

Home Winterization Tips

Guidelines for Primary and Secondary Homeowners in the Truckee – Lake Tahoe Area
(This list may not be complete and is to be used as a guideline only.)

Preparing for Winter Weather

Tips for All - Both Primary & Secondary Homeowners

1. **Disconnect hoses from outside water spigots.**

Most homes in our area have “freeze proof” exterior water spigots. Thus, you only need to disconnect hoses from the water spigots so that water does not collect and freeze. Some older homes may not have “freeze proof” spigots. If you are not sure which type your home is equipped with, consult a local plumber for specialized instructions. Also, be sure to drain irrigation and sprinkler systems.

2. **Caulk and maintain weather stripping.**

Ensure that your doors and windows are air tight; this will help reduce your heating bills. Maintain weather stripping around doors and use caulk on openings or outlets around pipes, foundation, windows, etc. You want to stop any migration of water and air.

3. **Insulate water lines.**

Put foam rubber insulation around hot and cold water pipes, you'll increase efficiency and save energy. (You can buy it in a home store.)

4. **Maintain heating units.**

Make sure your heating appliances are cleaned and serviced and ready for winter. Make sure your furnace filter is clean. Check that venting is clear and open.

5. **Maintain chimneys and stovepipes.**

Have chimneys and stovepipes inspected & cleaned. (Be sure you have a high-quality chimney cap.)

6. **Repair roof as needed.**

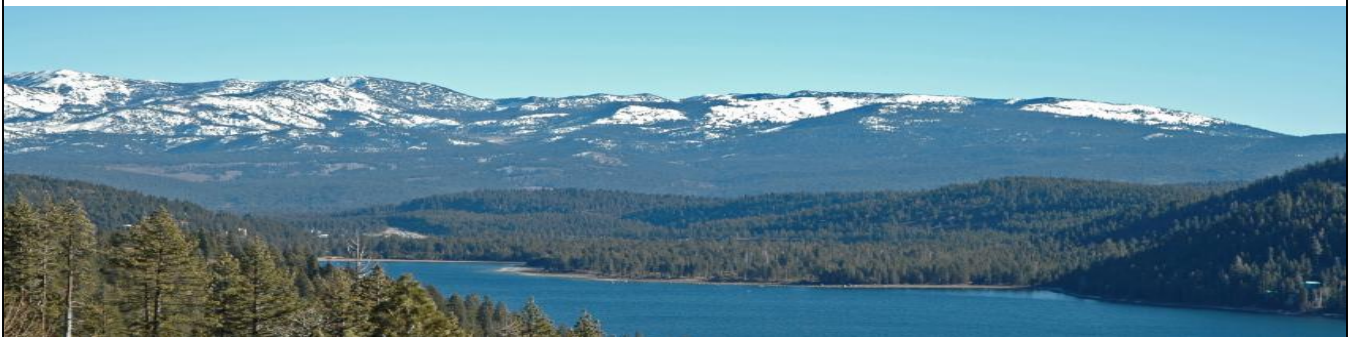
Check the roof of your home for missing shingles, shakes, or damaged materials (metal). Also, be sure to check around roof vents for any damaged materials. Repair as needed.

7. **Close foundation vents.**

Close foundation vents when colder weather begins and reopen again in the spring for proper ventilation. (Some contractors suggest that you leave at least two sub-area vents, for cross ventilation, open year round for proper ventilation.)

8. **Check your home insurance.**

For cold-weather homeowners, winter is a season that can bring damage from snow and ice, so it's a good time of year to look at your homeowner's policy.



Home Winterization Tips (Continued)

Miscellaneous Winter Preparation Tasks:

- Ø **Contract for snow removal.**
- Ø **Maintain snow blower.** (Change the oil as needed. Gasoline can go bad and cause damage to your motorized equipment, so take your gas cans to the dump and then refill them with fresh gasoline.)
- Ø **Install snow stakes.**
- Ø **Stock your wood supply, if necessary.**
- Ø **Check batteries in smoke & carbon monoxide detectors & alarms.** (Stock back up batteries to have on hand.)
- Ø **Put away patio furniture.**
- Ø **Add anti-freeze to your vehicles, if necessary.**

Winterizing Your Home for Extended Away Periods

Pipe Freezing Prevention

If you are a second homeowner or if you are a local who is heading out for a long vacation, you should consider turning off your water the next time you leave. Here's the procedure for preventing pipe freezing in your home:

1. **Turn water off.**
Locate the water shut off for your home. Then turn off the water -- if a special tool is needed, use it. **CAUTION: Turn the water shut off handle only as far as it will go in the direction it will move . . . normally clockwise ¼ turn to shutoff; ¼ turn counter-clockwise to open.**
2. **Open all faucets and flush all toilets.**
Once the water is off, open all the water faucets throughout the house and flush all the toilets to empty the tanks -- this allows any excess water to drain from the lines and tanks.
3. **Add RV Anti-freeze to all drains and toilets.**
Pour anti-freeze (environmental or RV) in every drain (including sinks, showers, and baths) and in the toilet bowls and tanks (after flushing to empty them).
Drains: 1 cup **Toilet Bowls:** 4-5 cups **Toilet Tanks:** 2 cups
4. **Set thermostat at 50 degrees +**

Other things to consider doing when leaving for an extended period:

- Ø Disconnect clothes washer water hoses.
- Ø Disconnect refrigerator water hoses (to ice maker and water dispenser).