

# Condo Insights

## **#50 An End of Season Checklist for Shore Condo and Second Home Owners.**

It's time to plan and prepare for the off-season. Check with your association for any specific rules, regulations, policies and procedures regarding preparing your condo for the off-season.

For your building, watch for branches and leaves that could break or clog gutters. Do this work along with the grounds and landscaping cleanup and irrigation system winterization.

Fall is the time to clean and winterize pipes—anything having to do with water should be looked at, including buttoning up any swimming pools.

Make sure drains and storm drainage areas are clean and free from debris. If you have a sump-pump, make sure it is working. Check any battery-backups.

Check sidewalks and driveways for cracks. Check condition of stairs and supporting structures.

Inspect, repair and clean all outdoor equipment, fixtures or furnishings before they are put away. Cover any grills. Disconnect any natural gas or propane lines.

Do not use outside balconies as a storage area. If you are away for an extended period of time remove furniture and décor from the balcony.

Screens should be removed from windows. Typically, this should be done by end of October, and screens should remain off until end of March.

Maintain interior temperatures to a minimum temperature to prevent freezing pipes and / or damage from freezing pipes. If you leave your thermostat set at 55 degrees and automatic, the HVAC unit will only run when the room temperature drops below 55 degrees.

Drain your water lines. The water supply should be turned off at the main shut-off valve. Open all faucets, showers and hose bibs to drain the pipes after the main valve is shut-off. The water supply to outside showers should be turned off and lines drained. Consider water sensor alarms that detect presence of water where there should be none. Some are even Wi-Fi enabled.

Replace aging water heaters, plastic ice maker lines, inspect washer hoses, and clean dryer vent lines.

Empty your refrigerator, unplug it and prop open the door. Make sure the water to your refrigerator icemaker is shut off; also lift the lever up on your icemaker line.

Make sure your condo is clean before departure. Remove anything that could be a food-source or ensure it is in mice-proof containers.

Strip the bedsheets.

Empty the trash bins. If you have private trash removal services, make sure they know to suspend service for the off-season.

Electrical breakers for smoke/fire/carbon monoxide detectors must be left on. Check and replace batteries if necessary.

When leaving for extended periods of time, the hot water heater circuit breaker in your electrical panel should be turned off until the water is turned back on whenever you return to your unit.

All electronic equipment which could be damaged in the event of a power surge, should be unplugged. Unplug any power-loads that are wasting electricity (and money).

Make sure the doors and windows are locked. Use smart locks to lock and unlock your seashore condo remotely. Inspect weather-stripping around windows and doors to prevent unwanted air infiltration. Off-season is the time to replace aging windows and doors.

Set any water alarms, light timers, security cameras and motion-sensors. Close the shades and drapes.

Set a temperature alarm to notify you if/when your heat goes out.

And since winter is just around the corner, finalize plans for snow removal as soon as possible.

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