

# Temporary Shutdown and Mothballing of Construction Sites

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Recommendations for temporary shutdowns  
or mothballing of construction projects that  
can help protect businesses and limit site risk.



# Temporary Shutdown and Mothballing of Construction Sites



## Introduction

This Loss Prevention Standard contains recommendations for temporary or extended shutdowns or mothballing of construction projects.

This should be considered a dynamic procedure and should therefore be reviewed and updated regularly, to reflect conditions and changes.

Specific consideration should also be made for reduced staffing levels and lone working to ensure that there is appropriate supervision oversight of site activities, including health and safety, quality assurance, environmental management and permit to work systems.



## Notification to Your Insurer

If work on site is to be stopped for an extended period, you must notify your Insurer and Broker.

## Project Risk Assessment

Before commencing extended closure, shutdown or mothballing of a construction project, a Project Risk Assessment should be carried out for each particular site, to determine what additional measures are required to safely secure the project and its contents, with specific reference to the following:

- The current stage of the project
- Environmental and weather conditions (during the shutdown period)
- Structural issues
- Site safety and security, including a schedule of regular inspections
- Housekeeping – removal of waste and combustible materials from site
- Emergency Response Plan (including emergency contacts)
- Project Recommencement Plan – to include procedures, inspections and checks before site operations are recommenced
- Monthly reviews/updates of the Project Risk Register (or more frequently, as required)

## Site Security

- The site perimeter should be secure, with robust fencing able to withstand anticipated weather conditions during the shutdown period
- Consider providing CCTV monitoring of the site perimeter (and inside the site), preferably with PIR sensors and loudspeakers to warn trespassers. CCTV should be linked to a 24-hour manned Alarm Receiving Centre

## General Housekeeping and Storage

- Storage areas for materials and equipment should not be located in flood risk zones
- Materials and equipment should be elevated off the ground
- All waste should be removed prior to shutdown
- Minimise storage within all buildings wherever possible, especially combustible materials
- Fuel oils and gas cylinders should be removed from site; otherwise they should be stored in an appropriate secure and external area
- Isolate all non-essential utilities and services
- Drain down water systems
- Temporary fire detection and alarm systems should remain operational and linked to a 24-hour manned Alarm Receiving Centre

## Construction Plant and Machinery

- Construction plant and equipment should be taken off-hire and removed from site. Where this is not possible, all construction plant and equipment should be parked or stored in a secure compound outside of a flood risk zone
- Remove batteries from large items of plant to prevent them from being stolen. Removing or isolating batteries also helps to maintain charge during long periods of inactivity
- Jibs on mobile cranes should be lowered and tower cranes should **be left in 'free slew'**
- Continued compliance with statutory inspection and maintenance requirements for critical plant and equipment should be completed
- Refer to Site Security guidance above for further advice

## Electro-mechanical Equipment and Installations

Special consideration should be given to electro-mechanical equipment during prolonged shutdowns of construction sites, such as:

- Any electro-mechanical equipment planned to be shut down should be preserved following manufacturer's recommendations
- Any electro-mechanical equipment on site but not installed/commissioned should be preserved following **manufacturer's recommendations**
- Fire protection for any operational electro-mechanical equipment should be activated
- Maintenance should be provided to any operational electro-mechanical equipment **as per manufacturer's recommendations**
- It is expected that an engineering analysis is carried out if maintenance is deferred on operational electro-mechanical equipment. The engineering analysis should be supported by the equipment manufacturer or by a third party specialist

## Prevention of Water Damage

- Incoming temporary and permanent water supplies should be turned off, wherever possible. Locations of shut-off valves should be detailed on site plans
- If the building envelope cannot be made fully watertight, consider providing or installing appropriate temporary protective measures to prevent water ingress
- Consider compliance with the Construction Insurance Risk Engineers Group (CIREG) Best Practice Guidance: 'Managing Escape of Water Risk on Construction Sites' - 5th Edition, November 2019

## Earthworks Excavations and Storage

- All excavations should be battered back to a safe angle or supported with appropriate excavation support
- Large sections of exposed earthworks should be adequately covered or protected from the elements wherever possible
- Appropriate temporary drainage should be in place. All temporary and permanent drainage runs should be clear, including discharge points, oil, silt and settlement traps, etc.
- Complete regular inspection and maintenance of pumps and dewatering systems. Remote alarms should be installed where continued operation of pumping systems is critical

## Temporary Works

- Carry out structural reviews and risk assessments for all temporary works
- Carry out regular inspections and maintenance of temporary works during extended shutdown periods

## Structural Design Issues

Specific consideration should be given to the following:

- Assess the effect of wind loading on partially completed building facades
- Assess the structural stability of partially completed structures or installations

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For more information please visit:

[Aviva Risk Management Solutions – Specialist Partners](#)

## Sources and Useful Links

- [Joint Code of Practice on the Protection from Fire of Construction Sites and Buildings Undergoing Renovation](#)

To find out more, please visit [Aviva Risk Management Solutions](#) or speak to one of our advisors.

Email us at [riskadvice@aviva.com](mailto:riskadvice@aviva.com) or call 0345 366 6666.\*

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## LOSS PREVENTION STANDARDS