
global FACILITIES

# WINTER READINESS AUDIT

KEEP YOUR FACILITY SAFE & OPERATIONAL

# Prepare Your **Facility**

**Winter in the UK can bring frost, snow, heavy rain, and strong winds — all of which can affect your facilities, operations, and occupants.**

This Winter Readiness Audit is designed to help you identify potential risks, plan preventive maintenance, and ensure your buildings remain safe, warm, and fully operational during the colder months.

By addressing key areas now, you can reduce downtime, avoid costly repairs, and meet your legal compliance obligations.

**Contents**



## YOU'RE IN SAFE HANDS

OUR ACCREDITATIONS

ISO 45001 ISOQAR Cert No. 21372 — UKAS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS 0026

ISO 14001 ISOQAR Cert No. 21372 — UKAS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS 0026

ISO 9001 ISOQAR Cert No. 21372 — UKAS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS 0026

SafeContractor APPROVED

CHAS

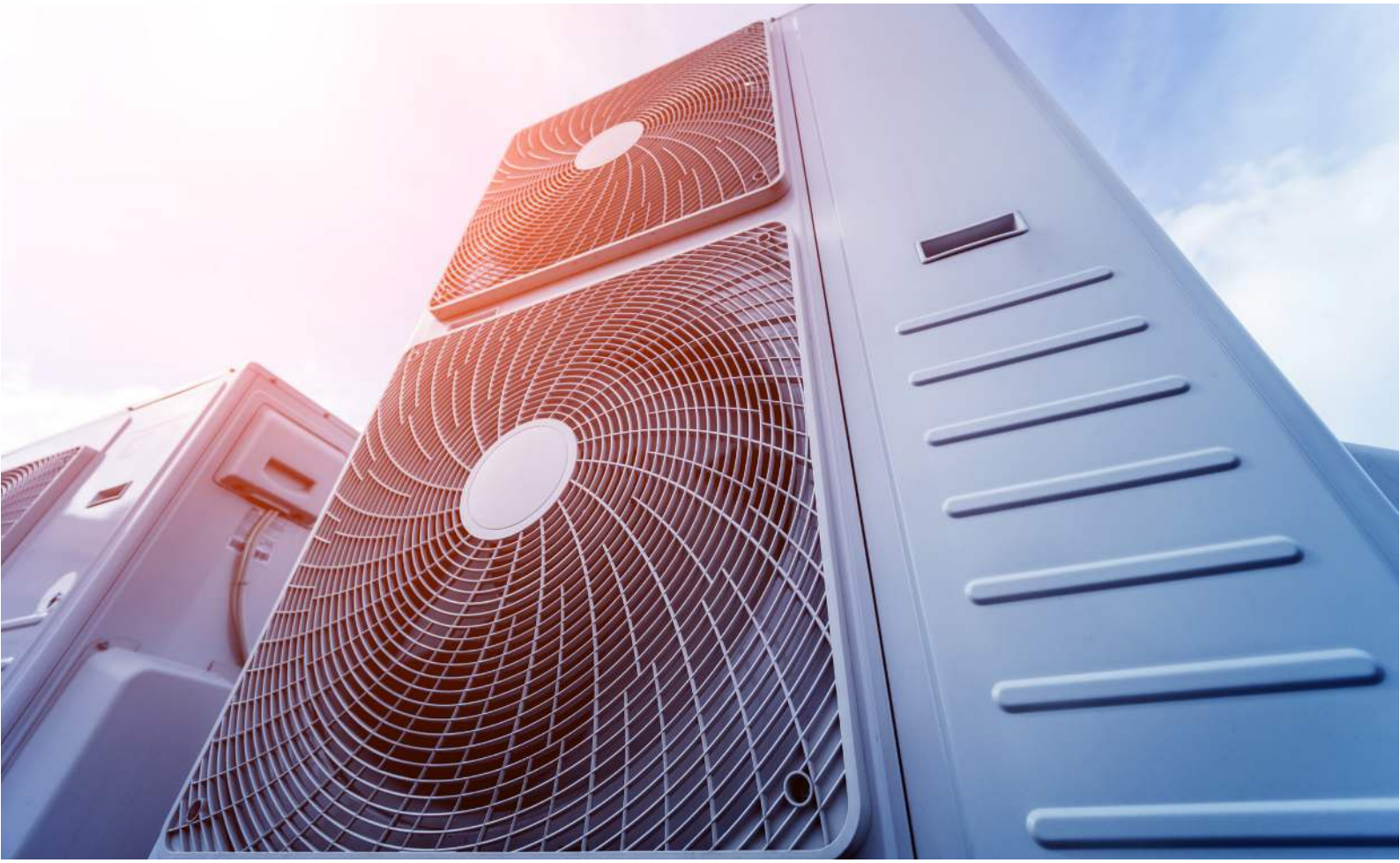
bmtrada QUALITY CERTIFICATION 3523 — UKAS PRODUCT CERTIFICATION 0012

INDIVIDUAL MEMBER

# Heating & **HVAC Systems**

Heating and ventilation are critical to keeping your facility comfortable and operational during winter. From boilers and radiators to air handling systems, ensuring your HVAC systems are properly serviced and calibrated can prevent breakdowns, improve energy efficiency, and keep occupants safe.

This section highlights the key checks and maintenance steps to protect your facility against cold weather disruptions.



# Checklist

## 1 Boilers inspected and serviced

Ensure all boilers are serviced in line with manufacturer recommendations and Gas Safe standards. Regular servicing improves efficiency and prevents mid-winter breakdowns.

## 2 Radiators bled and working

Test all radiators and heating panels to ensure even heat distribution. Bleed radiators if necessary to remove trapped air and maximise performance.

## 3 HVAC Filters changed & tested

Dirty filters restrict airflow and reduce system efficiency. Replace or clean filters to maintain good air quality and reduce energy costs.

## 4 Thermostat calibration checked

Verify that thermostats are accurately reading room temperatures to prevent over- or under-heating. Incorrect calibration can lead to energy waste or occupant discomfort.

## 5 Emergency heating backup tested

Test all secondary heat sources, such as portable heaters or backup boilers, to ensure they function correctly before severe cold sets in.

## 6 Ventilation systems free of blockages

Confirm that ventilation systems are not blocked and that air quality sensors are functioning properly — particularly important in sealed or high-occupancy areas.

# Plumbing & **Water Systems**

Frozen or leaking pipes are one of the most common causes of winter damage in UK buildings. Insulating exposed pipes, checking water pressure, and maintaining drainage systems can prevent costly bursts and leaks.

This section focuses on identifying risks to your plumbing and ensuring your water systems remain functional and resilient throughout the season.

# Checklist

## 1 Check pipes for suitable insulation

Identify exposed pipework, especially in roof spaces, external walls, or service ducts. Apply appropriate lagging or insulation to prevent freezing and bursts. Turn off exterior taps and insulate them.

## 2 Test water pressure and flow

Check water flow rates to detect early signs of blockage or airlocks. Pressure variations can indicate hidden leaks or frozen sections.

## 3 Inspect for leaks or corrosion

Inspect all visible pipework and joints for moisture, rust, or staining that could signal leaks or corrosion. Prompt repair can prevent larger system failures.

## 4 Protect water systems from freezing

Remove leaves, moss, and debris from gutters, downpipes, and surface drains. Blockages can lead to water ingress and ice formation during freezing temperatures.

## 5 Drainage and gutter checks

Ensure thermostatic mixing valves and trace heating systems (if installed) are operating correctly to protect against freezing in key areas such as plant rooms and water tanks.

**Pro Tip** *"Even a small leak in winter can freeze, burst, and cause significant water damage."*

# Roofs, Gutters **& Exterior**

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# Checklist

## 1 Inspect roof for missing tiles or damage

Conduct a visual check (or drone survey where appropriate) for cracked, missing, or displaced tiles that could allow water ingress during heavy rain or snow.

## 2 Clear gutters, drains, and downpipes

Blocked rainwater systems are a leading cause of leaks and damp. Ensure free flow by cleaning and testing drainage pathways.

## 3 Check external walls for cracks/damp

Inspect walls and facades for gaps, cracks, or areas of water staining. Early repair prevents moisture penetration and heat loss.

## 4 Inspect skylights, fascia and flashings

Inspect seals around skylights, vents, and flashings for deterioration or lifting that may permit leaks.

## 5 External lighting tested

With shorter daylight hours, ensure all outdoor lighting, including emergency illumination, is functional and energy-efficient.

# Safety
# & Compliance

Ensuring the safety of your staff, visitors, and contractors is essential during winter. Reduced daylight, icy walkways, and colder temperatures increase the risk of slips, trips, falls, and other incidents.

This section covers key safety checks, HSE compliance points, and preventative measures to keep your facilities accident-free and fully compliant.

# Checklist

## 1 Emergency lighting & signage checked

Confirm that all exit routes are clearly illuminated and that emergency lighting operates on backup power. Replace any defective units or batteries.

## 2 Fire alarm and sprinkler systems tested

Test fire alarms, sprinklers, and extinguishers to confirm compliance with British Standards (BS 5839 and BS 5306). Update service records accordingly.

## 3 Fall risk areas assessed

Identify areas prone to ice build-up or standing water. Implement gritting or de-icing schedules and maintain logs for compliance evidence.

## 4 HSE and Workplace Regulation Compliance

Ensure your winter safety procedures meet the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. Maintain written risk assessments and mitigation plans.

**Pro Tip**

*"HSE recommends documenting your winter safety procedures to ensure compliance and reduce liability."*

# Energy Efficiency **& Sustainability**

Cold weather often leads to higher energy consumption and operational costs. Maintaining insulation, preventing draughts, and optimising heating systems can reduce bills and carbon footprint.

This section outlines strategies to improve energy efficiency while keeping your facility comfortable and environmentally responsible.

# Checklist

## 1 Check building insulation levels in key areas

Assess insulation levels in walls, roofs, and windows to reduce heat loss. Pay special attention to plant rooms and unheated zones.

## 2 Inspect draught-proofing.

Check seals on doors, windows, and loading bays for air leaks. Simple repairs can significantly reduce heating costs.

## 3 Monitor energy usage trends.

Track heating energy consumption using smart meters or BMS data to detect inefficiencies and identify cost-saving opportunities.

## 4 Consider LED & HVAC upgrades.

Explore options such as LED upgrades, heat recovery systems, and smart thermostats to enhance long-term energy efficiency

**Pro Tip** *"A well-prepared facility is not only safe, but also more energy-efficient, reducing winter utility costs."*

# Contingency & Emergencies

Winter can bring unexpected challenges, from power outages to frozen equipment or emergency incidents. Being prepared with backup systems, emergency contacts, and essential supplies ensures continuity of operations.

This section helps you plan for emergencies, mitigate risks, and respond effectively to unforeseen events.

# Checklist

## 1 Backup power systems tested

Test generators, UPS systems, and battery backups under load to confirm readiness for power outages. Ensure fuel levels and maintenance logs are up to date.

## 2 Critical systems reviewed

Identify systems that cannot fail (e.g., IT rooms, refrigeration, or life safety equipment) and verify that adequate redundancies or environmental controls are in place.

## 3 Emergency contact list updated

Maintain up-to-date contact details for maintenance engineers, contractors, utilities, and key personnel. Ensure accessibility during out-of-hours periods.

## 4 Stock of winter supplies checked

Confirm availability of grit, salt, shovels, and other winter-response materials. Keep in secure, easily accessible storage near key areas.

## 5 Communication and escalation plan reviewed

Define clear reporting lines and procedures for incidents such as leaks, heating failures, or access issues caused by snow or ice.

**Pro Tip**

*"A well-prepared facility is not only safe, but also more energy-efficient, reducing winter utility costs."*

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