



Winterization Checklist

The cold winter months can wreak havoc on your home's plumbing system if you are not prepared for the temperature drop. Frozen water in pipes can be inconvenient at best and destructive at its worst. A good preventive measure to get ready for winter is to use this winterizing plumbing checklist.

1. Locate **YOUR** Water Shut off

You need to know where **YOUR** water shut off is before any plumbing emergency. Look for **YOUR** shut off valve in the following places:

- In the crawl space or basement, where the water line enters the home.
- In the garage where the water line enters the wall or ceiling, near the water heater or laundry hookup.
- Outside near the foundation, often protected by a concrete ring or clay pipe.



2. Insulate Pipes



For basic preventive measures, make sure any exposed pipes are well insulated.

To locate exposed pipes, look in your attic, crawl space, and garage. If you can see the pipe, it needs to be wrapped with insulation foam. Pipe wrap insulation is inexpensive and easy to install and can help reduce heating costs, as well as keep pipes protected.

3. Outside Water Faucets (aka: Hose Bibs, Yard Faucets, Sillcocks)

Protecting the hose bibs and pipes from the cold is very important. Start by removing any garden hoses that may be connected to outdoor faucets. To protect hose bibs from the cold, drain any collected water and insulate the faucets. In regions, like Wisconsin, where temperatures drop significantly every winter, many homes have dedicated shut-off valves for outdoor hose bibs or faucets. If you have a shut-off valve, turn the water to the hose bib off and drain any water that is already in the pipes. If you don't have a shut-off valve, you can protect hose bibs and outdoor faucets by insulating them with hose bib covers. Hose bib covers are inexpensive and easy to install. The insulation that these foam covers provide should keep the hose bibs from freezing. If insulation is not an option, you can let the faucet trickle to prevent full freezing. Be careful the water that trickles out won't freeze on a walk way and be a slip hazard.



4. Sprinkler System

Many commercial and residential systems utilize manual drain valves for winterizing.

This will consist of one or more manual drains on the main line and several automatic drains on the lateral lines.

- **SHUT OFF THE WATER SUPPLY TO THE SYSTEM.** Make sure the shutoff valve is working properly and no water is leading back into the system.
- Open the manual drains on the main line and leave them open.
- Open the drain valve located near the water supply.



- Open the small drain valves (petcocks) on the backflow preventer installed on your sprinkling system and leave them open.
 - If the shut off is sealed correctly and no water is going back into the system, close the drain valve by the water supply when it has finished draining.
 - If you have an automatic controller, allow it to go through a cycle with the system drained. This allows all the valves to open.
- If you have a manually-controlled system, open all zone valves and leave them open.

5. Main Vent Pipes

Clear any leaves from the main vent pipe on your roof. During winter, a clogged vent pipe can cause toilets to flush inadequately and waste pipes to drain poorly.



6. Keep sump pump discharge hoses directed away from the house.

Sump pumps are your last line of defense to protect your home against flooding.

The hose removes any water to a safer location away from your home's foundation. Make sure the hose is properly pitched at downward angle away from your house so it can't trap water and freeze.