



First Freeze Home Checklist

Finish outdoor water jobs before the first forecast night at or below 32°F, then protect pipes before deep cold.

Before the first freeze: outdoor water

- ☐ Disconnect, drain, and store every garden hose.
- ☐ Close indoor shutoffs to outdoor faucets, then open the outside faucet to drain.
- ☐ Put an insulated cover on exposed outdoor faucets (hose bibs).
- ☐ Shut off and drain sprinkler lines, or book a professional blowout.
- ☐ Empty and store rain barrels, fountains, and birdbaths that can crack.

Before deep cold: pipes inside

- ☐ Insulate exposed pipe in the garage, crawl space, attic, or unheated basement.
- ☐ Find the main water shutoff and make sure it turns.
- ☐ Keep garage doors closed if water lines run through the garage.
- ☐ On very cold nights, open sink cabinets on exterior walls.
- ☐ In very cold weather, let a faucet served by exposed pipe drip.

Heat, vents, and alarms

- ☐ Have the furnace or boiler serviced and put in a clean filter.
- ☐ Keep the thermostat at the same setting day and night during deep cold.
- ☐ Find the furnace intake and exhaust vents so snow can be cleared from them.
- ☐ Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.

If you will be away

- ☐ Keep the heat on and set no lower than 55°F.
- ☐ Ask someone to check the house during a cold stretch or power outage.
- ☐ For a long trip, shut off the main water and drain the lines.

If a pipe freezes

Never thaw a pipe with an open flame. Keep the faucet open and use a hair dryer, heating pad, or hot towels.

If a pipe bursts, shut off the main water valve and call a licensed plumber.

NOTES