



Protecting stored goods

Detecting a warehouse's weak points



Defects in the upkeep or use of a warehouse may cause significant damages to the goods.

When choosing a warehouse, a few signs can show at a glance that potential risks may exist.

A Is it actually intended to store goods?

Check that the building is suitable for the type of goods normally stocked there (e.g. fuel or combustible materials, explosives, etc.):

- 1. the separation of the storage cells or compartmentalization** must be such that if a structural component is destroyed (such as walls, roof, beams, etc.), this will not lead to the subsequent destruction of the building
- 2. to reduce the fire load, storage cells must be as far as possible from each other, and have a limited dimension** (height, surface, etc.)
- 3. monitoring/security of the site:** the local fire department must always be notified, and the protective equipment provided must be used properly.

Check that technical equipment (e.g. forklifts) is being used correctly: If put in different conditions than they were designed for, they will suffer premature wear and tear and might cause the merchandise to be damaged.

B Are there signs of humidity or slump?

- › Paint peeling off
- › Blisters formed
- › Musty odours
- › Fungal blooms
- › Splits in concrete

These are just some indicators of old water damage (heavy rainfall, snow melting quickly, water table rising, flooding by bodies of water, building located at the foot of a slope, etc.).

Brown stains at the bottoms of walls reveal excessive or uncontrolled humidity both inside and outside the building.

- › Cracks in walls and indoor ceilings
- › Doors not closing correctly
- › Ceiling sagging

... are evidence that the building might be slumping (particularly on the roof).



C Does it have enough protection from...

...fire?

1. Is there an automatic fire (heat, flame, etc.) detection system, a natural or mechanical smoke extraction system, or lightning protection (lightning rod, lightning arrester, electrical grounding)?
2. Are the electrical and heating installations in good condition, and have they been checked?
3. Are the fire hydrants accessible, connected to the municipal water supply, at least 0.75m from the ground to avoid freezing? Have the extinguishers (portable, mobile, and fixed ones) been chosen based on the classes of fire?
4. Can the fire hoses reach any point anywhere inside the protected room with at least two streams of water?
5. Are the automatic extinguishers (i.e. the sprinklers) working in order and well-maintained?



...vandalism?

In dealing with acts of malevolence, it is advisable you know the difference between theft from within and from outside:

- › Internal theft depends on how frequently inventories are taken
- › To gauge the threat from outside, verify whether there is:
 - a perimeter fence?
 - a ditch or mound of earth, concrete blocks, etc?
 - an entrance that is locked outside of business hours?
 - openings (windows and doors) protected by shutters, grills, bars?
 - enough lighting in the parking lots (both for staff and visitors) and their environment?
 - a security manager within the company?

Almost 2/3 of thefts are on the delivery docks