

Plumbing Tips From Wayne's Plumbing

Winterizing

- Disconnect outside water hoses. If left connected, water in the hoses can back-freeze and expand causing faucets and connecting pipes inside your home to freeze and break.
- Make sure outside faucets aren't dripping or leaking. Be aware that when pipes freeze, water pressure builds causing cracks - no matter if the pipe is made of plastic, copper or steel.
- If your home has any outside faucets such as outdoor bar sinks or small outdoor kitchens, turn their cutoffs off and drain the lines to prevent pipes freezing.
- Check the temperature setting on your water heater's thermostat. Set at 120°F for optimum performance.
- When leaving home for extended periods, shut off the main water valve and drain the system by opening faucets at the highest and lowest points of the house.
- If you have a sink faucet that is on the outside wall, leave the cabinet doors open to allow heat from the room to keep the pipes warm on an outside wall.

Caution! These tips are intended for homes that will be inhabited throughout the winter months. Additional steps should be taken to winterize vacation properties that will be abandoned or left unattended for weeks or months at a time. Seek professional help for winterizing such properties.

Cleaning

- Any toilet cleaning products that are designed to go into the tank are a definite NO. The chlorine that is in the cleaning products eat away the plastic parts and flapper inside the tank, causing parts to become brittle and start leaking sooner than normal. Some of the products such as the "Blue Globes" start breaking apart and get stuck in the small holes of the toilet bowl causing lack of water flow to flush the waste.
- If your shower head doesn't have the same pressure or water flow that it use to have and some of the small nozzles on the head aren't spraying or are spraying in a different direction then the rest of the nozzles, it may be caused by a calcium build-up. An easy solution to the problem would be to take a small nylon nail brush and scrub the nozzles while the water is running. Another suggestion would be to use a Ziploc baggy with warm water and a small amount vinegar in it and place it over the shower head using a rubber band wrapped around the top of the bag, behind the head to hold it into place. (Warning: Don't leave it on too long, the acidity of the vinegar may start to eat the finish off your shower head. Not recommended for all situations)
- If you have a slow drain or have a clogged drain. Do not use products containing Acid or Sodium Hydroxide. Try to stick with Enzymatic Bacteria that are safe for your pipes and the environment.