




Readiness Checklist:

Preparing for the Thaw



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As we look forward to the warmer temperatures of Spring, we should begin to prepare for the inevitable water issues that will result from a record cold and snowy winter in New York State. When the snow starts to melt, how can we be prepared?

- Mitigate basement flooding. Inspect sump pumps. If your pump is more than 10 years old it may need replaced. The last thing you would want is to find out that your pump needs replaced as a result of a flooded basement.
- Check your ditches, catch basins, and areas where the pump discharges. Make sure there are no blockages as the water will be flowing and debris may be a factor.
- Maintain preparedness for power outages. If you do not have a battery backup or generator, consider getting these now. Many basements flood due to power failure.
- Check your ceiling and walls for discoloration as these are signs of water damage. As ice and snow melts from roofs there are risks of water intrusion. Keep in mind the roof slopes melt first and water travels to the gutters. If ice is built up on or near the gutter it will melt slower than the snow. This forms an ice dam¹ affect and water may migrate into the home.

¹ For more expert advice regarding ice dams and your roof, see <http://www.human.cornell.edu/dea/outreach/upload/roof-ice-damming.pdf>

- Rake the snow off your roof if you can. This will eliminate moisture runoff. If you notice icicles hanging from your gutters you may want to call a roofer to help chip valleys in the ice to allow water runoff. Creating this will allow the water to run off, versus pooling up on the roof and entering your home. Walking the roof is not recommended. Inspecting the gutter line and removing snow while safely on the ground is preferable.
- If raking snow off of roofs or removing ice buildup, protect landscaping and plants ahead of time.
- Maintain driveways and walkways, which will become increasingly slippery and dangerous with the freeze/thaw cycles of March and April.
- Continue maintenance and accessibility of fire hydrants. Do not let them become buried or they may be encrusted in ice and snow when you need them most.

