

Winterizing Your Home

Winter season means freezing temperatures which can create a hazardous condition for your home. Here are six tips to help your home survive the cold...

1. Get The Furnace Ready:

- Call an HVAC professional to inspect your furnace and clean ducts.
- If your home is heated by a hot water radiator, bleed the valves by opening them slightly and when water appears, close them.

2. Get the Fireplace Ready:

- Cap or screen the top of the chimney to keep out rodents and birds.
- If the chimney hasn't been cleaned for a while, call a chimney sweep to remove soot and creosote.

3. Check the Exterior, Doors and Windows:

- Inspect exterior for crevice cracks and exposed entry points around pipes; seal them.
- Use weatherstripping around doors to prevent cold air from entering the home and caulk windows.

4. Inspect Roof, Gutters & Downspouts:

- Adding extra insulation to the attic will prevent warm air from creeping to your roof, causing ice dams.
- Clean out the gutters and use a hose to spray water down the downspouts to clear away debris.

5. Install Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors:

- Buy extra smoke detector batteries and change them when daylight savings ends.
- Install a carbon monoxide detector near your furnace and/or water heater.

6. Prevent Plumbing Freezes:

Locate your water main in the event you need to shut it off in an emergency.

Drain all garden hoses.

Insulate exposed plumbing pipes.

Drain air conditioner pipes and if your AC has a water shut-off valve, turn it off.

If you go on vacation, leave the heat set to at least 55 degrees.