

As Severe Winter Weather Arrives, So Do Property Damage Risks as a Result of Ice Dams

Written by Joseph King

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A severe winter storm has already dropped significant amounts of snow on the mountains in the Northwest, and now the storm is headed for the Rockies and Midwest. The National Weather Service (NWS) has issued a blizzard watch for Wednesday in eastern Colorado, Kansas, and a small area of southern Nebraska. Meanwhile, a winter storm watch has been issued from Colorado all the way through the Midwest as far north as Wisconsin.

As severe winter weather arrives, so do property damage risks as a result of ice dams. In fact, ice dams during freezing temperatures can cause thousands of dollars in property damage, according to the [Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety](#) (IBHS).

During freezing weather, heat from your home or business can escape through the roof and melt snow on the roof. The snow melt can trickle down to the roof's edge and refreeze, creating an ice dam that leaves additional snow melt no place to go but inside the attic.

Find out common misconceptions about ice dams below using guidance from IBHS, while [ice dam prevention resources](#) are available at [DisasterSafety.org](#).

ICE DAM MYTHS

Ice dams only form around gutters and eaves.

False: Ice dams can also form in roof valleys, pans, and shed dormers.

Heat cables are the answer.

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False: Although heat cables can help prevent ice dams from forming, they are not a simple solution. Heat cables only last a few years before they need to be replaced, while it is important to also have proper drainage when using cables.

Ice dams are only a problem for older homes.

False: Ice dams are more common for older homes that have poor ventilation, newer homes can also be a risk of ice dam damage.

for more information about how to make your buildings more resistant to a variety of disasters, large and small. Follow IBHS on Twitter at [@DisasterSafety](#) and on

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About IBHS

IBHS is an independent, nonprofit, scientific and communications organization supported by the property insurance industry. The organization works to reduce the social and economic effects of natural disasters and other risks to residential and commercial property by conducting research and advocating improved construction, maintenance and preparedness practices.