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DESIGN • CONSTRUCTION • CABINETRY

Winter Home Maintenance Guide

A short seasonal checklist to help protect your home from cold weather, snow, ice and indoor moisture. Complete these checks at the start of winter and revisit them after heavy snowfall, major freeze-thaw cycles or extended cold snaps.

Your winter checklist

Outside your home

☐ Keep snow clear of gas meters and appliance intake and exhaust vents. Do not strike, cover or bury equipment.

☐ Keep basement windows, dryer vents and heat pump or HVAC clearances open as instructed.

☐ Watch for persistent icicles or ice dams. Do not climb onto an icy roof; arrange qualified help.

☐ Keep steps, walks and entries safely lit and clear. Choose de-icing products suitable for the surface.

☐ After freeze-thaw events, check for slippery drainage paths, damaged finishes and signs of water entry.

☐ Confirm downspouts remain connected and direct meltwater away from the foundation when conditions allow.

Inside your home

☐ Check heating and ventilation filters on schedule and keep supply and return grilles unobstructed.

☐ Monitor window condensation and indoor humidity before moisture damages trim, drywall or finishes.

☐ From a safe access point, look for unusual attic frost, staining or wet insulation.

☐ Check plumbing in cold areas for freezing risk. Keep warm air paths open around vulnerable pipes.

☐ Run water in little used fixtures and floor drains to maintain trap seals.

☐ Clean bathroom fan grilles, range hood filters and accessible appliance vents.

Make this your first priority. Your home needs clear ventilation paths all winter. Snow or ice blocking a fuel-burning appliance vent can create a serious safety risk.

WINTER COMFORT AND PROTECTION

Heating Ventilation and Moisture

Good airflow and moisture control support comfort, protect finishes and help equipment operate properly. Follow the instructions for your specific furnace, heat pump, humidifier and HRV or ERV.

Filters and airflow

- ☐ Inspect furnace, air handler and ventilation filters regularly. Clean or replace them when dirty or at the manufacturer's interval.
- ☐ Keep indoor registers, return grilles and exterior intake and exhaust hoods unobstructed.
- ☐ Clean only homeowner-serviceable HRV or ERV filters and cores, following power-off and reassembly instructions.

Condensation and humidity

- ☐ Use bathroom fans during bathing and continue until excess moisture clears. Use the range hood while cooking.
- ☐ If condensation collects on windows, review indoor humidity, ventilation and closed window coverings.
- ☐ Watch for musty odours, staining or damp materials. Persistent moisture needs prompt investigation.
- ☐ Maintain indoor temperature and humidity within the ranges recommended for your flooring, cabinetry and millwork.

Frozen pipes and water concerns

- ☐ Know where the main water shut-off and important fixture shut-offs are located. Keep them accessible.
- ☐ If a pipe freezes, do not use an open flame. If there is leakage or a risk of a split pipe, shut off the water if safe and contact a qualified plumber.
- ☐ Do not enter standing water near energized equipment or use electrical devices.
- ☐ Photograph water damage, contact your insurer when warranted and begin qualified drying promptly.

Carbon monoxide safety

Test and maintain carbon monoxide alarms as required and directed by the manufacturer. If an alarm sounds, follow its instructions and emergency guidance. Move to fresh air and call 911 or the fire department when directed. Do not search for the source yourself.

Never use fuel-burning equipment indoors. Do not operate barbecues, camp stoves, generators or other fuel-powered equipment inside the home or garage.

PLAN AHEAD

Winter Readiness and Service Record

Record important information now so it is easy to find during a storm, outage or urgent repair. Keep equipment manuals and recent service reports with this guide.

Before severe weather

- ☐ Keep flashlights, batteries, first-aid supplies, essential medications and phone charging options accessible.
- ☐ Plan for household medical, accessibility, pet and communication needs during an extended power outage.
- ☐ Know how to shut off water and where utility emergency numbers are posted.
- ☐ Review exterior vents after drifting snow and confirm exits remain usable.

Important information

Main water shut-off	_____
Furnace filter size	_____
Heating service provider	_____
Insurance and policy	_____

Winter maintenance record

Date	Observation or service	Follow up

When to contact CLAY

If a concern may relate to CLAY's completed work, document when it started and include clear photos. For urgent hazards or active damage, contact the appropriate emergency or service provider first, then notify CLAY.

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Important note This guide provides general information. Product instructions, project documents, current safety requirements and advice from qualified professionals take priority. Conditions and systems vary by home.