

winter home CHECKLIST

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HOMES

ROOF AND DRAINS

- Check for missing, damaged or warped shingles and replace as necessary to prevent leaks.
- Reseal all seals around pipes, skylights, and penetrations in your roof with a roofing cement and caulking gun to prevent future leaks that can be caused from materials freezing.
- Check for deteriorated flashing at the chimney, walls and skylights and around vent pipes. Seal joints where water could penetrate, using roofing cement and a caulking gun.
- Ensure all vents, eaves, and openings are covered to prevent insects, birds and rodents from getting inside to nest in a warm place.
- Clean leaves and debris from courtyard and any exterior rock wall drains to prevent blockages.

WINDOWS, DOORS AND EXTERIOR

- Check all the weather-stripping around windows and door-frames for leaks to prevent heat loss. Replace if necessary.
- Examine window frames and all exterior wood materials, stucco, and mortar for signs of deterioration. Repair, replace, re-caulk or repaint to maintain integrity and appearance.
- Check for drafts around windows and doors. Caulk inside and out, where necessary, to keep heat from escaping.
- Inspect windows for cracks, broken glass or gaps. Repair or replace if needed.

LAWN, GARDEN AND DECK/BALCONY

- Trim overgrown branches back from the house and electrical wires to prevent iced-over or wind-swept branches from causing property damage or a power problem.
- Ensure rain or snow drains away from the house to avoid foundation problems. The dirt grade — around the exterior of your home — should slope away from the house. Add extra dirt to low areas, as necessary.
- Wrap outside faucets with covers to prevent freezing water damage.
- Shut off exterior faucets. Drain water from outdoor pipes, valves and sprinkler heads to protect against pipe bursts.
- Inspect decks or balcony for splintering and treat, if needed, to prevent further deterioration over the winter.
- Inspect outdoor lighting around the property. Good illumination will help minimize the chance of accidents on icy walkways at night.
- Check exterior handrails to make sure they're well secured.

HEATING, VENTILATING AND AIR CONDITIONING

- Check fireplace for drafts. If it's cold despite the damper being closed, consider installing a Chimney Balloon into the flue to air seal the area tightly.
- Clean or replace the air filter in your furnace for maximum efficiency and improved indoor air quality.
- Check that smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are in working order.
- Program thermostat to save on heating costs.
- Make sure fans are switched to the reverse or clockwise position, which will blow warm air down to the floor for enhanced energy efficiency and comfort.
- Flush hot water heater tanks to remove sediment, and check the pressure relief valve to make sure it's in proper working order.
- Examine exposed ducts in the attic, and crawl spaces, and use a sealant to plug up any leaks.

Done? Congratulations! You're officially ready for winter.

