



**MA Department of Conservation and Recreation
Office of Cultural Resources
Best Management Practices**

Historic Building Maintenance

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Goal : To protect actively used historic resources from further deterioration and address minor tasks before they lead to major problems.

Guidelines

DCR's historic buildings can be high style mansions or more common picnic shelters. A building is considered historic if it is 50+years old or is listed/eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Best Management Practices laid out here should be supplemented by a program of regular capital improvements, such as exterior painting, new roofing, interior finishes etc. implemented through FAMIS. Report any major changes in conditions to the Office of Cultural Resources. If an historic building is vacated and will remain empty for more than three years, refer to the BMP *Mothballing Historic Structures*.

The following annual maintenance activities should be incorporated into spring or fall operations.

Roof

- Clear roof of debris.
- Clean downspouts and gutters.
- Repair any loose gutter seams, shingles or building connections.

Exterior materials

- Eliminate points of entry for animals and insects to prevent, for example, chewing damage, nest growth and waste accumulation:
 - Install vented plywood in large openings
 - Place steel wool in smaller holes
 - Remove any nests
 - Block any foundation level burrows
- Clean chimney and ensure the chimney cap maintains a proper fit.
- Remove any equipment or material stored against the building.



Windows / Doors

- Repair/replace glazing putty, in kind (if inspected for presence of hazardous materials – most glazing compound contains some amount of asbestos).
- Replace broken or missing glass, storms or screens in kind.
- Install non-invasive weatherstripping.
- Touch up-paint any areas of exposed wood.

Interior materials

- Improve ventilation by installing vented panels in enough basement and attic openings to allow for air flow.
- Remove mold with mild bleach solution.
- Install sump pump in basements where standing water collects after storms.

Landscape

- Clear any built up material (sand, leaves, other debris) from around foundations. Keep the grade at least 6" from the wooden sill and framing members.
- Prune foundation plantings to allow 2' setback from buildings.
- Clear driveway and drainage systems of debris, leaf litter and aggregate and ensure positive drainage away from the building.
- Stabilize stone walls and garden structures.
- Prune trees and shrubs near building and utility lines.

Security systems

- If a security system exists, check proper function of alarms, detectors, etc. as recommended by the manufacturer or service provider; keep records up to date.
- Motion-activated exterior lighting should be regularly checked for proper function; switches for security lighting should remain in the "on" position at all times.

Extreme Weather

- Clear snow from shallow pitched and flat roofs during major snow events, particularly during storms of heavy, wet snow or snow followed by rain. Do not walk on roofs to remove snow.
- Clear roof edges to prevent ice dams.
- Clear downspouts of snow and debris to prevent back up of snow and ice.
- Check basements for water during heavy rain; activate sump as needed.