

Winter home maintenance tips



With the crazy cold snap, we thought we would share some tips on how to care for your home to prevent costly repairs.

Keep your home warm

Insulating your loft space and wall cavities is essential, around a quarter of your home's heat is lost through the roof. It's equally easy to lose warmth through your window frames so close your blinds and curtains in the evenings to trap the heat. Consider new PVCu windows with A+ rated glass if your windows are more than 10 years old. There are now some fantastic modern alternatives to timber sliding sash and old aluminum windows. Windows can be triple glazed for extra energy efficiency and soundproofing

Lining the area behind radiators with a reflective material i.e. aluminum foil this will reflect the heat given off back into each room.

Bleeding your radiators regularly is a good idea as this will remove any air trapped which allows even heat circulation. Keeping your central heating on at a minimum temperature of 15°C is a wise precaution, even when you're not at home as this will stop pipe freezing and keep an even temperature. This is particularly important if there is a possibility that the temperature outside is below freezing.

Check the exterior of your house

Check your downpipes and gutter for debris such as leaves and twigs and remove to prevent blockages which can cause water to escape. Also, make sure that everything is aligned and that the outlets are pointing away from your house and free from leaks.

Checking your roof for any damaged or missing tiles as well as worn concrete and caulking is a good idea throughout the year but it's even more important in the months running up to winter. Check the leadwork flashing around any chimneys to prevent leaks. Consider having your chimney swept to prevent fires.

Take care of your water pipes

Make sure all water pipes on your loft and garage. Make sure your cold water storage tank is sufficiently lagged. Pipes in lofts, eaves and behind cupboards are particularly vulnerable as they are typically more exposed and prone to freezing. Loft insulation should be laid over and under pipes.

Keep your eye out for leaks and blocked drains when the temperature starts to rise as burst pipes often occur when ice thaws.

What to do if you find a frozen pipe?

- Find your mains water stop-cock valve and turn it off immediately.
- Turn on all cold water taps to drain the system.
- Check for leaking joints or bursts in the pipes and gently heat any frozen pipes with a hairdryer or a heated cloth wrapped around the pipe. NEVER apply a direct flame to the pipe.

Away from home?

If you are going to be away for a long period of time and the weather forecast predicts cold weather, it is a good idea to drain your water system completely or leave your heating on low. Condensing boiler overflows can freeze and this will fill up the boiler with water and prevent the boiler working. If this happens gently heat the white overflow pipe then the water will drain out. You may need to drain the condensing chamber in the boiler.

Find your mains water stop-cock

Being able to turn off your water in an emergency is vital to reducing the damage a burst pipe may have on your home. Locate your stop-cock the moment you move in and check that it is easily accessible should you need to turn it off.

For more advice on any aspect of protecting your home. Please do not hesitate to contact us on

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