

Extreme Weather

Be Aware, Be Prepared, Take Action



In recent years we have witnessed more extreme weather patterns with increasingly intense storms throughout the UK and Ireland. Severe winter conditions such as low temperatures, snowstorms and ice have led to severe disruption. Extreme weather conditions cause lost time and site closure, but worse, they can put your staff at risk. At Arco we can provide expert advice and have a fully comprehensive range of products to help you effectively deal with these conditions.

Both the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Occupiers Liability Act make it the duty of the employer to ensure that employees and anyone else on site are kept safe from harm. As far as it is reasonably practicable employers must keep entrances and exits to sites clear of snow and ice. The Health and Safety Executive's Approved Code of Practice; The Workplace Health Safety and Welfare Regulations 1992 state that *"arrangements should be made to minimise the risks from snow and ice. This may involve gritting, snow clearing and closure of some routes particularly outside stairs, ladders and walkways on roofs"*

Create a Business Continuity Plan

We recommend that you create a Business Continuity Plan to minimise the impact of snow and ice upon the organisation. Think about what you need to include in your plan. For example, do you need to issue staff with winter workwear and PPE with thermal properties to keep them warm? You will almost certainly need to de-ice or clear snow from footpaths and car parks and keep the surrounding areas clear and safe.

Be prepared

Begin to make preparations well in advance so that you are prepared to take action as soon as you need to rather than waiting for the situation to become urgent. Stock up on essential workplace safety items and necessary kit for your employees. Ensure that they are kept maintained and are in working order and good condition.

Monitor the situation

Monitor the probability of extreme weather conditions that will affect you. Find a website or service that will illustrate how your area will be affected and that will send you weather alerts. The Met Office has a National Severe Weather Warning Service which can be found at www.metoffice.gov.uk and www.met.ie which issues warnings for rain, snow, wind, fog and ice.



Warnings are given a colour depending on a combination of both the likelihood of the event happening and the impact the conditions may have.



Yellow – Be aware

Severe weather is possible over the next few days and could affect you.

- Plan ahead thinking about possible travel delays, or the disruption of your day to day activities.
- Keep an eye on the latest forecast and be aware that the weather may change or worsen, leading to disruption of your plans in the next few days.
- Follow advice given by authorities under all circumstances, and be prepared for extraordinary measures.



Amber – Be prepared

There is an increased likelihood of bad weather affecting you.

- Disruption to your plans and possibly travel delays, road and rail closures, interruption to power and the potential risk to life and property.
- Be prepared to change your plans and protect you, your family and community from the impacts of the severe weather based on the forecast from the Met Office.



Red – Take action

Extreme weather is expected.

- Take action now to keep yourself and others safe from the impact of the weather.
- Widespread damage, travel and power disruption and risk to life is likely.
- Avoid dangerous areas and follow the advice of the emergency services and local authorities.

