

PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR WINTER

1

Check Doors & Windows for Leaks

Hold a lit incense stick close to the edges of your windows and doors. If the smoke moves, you can assume there is a leak. You can also find a thermal leak detector on Amazon for under \$40.00. Once you locate the leaks, add weather stripping or caulk to the gaps.



2

Clean your Gutters

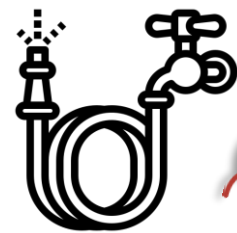
Clogged gutters can overflow and break. Once all the leaves have fallen, it's the perfect time to clear out all debris. Please be careful if you are getting on a ladder. Be sure the ladder is secure up against the home and if possible, have someone hold the ladder at the bottom to keep it secure. Gutter guards do not necessarily prevent debris from accumulating.



3

Turn Off & Drain Outdoor Water Lines

Before the first freeze, turn off the outdoor water shut off valve. Disconnect the hoses to all your outdoor faucets and turn the faucets on to allow any remaining water to flow through the pipes. When the water completely stops, turn the faucet off. Go back to the main shut off valve, place a bucket underneath it, and open the drain plug to allow any remaining water to drain from the valve. Once all the water is drained, replace the plug.



4

Add Extra Insulation to Attic and/or Crawlspace

Insulation keeps warm air inside in the winter and cold air inside during the warm summer months. Also, check the attic for exposed openings. Caulk any exposed cracks in the drywall to help keep your home warm.



5

Clean Dryer Vent

A heavy accumulation of lint in the airflow system is one of the major causes of dryer fires. Not only is it imperative to clean the lint filter after each use, it is equally important to inspect and clean the exhaust vent at least once a year. If your clothes take too long to dry, it may be because the vent is clogged.



6

Replace Furnace Filter

To keep air quality high and energy bills low, replace the filter once a month throughout the winter. Be sure to turn the furnace off before replacing the filter.



7

Have an Electrician Check the Breaker Box

Now is the perfect time to call your electrician and schedule a check of your breaker box. They should inspect all wires and test power flow through electrical circuits. Be sure to check your GFCI outlets too.

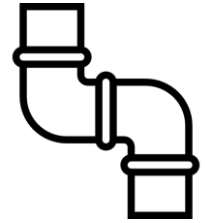




8

Insulate your Pipes

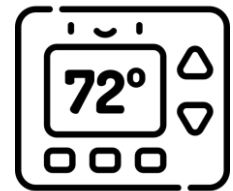
Insulated pipes have less risk of freezing, and they also keep your hot water hot as it travels from the water heater to the outlet. This can mean savings in water and electricity usage during the winter season. Pipes that run through any unheated area of your home should be insulated. Pipes can be insulated by snapping foam sleeves on them. You can find pre-slit, hollow-core, flexible foam pipe insulation at hardware stores. Measure the diameter of your pipes and bring those measurements with you to the store.



9

Upgrade to a Smart Thermostat

The biggest reason to upgrade is the energy cost savings. The thermostats are easily programmable and you can manually raise/lower the temperature in your home from your phone. If you are going to be away from home longer than expected, it is easy to keep the heat at a lower temperature in the winter while you are away. If you are a snowbird or leaving your home for an extended period of time, your thermostat will send alerts to let you know if the interior temperature in the home has fallen below, or risen above your set limits, so you can monitor whether or not your HVAC is working properly from afar. A smart thermostat can actually monitor the weather and heat your home more when a cold snap is on the horizon.



10

Check Sump Pump

Locate the exit pipe and check it for any dirt and debris. If there are any clogs, remove them. Make sure the water is being directed well away from your home's foundation. If you have a dual cord pump, both cords should be unplugged. If you hear a humming sound when you plug in the cord, it means it's working properly. If you have a single pump cord, pour 20 liters of water into the pump pit until the float rises. You should hear the pump turn on. While on, be sure to see that the water is pumping out as it should, and that the pump turns off when the water is removed.

