

Protecting idle property Tips for managing a business shutdown

There may come a time when you have to temporarily close your operations and instruct your staff to remain at home. In these instances, you will have to take measures to keep your property safe and secure while idle.

We have prepared a checklist of items to help you ensure that preventative measures are in place should your property become idle. Please review these items and implement them if they apply to your facility.



Property protection checklist

- Ensure that your fire sprinkler system valves are open, the fire pump controller is on (if you have one) and the system pressures are in the normal operational range.
- If you are planning on conserving energy, ensure that your building's heating is not set lower than 5 C and preferably at 15 C to prevent sprinkler and domestic water pipes from freezing and bursting. (If the temperature is set too low and the heating system fails, your plumbing will freeze faster.) Rooms containing diesel engine drivers for fire pumps should be set at 21 C.
- Ensure that someone visits the property daily to perform visual inspections.
- If you have security patrols, increase the frequency of visits to the property.
- Ensure that your contingency plans are up to date and include relevant phone numbers.
- Outdoor combustible storage should be kept at least 8 metres (26 feet) away from non-masonry and blank exterior walls of the building.
- Remove any overgrowth of vegetation and shrubs from the landscaping to remove hiding places for vandals.
- Access routes to the building should be kept free and clear of any obstructions so that fire departments can access your property easily.
- Remove containers or garbage cans, as well as any trash or fliers. Containers might attract garbage dumping or hazardous waste, such as used motor oil or other chemicals. Vandals and arsonists are more likely to target buildings that appear noticeably vacant or idle.
- Lock interior doors to increase interior compartmentalization and limit access and damage by vandals.
- Ensure that there is adequate nighttime lighting around building perimeters. Conduct weekly checks for burned-out lighting.
- Conduct monthly roof checks to look for roof drains clogged by vegetation, bird nests or vandalism.
- Where practical to do so, block or section off most of the parking lot to prevent vehicles from entering the property.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your broker. For more resources like this, visit [rsagroup.ca](https://www.rsagroup.ca).