

Do You Know?

We often don't think about freezing weather in Louisiana, but it happens! Almost every winter, ORM pays claims because of frozen water lines from HVAC systems and other items including sprinkler systems and domestic water lines. In many cases, these events occur over the holidays when there is a limited staff on site, or for educational institutions, both students and staff are not on campus.

Preventing Freeze Damage

A written freeze plan is an effective tool in reducing the potential of damage caused by broken pipes caused by freezing. The plan should cover the following:

- HVAC Systems:
 - Procedures for ensuring that chilled water lines do not freeze. This may include ensuring that water in cooling towers continues to circulate even though chilled water is not being used. Make sure that valves remain open, and if necessary, manually open valves to ensure that water circulates throughout the freeze event.
 - Identify HVAC systems that use mostly exterior make-up air. These systems may be the first to freeze in low temperatures.
- Automatic Sprinkler Systems:
 - Ensure that sprinkler riser rooms are properly heated.
 - Ensure that the building is properly heated, including attic spaces.
 - In lieu of using additional heat sources such as space heaters, rely on the building's HVAC system to heat the building. Open doors if needed to allow building heat into riser rooms or other susceptible areas.
- Domestic water systems:
 - Identify domestic water lines outside or at exterior building walls that are subject to freezing.
 - Take precautions such as wrapping pipes and installing insulating covers over hose bibs.

Stay informed of winter weather alerts and freeze warnings. Take appropriate actions!

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