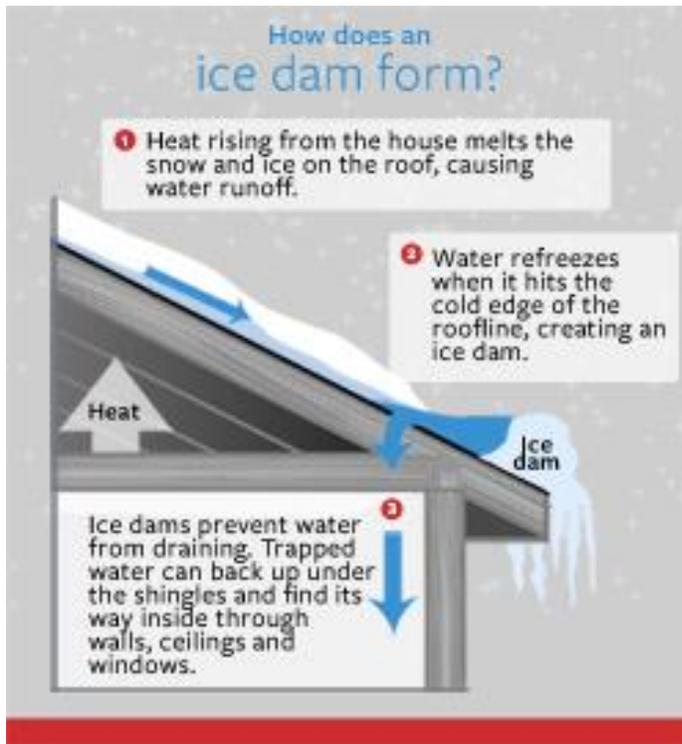


Ice Dams

As soon as snow accumulates until it disappears in the spring, take the time weekly to walk around your home and check to see if potential ice dams could be forming.



What is an ice dam?

An ice dam can form when water from melting snow re-freezes at the edge of your roofline. If the snow is not removed, the ice dam may grow large enough to prevent water from draining off the roof. The water can then back up underneath the roof shingles and make its way inside your home.

Tips to help remove an ice dam from your roof

Immediate steps you can take:

- **Remove snow from your roof after every storm.** Use a roof rake to clear the first three to four feet of snow from your roof immediately after each winter storm to prevent ice dams from forming. While the amount of snow and ice that your roof can handle may vary depending on a number of factors such as the roof type, age and condition of the structure, a good rule of thumb is if there is more than a foot of heavy, wet snow and ice on your roof, you should try to have it removed. Watch a video hear how a roof rake works. <https://roofrazor.com/>

Longer-term prevention:

Ultimately, the best prevention for ice dams is to eliminate the conditions that make it possible for them to form in the first place.

- **Insulate your attic.** Make sure your attic is well insulated to help prevent the melting-and-freezing cycle that causes ice dams to form. Check and seal places where warm air could leak from your house to the attic, including vent pipes, exhaust fans, chimneys, attic hatches and light fixtures.
- **Install a water-repellant membrane.** When replacing a roof, make sure to install a water membrane underneath the shingles. This acts as an extra barrier that helps prevent water from seeping inside the building.

Removing ice dams

Just because an ice dam is present does not necessarily mean water has penetrated the roof membrane. However, it is always best to remove ice dams before they have the opportunity to cause damage. To determine if you have damage, look for water stains or moisture in the attic or around the tops of exterior walls on the top floor.

- If you can reach the roof safely, try to knock the ice dam off with a roof rake, or cut a channel through the ice to allow standing water to drain.
- If you cannot reach the roof safely, consider hiring a contractor to remove it.
- Another method is to fill a nylon stocking with calcium chloride ice melt and place it vertically across the ice dam so that it melts a channel through the dam. If you try this method, make sure you can safely position the ice melt on your roof, and make sure to use calcium chloride, not rock salt. Rock salt will damage your roof. Also be aware that shrubbery and plantings near the gutter or downspout may be damaged.

Look carefully at large icicles. If the icicles are confined to the gutters and there is no water trapped behind them, this does not indicate the presence of an ice dam. However, large icicles can pose a danger to people when they fall off. Try to safely knock the icicles off from the ground, making sure not to stand directly beneath them. If you cannot reach them safely from the ground, consider hiring a contractor to help.

Ice dams and roof snow can be difficult and hazardous to remove. If you do decide to remove them yourself be incredibly careful, or you may call one of the companies listed below.

Absolutely Clean Window Washing 612-919-4185	Aspen Property Maintenance 218-343-2897
Duluth Ice Dam Removal 218-349-2684	Basement Pros 218-724-4225
Jay Litman Construction 218-525-4489	Green Up Duluth 218-506-8703
United Veteran's Construction 218-213-3264	Jacks Quality Construction 218-464-0715
Northern Home Design 218-391-5546	Larry Timm & Sons 218-624-1062
Valley Ridge Construction 218-724-2430	

The companies above were compiled from Angie's List whose services contained Snow/Ice Roof Removal. One Roof does not endorse any of these companies .If you find one of these companies no longer exists, let us know so we can update our resources.