

Get Ready for Winter Advice to Protect Your Property this Winter



To avoid scenes like these at your property this winter, there are a number of actions you should consider.

1. *Ensure heating systems receive regular maintenance.*
2. *Check and ensure all at risk water pipes and taps (external, in roof spaces etc.) are properly lagged.*
3. *Check for leaks and drips especially from overflows as these could indicate a problem.*
4. *Ensure you are aware of the location of stopcocks for your property including external buildings such as garages.*

If your property is being left unattended for a winter holiday period then you should consider the following measures.

1. *Ensure heating system thermostats are working and the system remains on at around 10°C during the holiday.*
2. *If your property does not benefit from mains supply ensure there are sufficient levels of Oil/LPG in the tanks to fuel the heating system for the holiday period.*
3. *Turn the water supply off at main stop cocks and at any external isolation valves to other external buildings.*
4. *Open taps in toilets and kitchens to drain water from pipes (only necessary if the property is to remain unoccupied for longer periods).*
5. *Open hatches to loft spaces to allow warmer air to circulate.*

On return to your building following an unattended winter period, you should consider the following measures.

- 1. Keep water supply turned off while bringing the temperatures up to normal levels.*
- 2. Check for any leakage as rooms warm up and pipes thaw.*
- 3. Close all taps and open the stopcocks and check for any leaks.*

If a pipe or joint has fractured, do not turn the water supply back on.

- 1. Be safe, assess the situation but do not take any unnecessary risks. If you have a 'burst' and water is near to electrical equipment or switch gear, isolate electrics (if in doubt seek advice from a qualified electrician).*
- 2. Remove any electrical items from the affected area and put them in a ventilated area where they can dry out. Do not use them until they have been tested.*
- 3. Remove any wooden or composite furniture from wet flooring*

Please ensure you keep contact details for 24 hours emergency plumbing or electrical services readily available, in the event you should need them quickly. Use local newspapers, yellow pages and the internet to find suitably qualified contractors, as well as personal recommendations from friends and family.

You should also keep your property insurers contact details to hand in the event of needing their authorisation to undertaken repair works.

Remember order your salt-grit stock early to help you keep your exterior environment clear of snow and ice.