Supervisor Lesko: Building Owners Should Address Snow Buildup on Roofs
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FARMINGVILLE, NY - Brookhaven Supervisor Mark Lesko today advised residents that the recent snowfalls have created a potential situation that may require the immediate attention of building owners and business owners. It is possible that ice and snow buildup on roofs may exceed the capacity of the roof's design.

Snow and ice overloading are a leading cause of roof collapse. Flat roofs are especially conducive to heavy accumulations. A critical time will be when the temperature rises above freezing or when rainfall occurs, which will magnify the roof's snow load. Water is obviously much heavier than snow.

Once the snow begins to melt, "ponding" of water can occur which may overload the capacity of the roof. It is imperative that people ensure their roof drains will operate in order to accommodate melting snow and ice.

Things to do:

1. Do not send workers on the roof if it is in danger of collapse.
2. Be careful when climbing on the roof, snow and ice buried underneath the snow can cause people to slip and fall.
3. Check the depth of snow on the roof. Look for drifting, puddles, ponding and ice accumulations on the roof.
4. Inspect roofs for leaks and structural defects that may develop as snow accumulates.
5. Remove snow as needed to prevent collapse. Excessive digging and scraping can damage the roof. Do not use tools that may damage the roof such as ice choppers.
6. Clear paths to drains and clear area around each drain.

If you have any uncertainty as to the condition of your roof or if your roof may have an excessive snow load, it is recommended that you seek professional assistance. A licensed roofing contractor, a licensed architect or engineer may be consulted.

We are also requesting the assistance of residents and business owners to clear a minimum of 3-feet of snow from all sides of hydrants in front of their homes and businesses. Clearing the snow away makes the hydrants visible and can save valuable time in the event of an emergency.

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