

Securing Buildings from Vandals and Theft

The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (DON) Historic Preservation Program understands the need to secure buildings from vandals and theft during the current State of Emergency. We recognize the impact this may have on communities in the interim and suggest employing only the measures that are absolutely necessary.

Use the following guidance for temporary measures. Please immediately notify your District or Landmarks Coordinator before performing any temporary work at your property and provide the following:

- your name
- the name of your business
- the building name
- the street address
- how to best contact you

Once the Coordinator has verified that you are following the protocols below, you may start securing your property. A list of DON contacts is provided on the second page.

Guidance for Temporary Measures

1. If the building is located where fire and security service is available, it is highly recommended that some form of monitoring or alarm devices be used.
2. Determine the building's vulnerable points of entry. Start with the ground floor, but also look at places individuals can reach by climbing or can access from another building or structure. This may include the roof and other floors above grade.
3. Secure points of entry with locking devices or other physical means of preventing access.
4. Temporarily covering windows with plywood is reasonable but should be used only where absolutely necessary. Take care not to damage architectural or structural features of the building. Fasten into materials that are more easily repaired in the future like wood, concrete, or mortar joints. Avoid fastening through metal, if possible. Do not attach fasteners through the face of brick or terra cotta. When possible use screws rather than nails, as these may be easier to repair.
5. Corrugated panels, metal grates, chain link fencing, and metal grills may also be used to temporarily protect openings or points of entry. Use the guidance noted above for fastening to materials.
6. If there are special architectural features or areas inside the building that require securing or protecting, use the guidance noted above for fastening to materials.

Please note that the following work may only occur after an Emergency Certificate of Approval has been issued by the District or Landmarks Coordinator:

If it is necessary to remove designated or controlled architectural features from the exterior or interior of the building for safe keeping, it is preferred that these be secured on site within the building. If it is determined for emergency purposes that they be taken to another property for short-term protection, these features will be required to be returned and reinstalled in the future, following the State of Emergency.

If you have a specific question about your property that is not addressed above, please contact your District or Landmarks Coordinator.

All temporary measures as outlined above will be required to be removed immediately following the end of the State of Emergency. Any subsequent associated repairs will need to be completed within 30 days.

DON Historic Preservation Staff Contacts:

International Special Review District

Columbia City Landmark District

Rebecca Frestedt

Phone: (206) 684-0226 Email: rebecca.frestedt@seattle.gov

Pike Place Market Historical District

Ballard Avenue Landmark District

Minh Chau Le

Phone: 206) 684-0229 Email: MinhChau.Le@seattle.gov

Pioneer Square Preservation District

Harvard-Belmont and Fort Lawton Landmark Districts

Genna Nashem

Phone: (206) 684-0227 Email: genna.nashem@seattle.gov

Landmarks Coordinator (excluding: Downtown, South Lake Union, First Hill, and Pike/Pine)

Sand Point Naval Air Station Landmark District

Erin Doherty

Phone: (206) 684-0380 Email: erin.doherty@seattle.gov

City Historic Preservation Officer

Landmarks Coordinator (Downtown, South Lake Union, First Hill, and Pike/Pine)

Sarah Sodt

Phone: (206) 615-1786 Email: sarah.sodt@seattle.gov

This general guidance for temporary measures is based on the [National Park Services' Preservation Brief #31 – Mothballing Historic Buildings](#). For more detailed information the full document is available online at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/31-mothballing.htm>.