



## Winter Prep Guide for Lake Tahoe Homes

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### 1. Heating System Check

- ☐ **Furnace Inspection**
    - ☐ Schedule annual furnace tune-up with an HVAC professional.
    - ☐ Replace or clean furnace filters.
    - ☐ Test thermostat for accuracy.
    - ☐ Check for unusual noises or odors when the furnace is running.
    - ☐ Inspect and clean ducts for blockages or dirt.
  - ☐ **Space Heater Safety**
    - ☐ Test space heaters for proper operation.
    - ☐ Ensure heaters have automatic shut-off features to prevent overheating.
    - ☐ Check electrical cords for fraying or damage.
  - ☐ **Fireplace Maintenance**
    - ☐ Hire a chimney sweep to clean out flues and chimneys.
    - ☐ Check fireplace dampers and vents for proper operation.
    - ☐ Stock firewood in a dry, accessible location.
  - ☐ **Programmable Thermostats**
    - ☐ Install or verify that programmable thermostats are set for energy-efficient heating cycles.
    - ☐ Set minimum temperature thresholds to prevent pipe freezing.
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### 2. Insulation and Weatherproofing

- ☐ **Window and Door Sealing**
  - ☐ Check for drafts around windows and doors.
  - ☐ Install weatherstripping or caulk gaps around window frames.
  - ☐ Replace damaged or worn-out weatherstripping on exterior doors.
  - ☐ Consider using insulating window film for added thermal protection.
- ☐ **Pipe Insulation**

- ☐ Insulate exposed pipes in basements, crawl spaces, and attics.
    - ☐ Use foam pipe sleeves or heat tape on pipes in unheated areas.
    - ☐ Install insulation around water heaters, particularly in cold locations.
  - ☐ **Attic and Basement Insulation**
    - ☐ Inspect attic insulation for compression or gaps and replenish as needed.
    - ☐ Check basement insulation, especially around windows and doors.
    - ☐ Ensure adequate ventilation to prevent condensation and ice buildup.
  - ☐ **Garage Door Insulation**
    - ☐ Insulate garage doors, especially if the garage is attached to living spaces.
    - ☐ Install weather seals along the bottom and sides of the garage door.
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### 3. Gutter and Roof Preparation

- ☐ **Clean Gutters**
    - ☐ Remove leaves, pine needles, and debris from gutters and downspouts.
    - ☐ Ensure downspouts direct water away from the foundation.
    - ☐ Install gutter guards to prevent clogging (if necessary).
  - ☐ **Check Roof for Leaks**
    - ☐ Inspect shingles or roofing material for damage (missing, cracked, or loose shingles).
    - ☐ Check flashing around chimneys, vents, and skylights for gaps.
    - ☐ Look for signs of moisture in the attic, such as mold or wet insulation.
  - ☐ **Snow Guards/Barriers**
    - ☐ Install snow guards on sloped roofs to prevent snow slides.
  - ☐ **Gutter Heating Systems**
    - ☐ Consider installing gutter heating systems to prevent ice dams.
    - ☐ Test the system for functionality before heavy snowfall.
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### 4. Plumbing Preparation

- ☐ **Drain Outdoor Pipes**
  - ☐ Disconnect and drain garden hoses.
  - ☐ Shut off water to exterior faucets.
  - ☐ Install insulated faucet covers over outdoor spigots.
- ☐ **Install Heat Tape**
  - ☐ Wrap heat tape around vulnerable pipes in basements, crawl spaces, and attics.
  - ☐ Plug in and test the heat tape to ensure it activates automatically during freezing conditions.
- ☐ **Water Main Shutoff Knowledge**

- ☐ Ensure all property managers and guests know the location of the main water shutoff valve.
  - ☐ Place signage or labels near the shutoff valve for easy identification.
  - ☐ Test the valve to ensure it operates smoothly.
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## 5. Snow and Ice Management

- ☐ **Snow Removal Contracts**
    - ☐ Confirm contracts with snow removal services for driveways, walkways, and roofs.
    - ☐ Set service thresholds (e.g., when more than 3 inches of snow accumulates).
    - ☐ Ensure service includes removal of heavy snow from flat roofs to prevent structural damage.
  - ☐ **Stock Salt/Sand**
    - ☐ Stock salt, sand, or non-toxic de-icing products in areas accessible to guests and staff.
    - ☐ Keep snow shovels and ice scrapers handy at entrances for guest use.
  - ☐ **Roof Snow Load Monitoring**
    - ☐ Install roof snow load monitoring devices or hire professionals to check roof snow loads periodically.
    - ☐ Establish a snow removal plan if snow accumulation exceeds safe levels.
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## 6. Emergency and Backup Systems

- ☐ **Backup Generator**
    - ☐ Test the generator for proper operation and refill fuel reserves.
    - ☐ Ensure the generator is connected to critical systems like heating and refrigeration.
    - ☐ Place the generator in a well-ventilated area away from windows and doors.
  - ☐ **Emergency Kits**
    - ☐ Prepare emergency kits for guests that include:
      - ☐ Flashlights, extra batteries, and a battery-powered radio.
      - ☐ Blankets, non-perishable food, bottled water, and first-aid supplies.
    - ☐ Place kits in accessible locations with clear signage.
  - ☐ **Carbon Monoxide and Smoke Detectors**
    - ☐ Replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
    - ☐ Test all alarms to ensure they are functional, especially near fireplaces and gas heaters.
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## 7. Vehicle and Access Prep

- ☐ **Driveway Markers**
    - ☐ Install reflective markers along driveway edges for easy snowplow navigation.
  - ☐ **Vehicle Winterization**
    - ☐ Winterize any vehicles on the property, including:
      - ☐ Adding antifreeze, checking tire pressure, and changing to snow tires.
      - ☐ Ensuring emergency kits are in each vehicle (flashlights, blankets, flares, etc.).
  - ☐ **Salt Storage for Guests**
    - ☐ Provide guests with easy access to salt or sand for personal use.
    - ☐ Place buckets of salt near outdoor stairways, driveways, and other high-traffic areas.
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## 8. Home Monitoring and Security

- ☐ **Smart Thermostats and Sensors**
    - ☐ Install smart thermostats to monitor and control temperatures remotely.
    - ☐ Set temperature alerts to notify property managers if the indoor temperature drops below safe levels.
    - ☐ Install water leak detection sensors near plumbing fixtures and pipes.
  - ☐ **Security Cameras**
    - ☐ Check and update security camera systems to monitor for any winter-related damage or suspicious activity.
    - ☐ Ensure cameras have uninterrupted power sources, especially during storms.
  - ☐ **Leak Detectors**
    - ☐ Place water leak detectors in kitchens, bathrooms, basements, and around water heaters.
    - ☐ Ensure the detectors send alerts to property managers in case of leaks.
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## 9. Guest Comfort and Amenities

- ☐ **Blankets and Space Heaters**
  - ☐ Provide extra blankets, comforters, and space heaters for guest use.
  - ☐ Clearly label heaters with usage instructions and safety warnings.
- ☐ **Firewood Supply**
  - ☐ If the property has a wood-burning fireplace or stove:
    - ☐ Stockpile enough firewood for the entire winter season.
    - ☐ Provide starter logs, fire starters, and instructions for safe use.
- ☐ **Winter Essentials for Guests**
  - ☐ Equip properties with snow shovels, ice scrapers, and de-icing products.
  - ☐ Leave clear instructions for guests on how to manage snow and ice during their stay.

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## 10. Insurance and Documentation

- ☐ **Review Insurance Policies**
  - ☐ Check homeowners insurance for coverage related to:
    - ☐ Frozen pipes, roof damage from snow, and guest injury liability on icy surfaces.
  - ☐ Update policies if necessary to ensure comprehensive winter coverage.
- ☐ **Property Inventory**
  - ☐ Create or update a detailed inventory of household items, appliances, and furniture.
  - ☐ Take photographs of the property's interior and exterior for insurance purposes.