

# Winter Maintenance Ideas for Safe and Warm Homes

Winter is the season when people cozy up indoors. The winter season evokes thoughts of comfort food and curling up in front of the fire or television. Home becomes the preferred comfortable space for the whole family during long winter months. This is why it's so important to ensure your home is in a good state of repair this time of year.

Here are 5 tips for you and your clients to properly maintain your homes this winter.

## **1. Keep your house or apartment building warm and prevent costly heat loss**

The first thing is to ensure that your building's heat source is in working order. Ideally, your heating system should be serviced annually by a qualified professional. If it's new, ask them to check if systems were properly installed. Replace furnace air filters at the beginning of the winter season. Clogged air filters slow a furnace down causing it to use more energy and run less efficiently.

Next, make sure caulking around windows and doors are in good shape and replace damaged glass panes on windows and doors. Another way to minimise heat loss is by installing storm doors (where applicable).

## **2. Avoid frozen pipes**

Never turn the heat off completely during the winter. Maintain adequate temperatures and air circulation throughout the house or building. If you are leaving for a prolonged period, make sure a family member or friend can check that all is in working order.

## **3. Watch out for snow accumulation**

It is very easy to lose control of your property if the snow is not removed quickly after a storm. This applies to the front of the building, all air intakes, exhaust vents and any electrical appliance located outside.

Large amounts of heavy snow should be removed from the roof regularly. A snow rake is a useful tool for this purpose. For safety, you may want to hire a professional to do it for you.

## **4. Keep fire safety in mind!**

Home fires tend to increase in the winter months. The main reasons are a malfunction of the heating system or a fireplace that is left unattended. Fireplaces and chimneys need regular cleanings to remain safe and effective. Also, check all emergency exits and ensure they are unobstructed. Make sure fire extinguishers are maintained and kept in easily accessible locations.

## **5. Maintain smoke and carbon monoxide detectors**

It is very important to regularly test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and check their batteries. This is especially important in the winter, when we keep the windows shut and typically use wood stoves and fireplaces more often. (Make it a habit to change the batteries at the beginning of every season.)

Home maintenance can take some time and effort. The time you spend protecting your property will make it more comfortable for you or your tenants. It will also avoid costly problems in the long run.

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