

## The Impact of Snow Pack on Buildings

Things to look for on roofs overloaded with snow

- Cracks in paint and plaster on walls and ceilings
- Leaks in areas not adjacent to eaves
- Sagging and twisting in wood rafters and joists
- Sagging and twisting in steel bar joists and purlins
- Misaligned or twisted ceiling tiles and tracks
- Creaking and cracking noises(although hearing noises may be too late.)

Others things to do

- Snow raked from roofs must be cleared away from structures to prevent leaks in basements and behind siding.
- Decks and balconies may also collapse from snow loads and need to be cleared as well
- Vent pipes for appliances and heating units must be clear to prevent carbon monoxide buildup inside.
- Shovel a path to your oil tank fill pipe(oil companies will not deliver otherwise)

Building code changes and upgrades

Prior to 2008 and the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the state code, roofs were built to withstand a 35 pounds per Square-foot load. A cubic foot of wet snow weighs 12 pounds—so 3 feet of snow on a roof would surpass that code. Structures built prior to the 1970's were built to withstand 30 p.s.f.

Steep roofs are safer than flat ones. The requirement of joist hangers since the 1980's have helped immensely as well.

Snow load requirements since 2008 require 50 pound per square foot protection. That means four feet of snow could be sustained on roofs. Again, flat roofs are at the biggest risk.

Recent codes also require all vent pipes to be at least 8 feet off the ground.