

WINTERIZE YOUR HOME

Leaving your home unattended for an extended period of time increases the potential for property damage unless proactive measures are taken. Help protect your home with these tips to prevent costly damage that can occur while away.

Appliances

- Unplug appliances to prevent damage from power surges.
- Empty and clean refrigerator, leave door ajar.
- Disconnect and drain hoses for washing machine.

Other

- Consider removing all food items to discourage rodent/insect infestation.
- Close fireplace/woodstove flues and dampers.
- Create a home inventory and keep it with you.
- Remove all valuables from home.
- Trim tree limbs, especially those overhanging your home or power lines.
- Store outdoor furniture and other expensive items in a locked garage or shed.



Security

- Lock all doors and windows. Use storm shutters if equipped.
- Leave contact information with your neighbors or local police.
- Consider maintaining exterior security lighting on timers.

Heating System

- If you heat your home while away, adjust to maintain temperature above 50 degrees in dwelling to prevent mold and mildew on furnishings from condensation. Consider purchasing a temperature-monitoring system.
- Have heating contractor winterize the system if turned off.
- Lower temperature setting on gas water heater or switch to vacation mode.
- Drain whole house humidifier.

Water System

- Turn off water at the meter.
- Open all faucets and drain all water lines. If your area is prone to freezing temperatures, drain the toilet and water heater also.
- Pour RV type antifreeze in drain traps.
- Remove/empty whole hose water filters.
- Drain dishwasher or use RV type antifreeze to winterize.
- Follow manufacturers instructions to winterize refrigerator/ice maker/water dispenser.
- If you will be gone for an extended time, cover toilet bowl with saran wrap to prevent evaporation of toilet trap and entrance of sewer gases.
- Consult a plumber for winterizing well pressure tanks, water softeners, acid neutralizers, etc.
- Use air compressor to remove any residual water in pipes.