

**Real Estate Implications**  
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You might think your job gets easier because there are few (or no) tenants in your building, but nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, even if your building is completely vacant for now, there is still plenty of work that needs to be done.

Here are some things to consider:

- Make sure your HVAC system is running properly.
  - It's OK to set the thermostat settings back (perhaps 55 degrees for heating and 80 degrees for cooling) - just don't turn them off completely!
  - Make sure your outside air and exhaust fans are running to keep the air circulating.
- Make sure someone is putting water in the "p-traps" - particularly in sinks and floor drains - to keep sewer gases from backing up into the space.
  - Don't forget the slop sinks in the janitor's closets, the floor drains in the bathrooms, and drains in the mechanical rooms and back-office areas.
- Make sure someone from your team is walking every inch of the building every workday.
  - He/she should be looking for potential issues - like leaks, unsecured doors, equipment left running, etc.
- Make sure exterior doors and, where operable, exterior windows are locked.
- Work with your tenants to shut off equipment that is not in use. Remember that equipment (like a copier) is still drawing power even when it is in the power-saving mode.
- Water that is sitting still in the plumbing system will develop **biofilms** - which can cause disease (including *Legionella*, *pseudomonas*, and *mycobacterium*).
  - Make sure someone is running the water through the system every day.
  - Consider working with an industrial hygienist to test the potable water before letting tenants back into the building.

- The very last thing you want - after going through COVID-19 - is to have an outbreak of Legionella when the tenants return!
- Consider posting a sign with your contact information on exterior doors in case someone needs access to the building.
- If the building is truly vacant, consider posting security guards on-site to deter vandalism and theft. Or, consider installing remote access cameras so you can keep an eye on common areas and the exterior.
- Make sure the roof access is secured - to keep people from accessing the roof and from accessing the building from the roof.
- Consider closing the miniblinds - or at least putting them down and angling them to minimize solar gain (which will reduce energy consumption).
- Review your insurance policy, and notify your insurance provider. Even if the closure is only temporary, there might be insurance requirements to consider.
- Make sure building systems (pumps, motors, elevators, etc.) are exercised/run on a schedule. When these pieces of equipment sit idle, they can degrade quickly.