



Preparing Your Waterfront Cottage for The Season

Preparing your cottage for the upcoming season involves several essential steps to guarantee that your waterfront retreat is ready for summer enjoyment and offers family and friends a safe and comfortable haven. Awareness of potential hazards is key to ensuring a secure and enjoyable experience for everyone involved in water activities.



Property Inspection: Begin by thoroughly inspecting your entire cottage, covering its exterior and interior, as well as the surrounding grounds. Look for any signs of damage, deterioration, or pest infestations that may have occurred during the off-season.

Utilities Check: Ensure that all utilities, including electricity, water, and gas, are properly working. Test lighting fixtures, electrical outlets, plumbing fixtures, and gas appliances to promptly identify and address any issues.

Landscaping and Yard Maintenance: Remove overgrown vegetation by trimming and mowing the lawn. Remove any dead or hazardous trees or branches to ensure safety. Clear pathways, stairs, and outdoor seating areas to make them safe and accessible.

Pest Control: Prevent pests such as insects, rodents, and wildlife from entering the cottage by sealing any cracks or gaps in the exterior walls, doors, and windows. Consider using pest deterrents or traps to keep unwanted visitors at bay.

Deep Cleaning the Interior: Give the interior of your cottage a thorough cleaning, paying attention to floors, walls, windows, and furniture. Remove any accumulated dust, cobwebs, or mould, and ensure all surfaces are sanitized and ready for use.

Appliance and Equipment Testing: Test all appliances, such as the refrigerator, stove, oven, microwave, dishwasher, and washer/dryer, to ensure they are in good working condition. Check gas lines, propane tanks, and fuel levels for grills, generators, and other outdoor equipment to ensure they are ready for use.

Stocking Supplies: Restock essential supplies, including cleaning products, toiletries, linens, towels, and kitchen utensils. Check your inventory of pantry items, canned goods, and non-perishable food items, replenishing them to ensure you have everything you need for your stay.

Inspect Safety Equipment: Check all safety equipment, including fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and first aid kits, and replenish them as needed.

Waterfront Preparation Checklist

1. **Inspect, Clean, and Prepare Waterfront Area:** Clear debris and vegetation from the waterfront area, including the shoreline, dock, and boat launch. Inspect the dock for any damage or deterioration and promptly address any issues to ensure its structural integrity and safety.
2. **Check for Environmental Changes:** Assess the environment surrounding your waterfront property for any changes, such as erosion, alterations to the bottom, or debris from the winter season.
3. **Check Water Quality:** Assess the water quality to ensure it meets safety standards for swimming and recreational activities.
4. **Beware of Currents and Undertows:** Remain cautious of currents and undertows in open water, as they can pose significant risks to swimmers and boaters.
5. **Assess Water Depth and Temperature:** Before swimming in open bodies of water, evaluate the depth and temperature to ensure a safe and comfortable experience.
6. **Inspect Safety Equipment:** Check all safety equipment, including fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and first aid kits, and replenish them as needed.
7. **Verify that life-saving equipment,** such as life jackets and flotation devices, are easily accessible and in good condition.

- Always have a life ring or throwbag within easy reach for emergency situations.
- Double-check that your boat or canoe is equipped with all necessary safety gear.



Review your Waterfront Safety Guidelines

Take the time to review safety guidelines and emergency procedures with family members and guests. Cover essential topics such as water safety rules, fire and wildfire safety protocols, and evacuation procedures. Establishing clear guidelines for water activities is crucial to ensure everyone's safety and enjoyment.

- 1. Define Access Rules:** Determine specific times and locations for family members and guests to engage in water activities. Establishing clear boundaries is essential for accident prevention, responsible enjoyment of water resources, and being a good neighbour.
- 2. Maintain Constant Supervision:** Keep a vigilant eye on children, ensuring they are always Within Arm's Reach when near the water. Drowning incidents can happen suddenly and quietly, highlighting the critical need for continuous supervision.
- 3. Utilize Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs):** Ensure that children and weaker swimmers wear properly fitted PFDs during outdoor water activities. These devices provide added buoyancy and protection against accidental falls or immersion.
- 4. Establish Equipment Rules:** Set guidelines for using recreational equipment such as canoes, boats, and inflatables. Emphasize the importance of safe usage and proper stowing, particularly for inflatables, which can be carried away by wind or currents.
- 5. Foot-First Entries:** Encourage everyone to enter the water feet-first to reduce the risk of injury. Natural bodies of water may hide hazards like rocks and debris, requiring cautious entry. Additionally, seasonal variations in water depth and conditions demand heightened awareness.
- 6. Consider Footwear:** Encourage using water or boating shoes to protect feet from sharp objects and improve traction on uneven surfaces. This simple precaution can significantly reduce the risk of injuries during water activities.