



Vacant Building Monitoring

Vacant buildings pose more challenges and risks than we may realize. Initially, the building is emptied of all equipment/assets and will have appointed employees or departments visit on a regular basis (weekly, monthly, etc.). Over time, the importance of monitoring can wane and suddenly the building is barely monitored. With no physical, routine presence the risks slowly start to exacerbate. These risks include fire, vandalism (broken glass), theft (metal and copper), and unauthorized access (squatting), all of which can greatly increase the improvement costs required to sell or renovate the building.

The Risk Control staff will gladly assist in developing a vacant building monitoring plan to mitigate the risk exposures. A few examples of best practices include:

1. Create a checklist of tasks to perform/items to check during maintenance visits.
 - a. Fire alarm panel (if applicable)
 - b. Fire suppression system riser (if applicable)
 - i. Wrap pipes in preparation of winter months.
 - ii. Empty the system as a last resort if the power is off for an extended period of time during a hard freeze.
 - iii. Notify the Fire Marshal and appoint personnel to monitor the building.
 - c. Alarm system (if applicable)
 - d. Conditions of egress doors and windows
 - i. Repair/replace to maintain a restriction of access.
 - e. Assess soffit and fascia for signs of rot.
 - f. Conditions of roof
 - g. Debris removal
2. Replace/repair damaged building components immediately.
3. Remove overgrown vegetation.
 - a. Reduces the appearance of vacancy.
 - b. Reduces limb damage to the roof, walls, and windows.
4. Coordinate with local law enforcement to increase monitoring during overnight hours.

Attention and preventative maintenance are a necessity when a decision is made to vacate a building but keep it on the property schedule. The planned monitoring will help identify building components that require repair or attention. The visits and vegetation management will also show a presence and discourage individuals from entering unlawfully. With a plan in place, the risk of a total building loss or major damage is greatly reduced.