



This Fall, Winterize Your Home

With cold weather approaching, now is the time to take steps to conserve energy and keep your family safe and warm.

Outdoors

- Check and clean out your home's gutters and downspouts so melted snow can move freely through them and away from your home's foundation.
- Apply an extra coat of waterproofing to decks.
- Trim trees and remove dead branches so they don't become a hazard when ice builds up on them.
- Turn off and drain outside faucets.
- Keep your water meter warmer than 40° F.
- Make sure steps and handrails are in good shape. They will be very important in icy weather.
- Buy a snow shovel and other winter supplies before messy weather strikes.
- Regularly shovel and salt sidewalks and driveways to keep them free from snow and ice.
- Drain gas from lawnmowers, lawn trimmers and other engines that won't be used until summer.

Indoors

- Check windows and doors for cracks and broken glass. Replace any broken windows.
- Fill window cracks or any small openings with weather-proof caulking.
- Apply weather-stripping around drafty doors.
- If windows are old and drafty, purchase heavy-duty, clear plastic to cover them as an economical way to keep the cold air outside.
- Check your plumbing. Cover any exposed pipes in your basement or cellar with insulation to avoid freezing.
- Have your furnace and other gas appliances inspected. This service should include checking and lubricating the furnace and changing filters.
- Have your chimney cleaned and check that the flue shuts tightly.
- If your home uses a forced-air heating system, have the entire duct system vacuumed.
- Insulate your attic to keep heat from escaping.
- Install carbon monoxide detectors on each floor.
- Never store more than a few pieces of firewood indoors – it can release harmful contaminants into your home.
- When a wood fire is burning, always keep a window open a bit.

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