

## AB Southern Insurance Limited



**“Winterizing”  
Your Home Can  
Save You a Lot  
of Heartache**

### 1) Furnace Inspection

- Call an HVAC professional to inspect your furnace and clean ducts.
- Stock up on furnace filters and change them monthly (during the winter)
- Consider switching out your thermostat for a programmable thermostat.
- If your home is heated by a hot-water radiator, bleed the valves by opening them slightly and when water appears, close them.
- Remove all flammable material from the area surrounding your furnace.

### 2) Get the Fireplace Ready

- Cap or screen the top of the chimney to keep out rodents and birds.
- If the chimney hasn't been cleaned for a while, call a chimney sweep to remove soot and creosote.
- Buy firewood or chop wood. Store it in a dry place away from the exterior of your home.
- Inspect the fireplace damper for proper opening and closing.
- Check the mortar between bricks and tuck-point, if necessary.

### 3) Check the Exterior, Doors and Windows

- Inspect exterior for crevice cracks and exposed entry points around pipes; seal them.
- Use weather-stripping around doors to prevent cold air from entering the home and caulk windows.
- Replace cracked glass in windows and, if you end up replacing the entire window, prime and paint exposed wood.
- If your home has a basement, consider protecting its window wells by covering them with plastic shields.
- Switch out summer screens with glass replacements from storage. If you have storm windows, install them.

#### 4) Inspect Roof, Gutters & Downspouts

- **If your weather temperature will fall below 32 degrees in the winter, adding extra insulation to the attic will prevent warm air from creeping to your roof and causing ice dams.**
- **Check flashing to ensure water cannot enter the home.**
- **Replace worn roof shingles or tiles.**
- **Clean out the gutters and use a hose to spray water down the downspouts to clear away debris.**
- **Consider installing leaf guards on the gutters or extensions on the downspouts to direct water away from the home.**

#### 5) Service Weather-Specific Equipment

- **Drain gas from lawnmowers.**
- **Service or tune-up snow blowers.**
- **Replace worn rakes and snow shovels.**
- **Clean, dry and store summer gardening equipment.**
- **Sharpen ice choppers and buy bags of ice-melt / sand.**

#### 6) Check Foundations

- **Rake away all debris and edible vegetation from the foundation.**
- **Seal up entry points to keep small animals from crawling under the house.**
- **Tuck-point or seal foundation cracks. Mice can slip through space as thin as a dime.**
- **Inspect sill plates for dry rot or pest infestation.**
- **Secure crawlspace entrances.**

#### 7) Install Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors

- **Some cities require a smoke detector in every room.**
- **Buy extra smoke detector batteries and change them when daylight savings ends.**
- **Install a carbon monoxide detector near your furnace and / or water heater.**
- **Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to make sure they work.**
- **Buy a fire extinguisher or replace an extinguisher older than 10 years.**

#### 8) Prevent Plumbing Freezes

- **Locate your water main in the event you need to shut it off in an emergency.**
- **Drain all garden hoses.**
- **Insulate exposed plumbing pipes.**
- **Drain air conditioner pipes and, if your AC has a water shut-off valve, turn it off.**
- **If you go on vacation, leave the heat on, set to at least 55 degrees.**



## 9) Prepare Landscaping & Outdoor Surfaces

- **Trim trees if branches hang too close to the house or electrical wires.**
- **Ask a gardener when your trees should be pruned to prevent winter injury.**
- **Plant spring flower bulbs and lift bulbs that cannot winter over such as dahlias in areas where the ground freezes.**
- **Seal driveways, brick patios and wood decks.**
- **Don't automatically remove dead vegetation from gardens as some provide attractive scenery in an otherwise dreary, snow-drenched yard.**
- **Move sensitive potted plants indoors or to a sheltered area.**

## 10) Prepare an Emergency Kit

- **Buy indoor candles and matches / lighter for use during a power shortage.**
- **Find the phone numbers for your utility companies and tape them near your phone or inside the phone book.**
- **Buy a battery back-up to protect your computer and sensitive electronic equipment.**
- **Store extra bottled water and non-perishable food supplies (including pet food, if you have a pet), blankets and a first-aid kit in a dry and easy-to-access location.**
- **Prepare an evacuation plan in the event of an emergency.**