



# Facilities Management

## Addressing Warning Signs of an Overstressed Building Structure During a Snow Event

**Loss Lessons Learned:** Excessive snow loads can cause significant structural damage, as evidenced by past losses. Warning signs like sagging ceilings, bowed trusses, and severe roof leaks often indicate imminent failure. Early detection through regular inspections and addressing drainage issues promptly could prevent costly damage and safety risks. MIIA has developed a comprehensive [Technical Guidance Document](#) to assist in identifying if your building may be overstressed.

**Warning Signs:** An overstressed roof deck or framing typically displays some warning signs. Wood and steel structures may show noticeable signs of excessive deflection (bending) before failure. The following warning signs are common in wood, metal, and steel constructed buildings:

- Sagging ceiling tiles or boards, ceiling boards falling out of the ceiling grid, and/or sagging sprinkler lines and sprinkler heads
- Sprinkler heads deflecting below suspended ceilings
- Popping, cracking, and creaking noises
- Sagging roof members, including metal decking or plywood sheathing
- Bowing truss bottom chords or web members
- Doors and/or windows that can no longer be opened or closed
- Cracked or split wood members
- Cracks in walls or masonry
- Severe roof leaks
- Excessive accumulation of water at nondrainage locations on low slope roofs



If any of the previous warning signs are identified, FEMA recommends evacuating the building and contacting a licensed engineer to do an assessment.

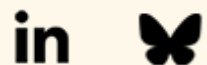
For complete details on the steps to protect your facilities, please refer to the linked [Technical Guidance Document](#). In addition, some of these practices may be eligible for MIIA Rewards credit, and the tools may be eligible for a MIIA Risk Management or Flex Grant. Please discuss with your Risk Manager for further details.

**Disclaimer:** The material contained herein is intended for general informational purposes only. It is not intended as legal advice and should not be construed as such. Any inquiries concerning Massachusetts law should be directed to a city solicitor, town counsel or other licensed attorney.



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