

## Winter Preparation Tips

Updated December 2, 2021

These Winter Preparation Tips are suggested tactics to help Homeowner's prepare their townhome for cold months in Minnesota.

1. **Low-Temperature Sensor/Alarm.** Once the outside temperatures dips below freezing be sure to use a "low-temperature" alarm system connected to your cell phone or phone land line, properly programmed, and turned on. This type of device automatically raises the inside temperature if it drops below 45 degrees. It is also recommended you have a thermostat control backup heat source available, such as your gas fireplace, etc.

**NOTE:**

**ARCTIC AIR** (268-568-5599) and **THELEN HEATING** (218-829-1491) have key access to townhome units and will do furnace repairs when Homeowners are not home.

2. **Thermostats.** It is recommended, if you do not occupy your townhome during the cold months to lower the thermostat no lower than 56 degrees. Lower settings can cause condensation and result in rust developing in the furnace's heat exchanger.
3. **Main Water Supply.** Turn OFF the main water supply valve in your unit when leaving for more than one day (a good practice to maintain year around).
4. **Check Toilets.**
  - **Tank Water Level.** The level should be at least ½-inch below the overflow tube.
  - **Leaking Flapper.** Place a teaspoon of food coloring in the tank before retiring for the night. If the food coloring shows up in the bowl the following morning, the flapper is leaking and needs to be replaced.
  - **Trickling Water.** Water trickling through the toilet can cause the sewer line to freeze and may result in water or sewage backing up into your unit.

**NOTE:** If you plan to leave your unit unoccupied for a prolonged period, it is a good practice to seal the toilet bowl with plastic wrap to prevent the water in the traps from evaporating, which then allows sewer gas to escape into the building.

5. **Garden Hoses:** Make sure all garden hoses are disconnected from outside faucets. This allows the faucet to fully drain and prevent it from freezing and breaking, which could cause a leak in the wall the next time the water is turned ON.
6. **Windows and Sky Lights.** Raise window coverings 6-inches to 8-inches above the sill. This allows for airflow to prevent condensation and frost buildup on the windows. It is also helpful to direct a small fan near sky lights to help reduce condensation and dripping from sky lights in ceiling.
7. **Lakeside Yard.** Please stay off the entire lakeside yard during the winter to avoid packing the snow, which could lead to freezing of the septic system lines or damage to the drain fields.

**Please contact a Board member if you have questions.**