

7 Essential Fall Maintenance Tips for Commercial Properties



Days are getting shorter, temps are cooling off, and leaves are starting to turn. As summer winds down, it's time for commercial property owners and facility managers to prepare for fall building maintenance.

Fall is the ideal time to get building chores done. Getting commercial properties ready for fall and winter is critical to protect your valuable assets and your people, and keeps costs down—not to mention save time and minimize disruptions. Fall and winter weather can sweep in with a plethora of challenges that threaten your properties' safety and functionality.

To keep operations running smoothly, reduce hazards, and minimize expensive repairs, let's look at the top building maintenance and preparation tasks to address this autumn. | **CONTINUED >**

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7 Essential Fall Maintenance Tips for Commercial Properties *(continued)* >

1. ROOF MAINTENANCE

Roofs are your building's main defense against the elements, and they take a lot of abuse in the winter with wind, ice, snow, and extreme temperatures. Making sure roofs are ready to withstand these elements is critical. A leaking roof can do serious damage to the insides of buildings and create further (very costly) problems, such as water damage. A damaged roof can also allow heat loss, which is costly and inefficient.

We recommend conducting a thorough inspection of your properties' roofs for signs of wear and tear, including loose or damaged shingles or tiles. Clear away any debris, leaves, and branches that have accumulated over the summer. You may want to bring in a professional roofing contractor to inspect and address potential issues.

While you're up there, make sure that gutters and downspouts aren't clogged; if they are, water overflow can lead to structural damage to the building's foundation and exterior. Start the fall and winter with gutters and free of debris, so that they're ready for rain, snow and ice. Repair any damage before winter storms begin.

2. HVAC MAINTENANCE

Your HVAC system is a critical maintenance item in advance of winter, since you rely on it for keeping indoor temps comfortable during the colder seasons. Because HVAC systems are complex, with a lot of moving parts, they require plenty of regular maintenance.

To ensure your buildings are ready to face the frost, you'll want to change air filters (so that they're efficiently trapping particulates, contaminants and allergens circulating inside). These should be changed about every three months, so a season change is a great reminder.

Get heating-specific parts of your system inspected, including the heat exchanger, burner combustion, gas pressure and all gas or oil connections. It's important these are in working order not only to ensure warmth but to prevent fire hazards. Don't turn the heat on till you're sure the burner is clean and that the heat exchanger is not cracked.

Regular maintenance and tune-up should cover thermostat settings, condensate drains, electrical connections and controls, plus lubrication of moving parts. Ducts, fan, blower motor, blower assembly, ignition system, evaporator coil and safety controls should also be inspected.

3. INSULATION ASSESSMENT

Insulation is key to energy efficiency, which is important for occupant comfort and cost effectiveness. Proper insulation helps to retain heat during the winter, reducing energy costs. By inspecting insulation, you can spot wear, damage, or gaps that could reduce efficiency. Plan to repair or reinforce any areas of insulation that are deteriorating.

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4. WINDOW AND DOOR MAINTENANCE

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EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Mark Lettieri

RESTORATION ESTIMATOR

What do you enjoy most about your role?

The two things that stand out the most are the ability to create relationships in the workplace with clients who then see you as a resource. Also, seeing projects through from start to finish is a rewarding feeling, as you can physically see the culmination of hard work and collaboration amongst team members as a project moves toward the finish line.

What has your time at PBI been like?

My time at PBI has been nothing short of incredible. The family-oriented environment and the unwavering support of leadership has allowed me to find true success in my two years of being here full time. Being able to work for some incredible clients has provided experiences that not many people get to be a part of. This company has done amazing things thus far and the party is only getting started..

What's a project or accomplishment you're particularly proud of?

Being involved at Northwest Stadium for the Washington Commanders has been something that I take tremendous pride in. The opportunity to work for such a prestigious, high-profile organization is something that I don't take for granted. We just completed a project for leadership within the organization renovating a high-profile suite in 13.5 days. This is just one of many representations of when hard work by vendors and team members comes together and results in a great product at the end of it all.



What advice would you give someone starting in a similar role or joining the PBI team?

Understand that success is a byproduct of hard work. Be willing to go above and beyond for your clients and teammates. There is so much opportunity to learn and grow in this organization with countless resources and the infinite support of leadership to do whatever is necessary to help be successful. The processes in place are strategically generated to pave a path of growth and success, so be prepared to work hard within that process!

Outside of work, what are some of your interests?

Outside of work, I like to live a coastal lifestyle. I spend most of my summer weekends on the Delaware beaches, where we often drive on to the beach and fish all day. Some days we take the boat out into the ocean to fish as well. I have a very tight-knit family, so it's always enjoyable when we all are able to get together in one of our favorite places. I enjoy playing golf a few times a week! ■

Windows and doors are potential sources of drafts and heat loss. Properly maintained windows and doors protect against water intrusion and increase energy efficiency. Examine them closely for cracks, gaps, or damaged weatherstripping. Replace any weatherstripping that is worn or damaged to prevent cold air from leaking in. Consider upgrading to energy-efficient windows and doors to improve insulation and reduce overall energy consumption.

5. EXTERIOR MAINTENANCE

The exterior of your commercial building is another first line of defense against whatever the season dishes up. Since it's constantly exposed to harsh weather conditions, it can degrade in ways that affecting the structural integrity of the building. Siding, paint, and caulking should all be suspected for signs of deterioration; address issues such as peeling paint or cracked caulking so that moisture can't seep inside. Damaged siding affects the property's aesthetic appeal as well as functionality, so be sure to clean that up this fall.

6. LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE

Autumn is a great time to get commercial property landscaping prepared for the coming winter. Trees and shrubs should be trimmed to prevent falling branches from causing facility damage in storms. Fallen leaves can lead to drainage problems as well as create slippery conditions for occupants, so be sure to keep up with raking or blowing. Outdoor water features should be drained and winterized, as freezing temperatures can damage them. This is also a good season to make landscaping improvements; some new plantings do well as the weather cools, and reseeding or aerating lawns can promote healthy growth come spring.



7. PEST CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Cooler temperatures can send pests scuttling indoors in search of warmer climes. To prevent these unwelcome visitors, have a qualified pest control company inspect and identify potential entry points for rodents or insects.

Typical vulnerabilities can include cracks in foundations or gaps around doors and windows. All potential entry points should be sealed, and you may want to consider further measures to prevent infestations. Ask your pest control company about your area's biggest pest risks, and consider a regular maintenance schedule.

IF PREPARATION ISNT ENOUGH....

Sometimes inclement weather wreaks havoc on commercial buildings even when you've done your due diligence on maintenance. If you do run into any seasonal building issues, PBI stands at the ready to address them with our trademark speed, service, and solutions.

Any day of the year, we call back immediately and we're onsite in two hours. If this fall or winter lands you with water damage, roof leaks, flooding, mold, or any other facility emergency, we'll be there for repairs or restoration—whatever it takes.

**Just call if you need us, or if you have a question: 1-888-PBI-1988
or email: service@pbi1988.com**

Stay safe, functional and efficient as the leaves begin to fall! ■

CASE STUDY:

WASHINGTON COMMANDERS



PBI has a Master's Service Agreement in place with the Washington Commanders. This means that PBI is the Commanders' general contractor for all maintenance and renovation to the stadium, resulting in a wide-ranging portfolio of work that the PBI team is proud to complete in record time, often under intense time pressure.

Most of our work with the Commanders fall into one of three categories: event preparation, standard suite renovations, and specialty projects. All three require our very best speed, service, and solutions.

During the summer when the stadium is used for concert events and international soccer games, as well as during football season, we're involved in event preparations for the week leading up to the game or event. We work closely with facility staff, who generate a list of maintenance items that impact the stadium experience, aesthetics, or functionality. We then have one week to get the stadium ready for the event. This might mean suite repairs, lockers, bathrooms, stadium seats, or any number of other items. In any given week we do up to \$50,000 worth of event prep.

Standards suite renovations are another big aspect of our work. Throughout the stadium are 300 standard suites that fans or companies can buy for the year or a single event. With the Commanders, they tell us what they want in the suites, we get a list of 10 to 20 suites, and we have a limited time to renovate. A recent project gave us two weeks before the next game to redo flooring, cabinets, countertops, and paint in a dozen suites. We do \$750k to \$2 million of those a year.

Finally, there are specialty projects. A recent one just completed was in an area called Owner's Club West, which is a club-type area with lounge, bar, and ten suites. These suites are where the "limited partners" (minority owners)—including Magic Johnson!—watch the games. This was a total facelift, gutted to the bare bones and then built up to high-end elegance, and we completed renovations in just four weeks. Josh Harris, the team majority owner, communicated to PBI how beautiful everything looked.

We also recently renovated a luxury suite that Harris asked to have prepared for his Harris Blitzer Sports Entertainment Group. We completed a full \$300,000 renovation to this suite in 13.5 days. We've also worked on the General Manager's Family Suite, Head Coaches' Family Suite, Washington Commanders Coaches Booth, and other high priority areas with elevated finishes. These designed builds are catered to provide an upscale experience for key people in the organization.

“They do beautiful work.”

~ Josh Harris, Owner, Washington Commanders

How do we do it? Through constant communication, obsession with detail, flexibility, and the willingness to do whatever it takes around the clock.

Mark Lettieri (who is also this quarter’s Employee Spotlight!), is a key PBI staffer involved in all of the Commanders work. He says that the work goes so well because “We don’t miss deadlines, ever, and we pride ourselves on that. We maintain a relationship with Commanders’ facilities and operations crews in which our focus is to be their greatest resource and biggest asset at all times.

“We’ll provide whatever they need, whatever it takes, whenever they ask. If they call at 1 a.m. with an emergency project, we’ll do it. If they need a site renovated in 13 days, we’ll do it. As a company, we pride ourselves on the relationship side of construction. We focus on accounts, not just a singular job. It’s a long-term partnership.

“We’re doing work for some pretty incredible people. And we can’t do what we do without our trade partners. We have such a valuable team. This is a cumulative effort with so many team members—one big operation with many branches.

“We’re lucky to have this incredible contract with one of the nation’s biggest and bests sports franchises and we’re proud to be nailing it!”

The Commander’s Director of Operations tells PBI that although they appreciate our skill, experience, communication, innovation—the number one reason they turn to us is that we embrace deadlines and nail them every time.

