

Getting Ready for Winter

"Its that time of year". Time to start thinking about cold weather and how mother nature will affect your community. There are four areas you should be concerned about when getting ready for winter.

These four areas are:

- Gutters
- Exterior Faucets
- Weather Stripping
- Sidewalks/ Drives

Gutters

Most gutters are designed to take water from the roof and move it away from the building foundation. During the summer months leaves and other trash build up inside the gutter and start plugging the downspouts. If left unclean, snow and ice could build up and freeze causing water to back up under the shingles or overflow the gutter and run down the foundation walls. Both can cause costly interior repairs, which could have been avoided by cleaning out the gutters before winter.

Exterior Faucets

Garden hoses if allowed at your community should be removed prior to freezing weather. An exterior faucet is made to drain itself when the hose is removed which will prevent any damage to the faucet. When a hose freezes on an exterior faucet the faucet will freeze inside causing a split in the pipe back inside the wall of the building. When someone tries to use it in the spring you will end up with a flood of water inside the wall of the building. Again damage can be avoided if all hoses are removed before winter weather arrives.

Weather Stripping

Windows and doors can be a big source of heat loss if the seal around them is bad. Weather stripping should be checked each year to insure there is no gaps, which would allow the cold air to pass through. Most window and door companies sell replacement weather stripping. Another source for weather stripping is the local hardware store, which could sell you a generic type that will fit most windows and doors. For little cost you could save big in heating bills.

Sidewalks / Drives

Your sidewalks and driveways come into play when it starts to snow. If you have areas where water sits after a rain this could become slippery and cause people to fall. If replacement of these areas are out of the question you should have a plan for checking them and keeping them clear after each snowfall. Keep a time log of when the area was cleaned and if salt was used. This will help to cut down on the chance of people getting hurt.

Each property is a little different, and you may have other areas of concern when getting ready for winter. These four will help you get started in preparing for winter and should save your community some money.

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