



Closing your operations over the festive season? Never fear, EQUANS will be here.



With the festive season upon us and a resulting mass exodus from workplaces in December and January, it might not be as dark and quiet in buildings and facilities as you might think.

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**The summer break can be a time when businesses can conserve energy by cutting back on unnecessary air conditioning, lighting and power. However, it is still essential to ensure those services are available if and when needed, and particularly if staff are likely to come in during the quieter periods.**

What's even more important is knowing that if something goes wrong within your facility when fewer or no people are on site, your service provider is available at any time of the day or night, public holiday or not, to respond to alarms, concerns or to fix potential problems.

## Things don't always go as planned

At quieter times and when you least expect it, mishaps can happen. It could be an air conditioning unit left on that has been leaking, leaving a pool of water. It could be the breaching of an emergency exit or alarmed door. It could be a run of days where the mercury is pushing 46 or 47 degrees and plant rooms are starting to heat up, or minor issues throughout the year are exacerbated by the rising or continuous run of heat.

Our support teams across mechanical, refrigeration, electrical, audio-visual and fire protection services will be working with clients to ensure that, where required, 24-hour support is available for all incidents and issues, whether it be on a public holiday or a Sunday morning at 1am.

**AS THE NEEDS OF EACH BUILDING, FACILITY OR INDUSTRIAL SITE DIFFER, SO TOO WILL THE MAKE-UP OF YOUR SUPPORT TEAM.**

With a large proportion of our serviced facilities in the healthcare sector, our team members work to ensure response times are minimal, which includes having teams embedded on site at major health services or hospitals. In health and aged care, it will be business as usual.

## What (not) to do when it's quiet

Some sites might be quiet, but many others, such as essential services, are busier than ever. Over the festive season we re-schedule planned maintenance, undertaking annual or preventative checks, which can instead be scheduled for early December or later in January without putting safety at risk. This ensures operations can carry on as usual and uninterrupted during peak periods – such as national mail and courier facilities, telecommunications providers or television streaming services. We wouldn't want to disrupt coverage of the World Cup or the Australian Open, slow delivery of your keenly awaited Christmas package or the streaming on your New Year's Eve

video call with your nearest and dearest interstate or overseas.

Schools resemble echo chambers during the festive season, but that doesn't mean our services go quiet when the classrooms do. The festive season is an ideal time for schools to undertake planned maintenance. With planning, communication and preparation, we ensure the right staff are available at the ideal time of the year to suit the varied purposes of the clients we serve.

Almost every new building has some type of smart technology which can control building services remotely or make life easier on the inside, along with older buildings which have retro-fitted Building-Management Systems. Whether it be motion-controlled lighting or snooze features on equipment, these can ensure buildings and facilities run at optimum levels during quieter times.

External access to smart operational systems also ensures buildings can be monitored remotely if alarms sound or there is cause for concern for building managers or third parties, including our teams. Some can track movements – who is coming or going after hours, how long they use the air conditioning for. Not necessarily big brother, but handy for knowing when energy is being used, if those on site are safe in the event of an alarm, and if there is a problem – what needs fixing and where it is.

## A tale of Heat, Water and Smoke

One of the most common things to go awry during the festive season is heat. Overheating can happen not just on the extremely hot days – but also as a result of equipment issues, e.g. in a data centre or a computer room. If high temperature alarms sound, they generally trigger a call to the client, the client calls us and we investigate. These are immediate – your data and computer systems are of the utmost importance, and we can't rest if the heat is rising.

The same applies to water – a leaking roof in a shopping centre or building – and with fire and smoke alarms. Fire alarms generally trigger fire brigade call-outs, whether it's a person smoking in a toilet or someone vandalising a fire hydrant in a stairwell.

In the event of an alarm or something going amiss at a site that requires attendance outside of business hours, our call centre will typically log the job,



dispatch technicians and have these technicians arrive on-site, morning or night, even if a brigade is called. If the matter escalates, we will have a manager on call.

We'll then isolate the fault, be it the water leak, the faulty diesel pump or another source of excess smoke, and we'll fix it. If your business is taking a break, you can rest assured that we'll be there to take care of the issue and restore operations as quickly as possible.

Nine times out of 10, a system will fail because of a lack of maintenance or due to human error. Ensuring you stay up to date with scheduled and annual maintenance ahead of any Christmas closure is essential, so there's a lower risk of something going wrong at the worst possible time.

We wish you a happy and safe festive season! 

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**If you would like more information or to chat further to us about this article, you can contact us at [info.anz@equans.com](mailto:info.anz@equans.com).**

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*The advice provided in this article is general in nature and no party is entitled to rely upon this advice. If you need advice specifically relating to your circumstances, please contact a member of the EQUANS team for an initial discussion.*

