CALGARY SAFETY CONSULTANTS

Roof Snow Removal Plan Template

One plan for each roof, prepared before winter

How to use this plan

Complete one plan for each roof or roof area that may need snow or ice removal. Fill it in during the fall, before snow arrives, with the people who know the roof: your maintenance lead, the contractor, the roofing company and, for load questions, a structural engineer. Involve your health and safety committee or representative. Then use the Roof Snow Removal Pre-Work Checklist on the day of every job.

- **Parts A and B** record the building, the roof and the snow load trigger agreed with your structural engineer.
- **Parts C to E** cover roof access, the fall hazard map and the fall protection method and anchors, chosen by the hierarchy of controls.
- **Parts F and G** plan the rescue and the ground exclusion zone. **Parts H to K** cover equipment, weather limits, the contractor and check-ins.
- **Part L** summarizes fall protection plan rules by jurisdiction. Review the plan every fall, after any incident and when anything changes, then sign off.
- **Don't invent load numbers.** Record only the design snow load and trigger your engineer or the building's design documents give you.

Key terms

Term	What it means
Design snow load	The snow load the roof structure was designed to carry, based on the building code in force when it was built. Get it from the drawings or a structural engineer.
Removal trigger	The measured condition, such as snow depth in a drift area, that means snow must be removed. Set it with your engineer.
Travel restraint	A harness and lanyard or lifeline set up so the worker can't reach the edge or an opening. Preferred over fall arrest for snow removal.
Personal fall arrest	A harness, connector and anchor that stop a fall after it starts. Needs clearance below and a rescue plan.
Control zone or warning line	A marked area near an edge where work is restricted, allowed only in some jurisdictions and only on low-slope roofs.
Exclusion zone (drop zone)	The barricaded area on the ground where snow and ice will land, kept clear of people and vehicles.

Part A: Building and roof details

Building name

Address

Plan date

Owner or condo corporation

Property or facility manager

Phone

Roof area covered by this plan

Province, territory or federal

Plan version

Roof type (tick all that apply)

- ☐ Flat or low slope
- ☐ Sloped (pitched)
- ☐ Multiple levels
- ☐ Parapet walls
- ☐ Canopy or overhang
- ☐ Metal roof

Height to eaves or edge (m)

Highest point (m)

Approximate area (m2)

Roof membrane type

Roof description: construction, levels, rooftop units, known problem areas

Part B: Snow load trigger and structural engineer

Structural engineer | **Firm** | **Phone**

Design snow load (from engineer or drawings) | **Source and date**

Removal trigger agreed with the engineer (for example, measured depth in named drift areas)

Drift or build-up area	Location on roof	Trigger for this area	Check how

Emergency signs. Tick the signs that will trigger an immediate engineer call and closing the area below:

- ☐ Visible twisting, bending, sagging or cracking in roof members, ceilings or walls
- ☐ Doors or windows that suddenly stick, or new leaks below the roof
- ☐ Any other sign of structural distress noted by staff or the engineer

Who closes the area below | **Who calls the engineer**

Part C: Roof access points

List every way onto this roof. Rank access from safest to least safe: interior stair to a door, roof hatch with guardrail and grab bar, fixed ladder with cage or ladder safety system, portable ladder (last choice).

Access point	Type	Location	Guardrail or hatch protection	OK to use	Notes
				☐	
				☐	
				☐	
				☐	
				☐	

- ☐ Access point is outside every drop zone
- ☐ Hatch has a guardrail around the opening and a grab bar, or a plan to protect it

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- [ ] Fixed ladders inspected and free of ice; portable ladders only where no other access exists
- [ ] Portable ladder (if used) projects about 1 m above the landing, is secured top and bottom and set at about 75 degrees
- [ ] Tools will be hoisted on a line, not carried up the ladder

Part D: Fall hazard map notes

Walk the roof before snow falls. Sketch the roof below or attach a marked-up roof plan or aerial photo showing every item in the checklist.

Hazards present on this roof

- [ ] Unprotected edges
- [ ] Low parapets
- [ ] Changes in level
- [ ] Skylights
- [ ] Roof hatches
- [ ] Smoke vents
- [ ] Fragile panels
- [ ] Drains and ponding
- [ ] Overhead power lines
- [ ] Rooftop units
- [ ] Gas lines
- [ ] Exhaust vents

Roof sketch or reference to attached roof plan (mark edges, openings, anchors, access and drop zones)

Hazard	Location	Control in place (screen, cover, guardrail, marker)	Marked for winter
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐

Part E: Fall protection method and anchors

Choose the most protective method that's reasonably practicable, working down the hierarchy of controls. Tick each method used on this roof.

Level	Options for roof snow removal
Eliminate	Leave the snow when the engineer confirms it's safe; roof rake from the ground on low roofs; snow guards and heat trace when building or re-roofing.
Engineering	Permanent guardrails, skylight screens and covers, engineered anchors or horizontal lifelines set back from the edge.
Administrative	Control zone or warning line where allowed, written procedures, training, supervision, weather limits, two-person rule.
PPE	Travel restraint first, personal fall arrest only where restraint isn't practicable, traction footwear and winter clothing.

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Methods used on this roof

- ☐ Leave the snow
- ☐ Roof rake from ground
- ☐ Guardrails
- ☐ Skylight screens
- ☐ Travel restraint
- ☐ Personal fall arrest
- ☐ Horizontal lifeline
- ☐ Control zone
- ☐ Warning line

Anchor ID	Location	Type	Rated capacity	Certified by and date	Inspected
					☐
					☐
					☐
					☐
					☐

Alberta: permanent anchors at least 16 kN per worker or 2 times the maximum arresting force. B.C.: 22 kN, permanent anchors certified by a professional engineer. Never tie off to vents, pipes, rooftop units or snow guards.

Lanyard or lifeline length to keep workers back from the edge

Clearance below (fall arrest only)

Part F: Rescue plan

Complete this part whenever anyone will use personal fall arrest. A suspended worker must be rescued quickly, so the plan must be in place and practised before work starts.

Rescue lead

Backup rescuer

First aider on site

Rescue method

- ☐ Rescue kit (raise or lower)
- ☐ Ladder access to worker
- ☐ Aerial lift
- ☐ Assisted self-rescue
- ☐ Fire department (backup only)
- ☐ Other

Step-by-step rescue procedure for this roof

Rescue equipment location

Nearest hospital

Emergency number

- ☐ Rescue equipment is staged at the roof access point during every job
- ☐ Rescuers have practised this procedure in winter conditions (date in the review record)
- ☐ Emergency services can reach the building and the roof access point

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Part G: Ground exclusion zone

Mark every area where snow and ice will land, plus a wide margin for bouncing and sliding ice. Show the zones on the roof sketch in Part D.

Drop zone	Below which edge	Entrances, sidewalks or parking affected	How closed

- ☐ Barricades, cones and caution tape available and stored at:
- ☐ Entrances inside a drop zone closed or redirected, with signs
- ☐ Vehicles moved; gas meters, vents and windows below protected
- ☐ Ground spotter with a radio assigned for each job, with an agreed stop signal
- ☐ Zone stays closed until roof work is finished and the snow below is cleared

Part H: Equipment

Equipment for this roof

- ☐ Plastic shovels
- ☐ Plastic pushers
- ☐ Roof rakes
- ☐ Full-body harnesses
- ☐ Lanyards or lifelines
- ☐ Rope grabs
- ☐ Rescue kit
- ☐ Traction footwear
- ☐ Two-way radios
- ☐ Barricades
- ☐ Warning line kit
- ☐ First aid kit

Item	Quantity	Stored at	Inspection frequency

No metal shovels or picks on the membrane. Mechanized equipment only if the plan allows it, kept well back from edges.

Part I: Weather limits

Set the conditions that will stop or postpone the job. Use your own limits, informed by your cold stress program and the equipment manufacturers.

Condition	Stop or postpone when	Who decides
Wind speed or gusts		
Wind chill or temperature		
Freezing rain or ice on the roof		
Heavy active snowfall		

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Condition	Stop or postpone when	Who decides
Lightning or thunder		
Poor visibility or darkness		
Other		

Warm-up location

Warm-up schedule

Weather source checked

Part J: Contractor details

Contractor company

Contact

Phone

WCB account or clearance

Liability insurance and expiry

Prime contractor (if applicable)

- [ ] Contractor's fall protection plan or procedures for this roof received and reviewed, including rescue
- [ ] Crew fall protection training records received
- [ ] Contractor's approach to weather, cold stress, working alone and drop zones confirmed
- [ ] Roof hazard map, anchor records and snow load trigger given to the contractor
- [ ] Written agreement on who controls the work site and who is prime contractor, where required
- [ ] Contractor orientation to the building and roof completed

Part K: Communication and working alone check-in

Nobody works on a roof alone. Plan at least two people on the roof, a ground spotter on larger jobs and a check-in with someone off the roof.

Minimum crew on roof

Ground spotter required?

Check-in interval

Radio channel

Check-in contact (off the roof)

Phone

Backup contact

If a check-in is missed: steps and times

Communication methods

- [ ] Two-way radio
- [ ] Cell phone
- [ ] Check-in app
- [ ] Lone worker device
- [ ] Air horn or whistle
- [ ] Other

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Part L: Written plan rules by jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Main rules	Fall protection required	Written plan or procedures
Alberta	OHS Code Part 9, ss. 139, 140, 161	3 m or more; less with an unusual possibility of injury; over 1.2 m at a permanent work area	Fall protection plan at 3 m or more without guardrails, with rescue procedures; reviewed with workers
British Columbia	OHS Regulation Part 11, ss. 11.2, 11.3	3 m or more; less with a greater risk of injury	Written plan at 7.5 m or more without permanent guardrails, or where procedures replace a system
Saskatchewan	OHS Regulations, 2020, ss. 9-2, 9-3, 9-4	3 m or more; less with a possibility of injury	Fall protection plan (s. 9-3); control zones (s. 9-4)
Manitoba	WSH Regulation Part 14 (s. 14.2); Part 31 (roof work, check whether it applies)	3 m or more; less where the surface below raises the risk	Written safe work procedures, including fall rescue; Part 31 roof work procedures and training where it applies
Ontario	O. Reg. 213/91 s. 26 (construction); Reg. 851 s. 85 (industrial establishments, including most commercial buildings)	More than 3 m; lower in listed situations (e.g. into water, machinery or a hazardous substance)	Written rescue procedures before fall arrest or nets are used on construction projects (s. 26.1(4))
Quebec	Safety Code for the construction industry s. 2.9.1; Regulation respecting OHS	More than 3 m; lower in listed situations (construction)	Check the regulation that applies to your workplace
New Brunswick	Regulation 91-191, ss. 49, 50.2	3 m or more	Fall protection code of practice at 7.5 m or more
Nova Scotia	Workplace Health and Safety Regulations, ss. 21.2, 21.4	3 m or more	Written fall-protection safe-work plan at 7.5 m or more
Prince Edward Island	Fall Protection Regulations, ss. 2, 3	3 m or more	Written plan with rescue wherever fall arrest or a safety net is used
Newfoundland and Labrador	OHS Regulations, 2012, Part X, ss. 138 to 146	See Part X	Fall protection training prescribed by WorkplaceNL for equipment users (s. 139); recertify every 3 years under the WorkplaceNL standard
Yukon	OHS Regulations, ss. 1.37, 1.38	3 m or more; less with an unusual risk	Written plan with rescue at 7.5 m or more without permanent guardrails
NWT and Nunavut	OHS Regulations, ss. 119, 120	3 m or more; less with a risk of injury	Written plan with rescue at 3 m or more without a guardrail or similar barrier
Federal	Canada OHS Regulations, ss. 12.06, 12.07	3 m or more; less where the landing surface is more dangerous	Fall-protection plan before work begins, with rescue procedures

Summary only, October 2026. Check the current legislation for your jurisdiction. Treat 3 m as the outside limit: canopies, skylights and openings can be dangerous lower.

Common mistakes to avoid

- Clearing every roof after every storm instead of using an engineered trigger.
- Leaving skylights unmarked and unprotected under the snow.
- Tying off to vents or rooftop units instead of rated anchors.
- Using fall arrest with no practised rescue plan.
- Starting work before the drop zone is barricaded.
- Piling snow or clearing unevenly, or scraping down to the membrane.

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- Sending one worker onto the roof alone.

Review record

Review date	Reason (annual, incident, change)	Changes made	Rescue practised
			☐
			☐
			☐
			☐

Sign-off

Prepared by	Position	Date

Owner or property manager approval	Signature	Date

Committee co-chair or representative	Signature	Next review date

Free guide. Read How to Plan Safe Roof Access and Snow Removal at calgarysafetyconsultants.ca/safety-guides/hazard-management/roof-access-snow-removal/. Questions? Call Calgary Safety Consultants at 1-888-231-0358.

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