



Travel Checklist for Snowbirds

PREPARING YOUR VACANT HOME

The following are some things you can do to help protect your vacant home while you head for warmer, or cooler, weather. Print this checklist and share it with fellow snowbirds to help them prepare their homes for the months when they are away.

- Forward your mail and stop newspaper delivery.
- Ask a trusted neighbor or relative to regularly check on your home, and remove flyers and other items that may have been left at your door.
- Arrange for someone to clear snow from your driveway and walkways.
- Turn on your alarm systems and motion-activated lights and set interior lights on timers.
- Secure valuables that you are not taking with you in a safe deposit box or other secure location.
- Install deadbolt locks, security-type hinges and sturdy door frames that cannot be spread apart. Invest in slide locks or other equivalent security locks for sliding glass doors or French doors.
- If you are not heating your home while you are away, turn off the home's water supply and drain pipes completely. Add non-toxic antifreeze rated for plumbing systems to toilet tanks and bowls.
- If the heat will be kept on in your home, turn off the water supply (after verifying with your boiler servicing professional that it is safe to do so for your particular heating system), shut off water to dishwashers and clothes washers, and maintain heat in your home.
- Set the temperature to a minimum of 55 degrees Fahrenheit, and leave the furnace running to prevent pipes from freezing.
- Perform routine maintenance, including scheduling heating system, roof and chimney inspections and cleaning your gutters.
- Remove dead trees and large, overhanging limbs.
- Unplug all appliances and phones.
- Clean the home thoroughly, check for potential openings, and remove food to discourage pests.
- Arrange for a trusted relative, neighbor or friend to be available and have access to your house in case of emergency.