

# PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR WINTER WEATHER



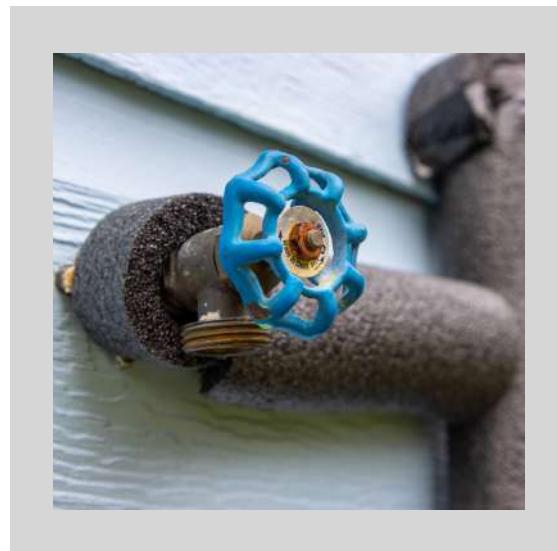
When winter's icy grip takes hold, your home's plumbing and HVAC systems face the toughest season of the year. From preventing costly pipe bursts to ensuring your HVAC system runs at peak efficiency, we'll walk you through everything you need to know to winter-proof your home.

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# UNDERSTANDING WINTER PLUMBING RISKS

Before diving into prevention strategies, it's essential to understand the primary risks your plumbing faces during winter:

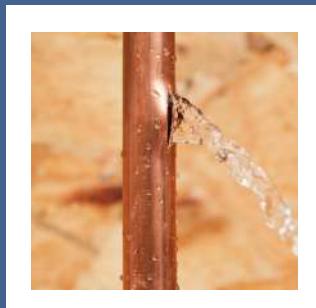


**Thermal Shock:** Rapid temperature changes can stress pipes and joints.

**Reduced Efficiency:** Cold temperatures can affect the performance of water heaters and other appliances.

**Frozen Pipes:** When water freezes, it expands, potentially causing pipes to burst.

**Increased Pressure:** Cold weather can increase the pressure within your plumbing system.



## DID YOU KNOW...

*A 1/8-inch crack in a pipe can leak up to 250 gallons of water per day, causing significant damage to your home.*

# INSULATING YOUR PIPES

Insulating pipes helps maintain water temperature and helps prevent bursts, avoiding expensive repairs. Follow these steps to protect your plumbing:

## **Identify Vulnerable Areas:**

Focus on pipes in unheated areas like basements, attics, crawl spaces, well houses, and exterior walls.

## **Choose the Right Insulation:**

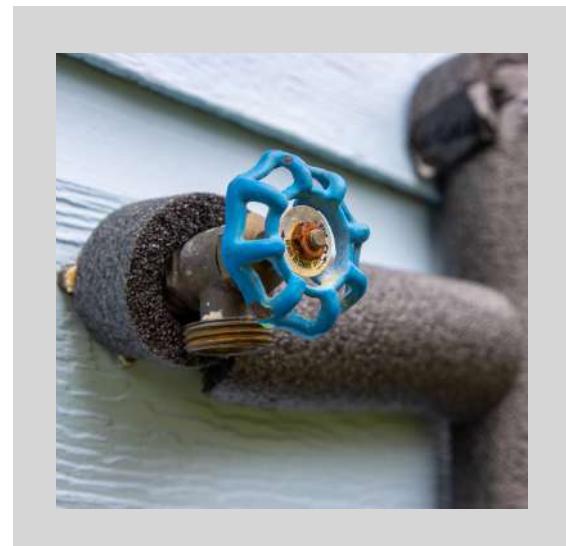
Depending on the pipe material, use foam pipe sleeves or heat tape, with 7/8 inches of thickness.

## **Insulate Properly:**

Ensure you have the correct insulation for your pipes. There are a variety of sizes and thicknesses to choose from.

## **Don't Forget Valves and Fittings:**

These areas are often overlooked but equally important to insulate.



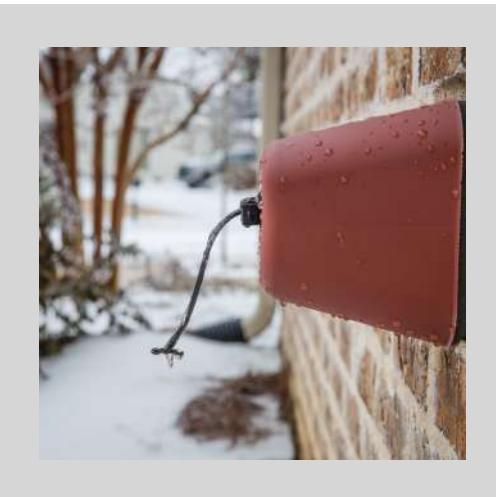
## **PRO-TIP:**

*For an eco-friendly option, consider using natural fiber insulation materials like sheep's wool or recycled denim.*



# PROTECTING OUTDOOR FIXTURES

Outdoor plumbing elements are particularly vulnerable to winter damage. Take these tips to protect them:



## **Installing Faucet Covers:**

These work by trapping heat that radiates from indoor plumbing to the outdoor spigot.

## **Disconnect and Drain Garden Hoses:**

Store them indoors to prevent freezing and cracking.

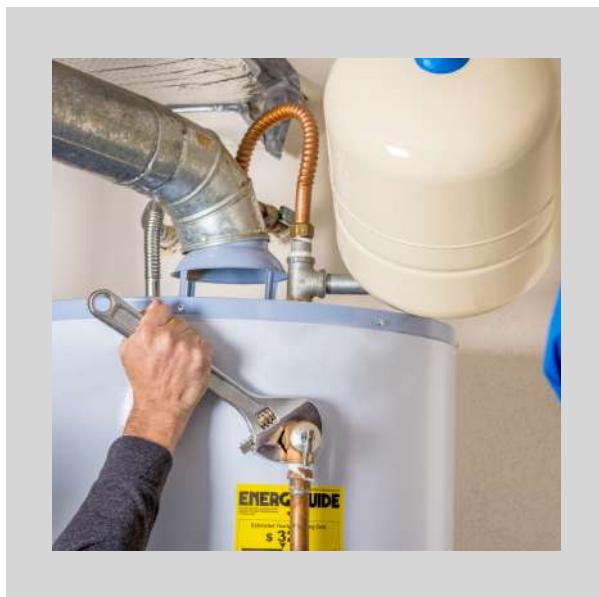
## **Install Frost-Free Sillcocks:**

Replace standard outdoor faucets with frost-free versions for added protection.

**Protect Sprinkler Systems:** Blow out backflow and irrigation lines with air.

# MAINTAINING YOUR WATER HEATER

Your water heater works harder during winter. Ensure it's up to the task with these maintenance steps:



**Adjust the Temperature:** Set it to 120°F (49°C) for optimal performance and safety.

**Insulate the Tank:** Use a water heater blanket to reduce heat loss and improve efficiency. For gas heaters, **do not** cover the gas chamber or bottom of the water heater. If you need help, don't hesitate and contact us.

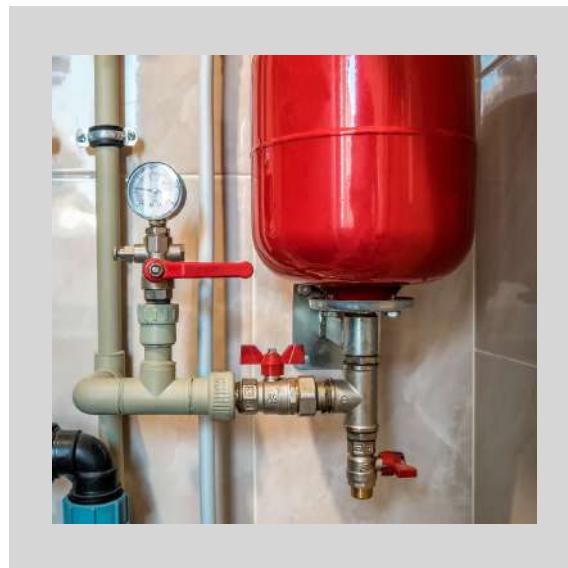
**Flush the Tank:** Remove sediment buildup to improve efficiency.

**Check the Expansion Tank:** Ensure the expansion tank is functioning properly to manage pressure buildup and protect your system.

**Pressure Relief Valve:** Recommended to be tested twice a year, and when testing just a reminder, the water is **HOT**. If you're unsure or unable to perform this, please contact **Patriot Plumbing Heating and Cooling**.

# BENEFITS OF HAVING AN EXPANSION TANK

An expansion tank is essential for managing pressure fluctuations in your water heater.



As the water heats up, it expands by approximately 4%. This creates additional pressure in your plumbing system.

Without an expansion tank to absorb the pressure, pipes, and fixtures may become over-pressurized, leading to potential leaks or even burst pipes. By reducing stress on your plumbing system, an expansion tank helps prevent costly wintertime repairs and keeps your system running safely and efficiently.

# PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES

Preparation is key to managing unexpected plumbing and heating emergencies. Be prepared with these tips to ensure everyone is on the same page:



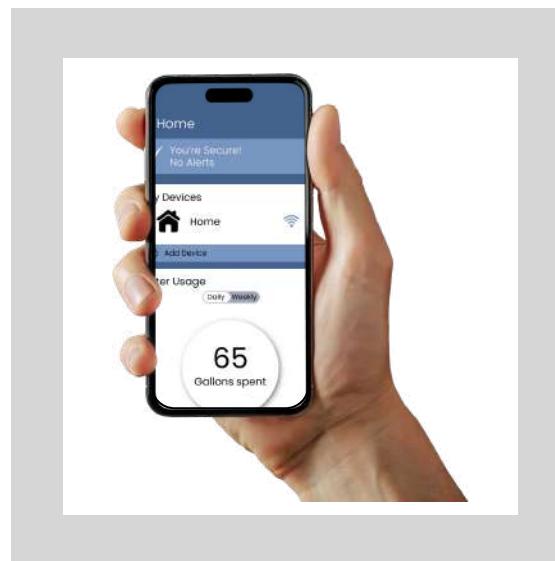
**Locate Your Main Water Shut-Off Valve:** Everyone in your household should know where it is and how to use it.

**Create an Emergency Kit:** Include items like a flashlight, adjustable wrench, pliers, water meter key, and pipe repair tape.

**Know Your Plumber:** Keep the contact information of a reliable emergency plumbing service handy. We'd be honored if you'd keep our number handy for those emergency situations **(509) 262-5811**.

# SMART HOME SOLUTIONS FOR WINTER PLUMBING

Preparation is key to managing unexpected plumbing and heating emergencies. Be prepared with these tips to ensure everyone is on the same page:



## **Smart Water Monitors:**

Measures water consumption and pressure, early leak detection, abnormal water flow, and automatically sends alerts to you.

## **WiFi-Enabled Shut-Off Valves:**

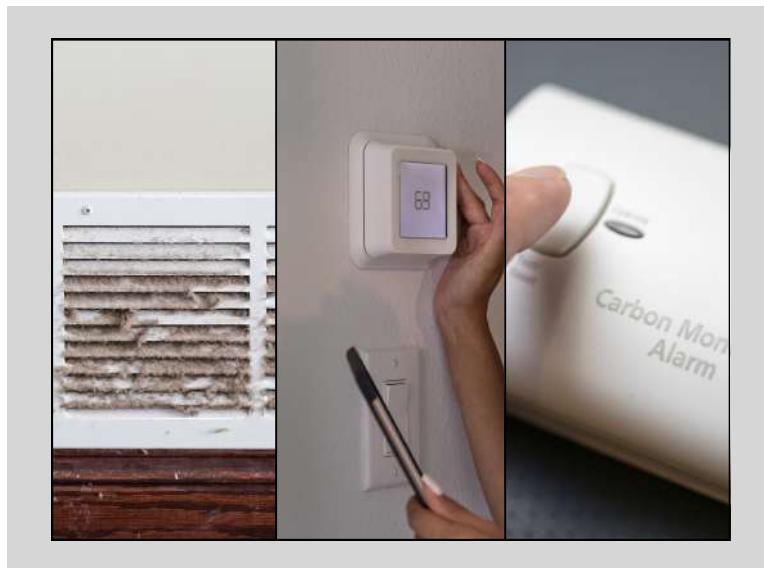
Easily able to turn off the water supply without physically turning off the main water valve when necessary.

## **Temperature Sensors:**

Get alerted when temperatures change in your home before a disaster strikes, and take the necessary steps.

# PREPARING YOUR HVAC SYSTEM FOR WINTER

Your HVAC system requires attention to operate efficiently throughout winter. Follow these tips to ensure it's ready:



## Clean and Seal Ductwork:

Enhance efficiency and air quality.

## Replace Air Filter:

A dirty air filter restricts airflow and makes your system work harder.

## Fix Drafts:

Drafts around doors and windows make your heating system work harder and increase your energy bill.

## Test Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Detector:

Replace the batteries at least annually

## Furnace Care:

Regular inspections and maintenance of furnace components prevent breakdowns. Older furnaces are less reliable and less efficient. Depending on the type, their lifespan can range from 15 to 30 years.

## Calibrate Your Thermostat:

Your thermostat should be calibrated yearly. Incorrect calibrations can be caused by dust or debris. Consider upgrading to a programmable or smart thermostat.

# PROFESSIONAL INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE

When in doubt, always consult with a professional. While DIY preparations are essential, nothing beats the expertise of a professional. Here's why having a professional technician is important to call:

- 1** Schedule an **annual** pre-winter plumbing inspection.
- 2** Have your HVAC system checked to ensure it's running **efficiently**.
- 3** Consider **upgrading** older plumbing fixtures to more efficient, winter-resistant models.



## Expert Insight:

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. A professional inspection can identify potential issues before they become costly emergencies."

- Hal Signett, General Manager

# SCHEDULE YOUR PRE-WINTER PLUMBING INSPECTION TODAY!

Preparing your plumbing for winter doesn't have to be a daunting task. By following this guide, you're taking proactive steps to protect your home and avoid costly repairs. Remember, if you're ever in doubt, it's always best to consult with a professional plumber.

**SCHEDULE YOUR PRE-WINTER PLUMBING  
INSPECTION TODAY!**  
**(509) 262-5811**

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**Heating and Cooling**, your trusted partner in  
plumbing and HVAC services.

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