



WINTER HOME PREP CHECKLIST

Rapid Restoration Team

Winter Home Prep Checklist

Simple steps to help prevent leaks, water damage, and mold.

1. Quick Whole-Home Walkthrough

- ☐ Walk each room and look for new stains on ceilings or walls
- ☐ Check for musty smells, especially in corners and closets
- ☐ Note any windows with heavy condensation or frost buildup

2. Plumbing & Pipes

- ☐ Disconnect and store all outdoor hoses
- ☐ Turn off and drain outdoor spigots (use interior shutoff valves if you have them)
- ☐ Insulate any exposed pipes in unheated areas (garage, crawlspace, basement, exterior walls)
- ☐ Check under sinks for slow drips, damp wood, or discoloration
- ☐ During extreme cold, open cabinet doors under sinks on exterior walls
- ☐ Consider letting faucets drip slightly overnight during deep freezes

3. Basement, Crawlspace & Sump Pump

- ☐ Walk the perimeter of your basement and check walls/floors for dampness, staining, or flaking paint
- ☐ Smell for musty or earthy odors, especially in corners and storage areas
- ☐ Make sure your sump pump is plugged in and the pit is clear of debris
- ☐ Test the sump pump by carefully pouring water into the pit and confirming it turns on
- ☐ Check that the discharge line outside is not blocked, frozen, or draining back toward the house
- ☐ Elevate stored items on shelves or pallets, not directly on the floor

4. Roof, Gutters & Outside Drainage

- ☐ Clean gutters and downspouts so water can flow freely
- ☐ Confirm downspouts extend at least 3–6 feet away from the foundation
- ☐ Look for missing, curled, or damaged roof shingles (from the ground or photos)

- ❑ Check that window wells are clear of leaves and debris
- ❑ Make sure grading around the home gently slopes away from the foundation

5. Bathrooms, Kitchen & Laundry

- ❑ Inspect around toilets, tubs, and showers for soft flooring, gaps in caulk, or staining
- ❑ Reseal or re-caulk areas where caulk is cracked, missing, or moldy
- ❑ Run bathroom exhaust fans during and after showers (15–20 minutes)
- ❑ Check washer hoses for bulges, cracks, or leaks
- ❑ Make sure the laundry drain is clear and the area around the washer is dry

6. Heating, Humidity & Ventilation

- ❑ Replace or clean your furnace filter
- ❑ Keep indoor humidity around 30–50% (use a hygrometer if you have one)
- ❑ Use a dehumidifier in damp basements if humidity runs high
- ❑ Watch for persistent condensation on windows or walls and adjust humidity/ventilation
- ❑ Ensure supply and return vents aren't blocked by furniture or rugs

7. In Case of a Leak or Burst Pipe

- ❑ Make sure everyone in the home knows where the main water shutoff is
- ❑ Label the main shutoff valve and any important secondary shutoffs
- ❑ Keep a basic emergency kit handy: towels, mop, bucket, flashlight, and a small wet/dry vac, if you have one
- ❑ Save contact info for your plumber, restoration company, and insurance in your phone
- ❑ Take photos right away if you find water, and note the date and time you first noticed it

Call Rapid Restoration Team When:

- There's more than a small puddle on the basement floor
- Water is touching walls, baseboards, cabinets, or built-in shelving
- The sump pump failed or you're not sure what caused the water
- You smell something musty or see signs of mold
- You need photos, readings, and documentation for an insurance claim

Rapid Restoration Team

Your local Chicagoland water damage & mold specialists. *We help homeowners and businesses with water, mold, and clean-up so you don't have to figure it out alone.*

 www.RapidRestorationIL.com

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