



DESIGN. CRAFT. PRESERVE.

THE WINTER READINESS GUIDE

Irrigation & Winter Readiness Checklist

Use this checklist between mid-September and late October to shield your landscape and irrigation investments from sub-zero freeze damage, pipe bursts, and frost heave.

IRRIGATION SYSTEM: BLOWOUT & BACKFLOW PREP

- ☐ **Main Water Isolation:** Locate and shut off the interior main water valve to the irrigation line in your basement or utility room. Tag the valve to prevent reopening during winter.
- ☐ **Commercial Air Blowout:** Schedule a high-volume air compressor blowout at 40–50 PSI between Sept 15 and Oct 15.
- ☐ **Backflow Assembly Care:** Drain the Pressure Vacuum Breaker or RPZ unit completely. Open test cocks and set internal ball valves to a 45-degree angle to prevent brass housing cracks.
- ☐ **Controller Shutdown:** Set your smart controller or timer to 'System Off' or 'Rain Mode' to keep program schedules intact while preventing valve activation during cold months.

WATER FEATURES: PONDS, FOUNTAINS & LINES

- ☐ **Pump Removal & Storage:** Pull submersible pumps, clean intake screens, and store pumps indoors in a bucket of water to keep internal rubber seals from drying out.
- ☐ **Basin & Line Drainage:** Drain decorative fountain basins and blow out water supply lines to prevent freeze expansion cracks in masonry or acrylic.
- ☐ **Pond De-Icer Installation:** Install a floating pond de-i-cer and aerator to maintain an open air hole for gas exchange if keeping fish outdoors.

HARDSCAPES & KITCHENS: OUTDOOR PROTECTION

- ☐ **Hose Bib Disconnection:** Disconnect all garden hoses from outdoor spigots so frost-free sillcocks can drain completely before freezing temperatures arrive.
- ☐ **Gas & Water Isolation:** Shut off gas and water supply lines to outdoor kitchens, bars, or sinks. Drain outdoor sink traps, faucets, and mini-fridges.
- ☐ **Joint Sand Inspection:** Sweep pavers clean of organic debris and replenish missing polymeric sand to prevent water intrusion and frost heave.

Irrigation Maintenance & Time Tracker

Complete this section over winter to stay ahead of the spring activation rush and clear service approvals early.

PRE-FREEZE PRIORITY CHECKLIST: CONFIRMATION

- ☐ **Commercial Irrigation Line Blowout Complete** (High-volume CFM evacuation performed)
- ☐ **Backflow Preventer Drained & Set to 45°** (Prevents trapped water brass expansion)
- ☐ **Outdoor Spigots Disconnected & Main Tagged** (Prevents basement pipe freeze bursts)
- ☐ **Outdoor Kitchen Water Lines Drained & Capped** (Protects valves and stainless appliances)

WINTERIZATION & SPRING TIMELINE: SCHEDULE

Phase	Target Date	Status / Notes
Main Water Isolation	Mid-Sept	Shut off interior irrigation supply valve & tag handle
System Blowout Service	Sept 15 – Oct 15	High-volume CFM air evacuation by Boulder Creek team
Backflow Freeze Prep	Mid-Oct	Open test cocks; position ball valves at 45° angle
Deep Ground Freeze	Nov – March	Soil freezes 40–60"; lines remain safe & empty underground
Spring System Activation	April / May	Re-pressurize lines, test backflow assembly, set controller

Is Your Investment Protected?

Don't let Minnesota's sub-zero frost catch your outdoor living investment unprepared. At Boulder Creek Outdoor Living, we'll completely evacuate your lines, safeguard your back flow assembly, and ensure a seamless spring startup across Duluth, the Iron Range, and North Shore.

Schedule your Autumn Irrigation Blowout today!



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