4. **Get the right coverage.** Winter weather can bring unexpected damages to your home or business. To ensure you're covered, talk to a local, independent agent about your home or business insurance coverage.

Ready for more seasonal safety tips? See our five tips to prepare for a winter storm.