

PROTECT YOUR HOME WHILE AWAY FOR THE WINTER

There are steps you can take to help keep your home safe and sound while you are away during the winter months.

PROTECT YOUR PIPES TO AVOID WATER DAMAGE

Taking care of your plumbing and water before you leave for the winter months is essential. If a pipe bursts or leaks while you are away it could cause significant damage to your home. If no one will be home for along period of time consider turning off the water supply to your home completely. This can be done by calling Barnegat Township's Utility Department at 609-698-6185 (a \$40 charge applies) and requesting that the water be shut off at the curb. Drain your pipes of all water by opening the faucets and flushing your toilets to clear the water from the bowl.

Washing machines and dishwashers can also cause water damage even when not in use. Shut off the water to these appliances, where possible, to avoid any leaks or broken hoses while you are gone.

Consider draining and shutting off your outdoor water faucets to prevent freezing damage.

KEEP YOUR HOME AND PLUMBING WARM

If you decide to keep your water on, the best defense against freezing pipe is to keep the furnace running and the home warm. Leave the heat at 55 degrees or higher to ensure that the interior walls containing water pipes do not drop below freezing. Keeping room and cabinet doors open also helps heat to circulate and warm the outside walls where pipes are located.

Every year, have your heating system inspected and serviced before winter. Have your fuel tanks, if applicable, filled before you leave and ask someone to check on heat and fuel levels periodically while you are gone to ensure you do not run out.

BE READY FOR EMERGENCIES

Ask a trusted friend, neighbor or relative to keep an eye on your home and be available in emergency situations. Give them access to your home so they can periodically check for heating, electrical and water issues. If the weather turns frigid, have them also check the roof for icing and inspect for leaks inside. Make sure they have your contact information and a list with numbers for local people they can reach if repairs or services are needed. If they find a leak, have them call the Barnegat Township Utilities Department to have the water shut off at the curb (there is no charge for emergency shut-off service) before calling a plumber. The Barnegat Utilities Department will work with the plumber regarding turning the water back on/off so the repairs can be made.