



See
Opinion

Home Inspections
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Arrival & Departure and Your Door County Vacation Home

Your vacation home is your sanctuary.

Your place of refuge where you go to relax and connect with friends and family. There's not a better way to extend your leisure time than to minimize the tedium of home maintenance and or unnecessary expensive repairs.

When you do not occupy your home on a full time basis many issues may arise in your absence that may be very costly to repair. Below is my check list of items to be completed before departure from and on arrival at your vacation home.

Preparation (first time only)

ELECTRICAL

- Clearly mark the usage of all circuit breakers in the electrical panels. It is very important to know what breakers should be turned off when you leave. For example, turning off the breaker that controls the sewage ejector pump could result in sewer water flooding your basement or crawl space.
- Locate breakers for electric water heater and well pump (if you own your well). Install brightly colored post it flags or other self adhesive markers on these breakers or alongside of them to clearly mark these breakers to be turned off when not residing in the home.
- Remove extension cords wherever possible, they are one of the largest causes of house fires.

PLUMBING

- Locate the main water valve and mark it with a brightly colored tag to identify for all using the home. If the main water valve is located in the crawl space it may be possible for a plumber to alter the location of the main valve or extend the valve stem up through the floor of a closet to eliminate the need to access the crawl space. Fixture and appliance leaks and frozen/broken plumbing pipes may cause many thousands of dollars of damage to a home.

HEATING, VENTILATING AND AIR CONDITIONING

- If one is not already installed a programmable thermostat will help in reducing energy consumption.
- There are remote control thermostats available that allow you to monitor and control the temperature of your home with your telephone or computer (forced air or hot water only). It may be programmed to alert you when the temperature falls below a preset level and will allow you to raise or lower the temperature with your phone prior to your arrival.
- Monitor humidity levels in your home on all floors. Purchase a hygrometer (humidity gauge) for each floor including basement and or crawl space (multi remote units are available). If humidity levels approach 50% and dehumidifier should be installed in the basement or crawl space. A low temperature dehumidifier with an automatic condensate removal pump is recommended.

DEPARTURE CHECK LIST

ELECTRICAL

- Turn off breaker to “well pump” (if you have a private well).
- Unplug all countertop appliances
- Check to see that all interior and exterior lights are tuned off..

WATER HEATERS

- Turn off breaker (in circuit breaker panel) if electric water heater.
- Turn off switch on top of unit if Power Vent water heater (see photo).
- Turn gas valve control knob to “pilot” if conventional gas water heater (see photo)

PLUMBING

- Turn on water at kitchen sink and run garbage disposer until all debris has been properly discharged.
- Check all toilets and flush if needed, check to see if all toilets stop running.
- Check all exterior water faucets, turn off water and remove all hoses.
- During winter months open kitchen and bathroom doors beneath sinks.
- Turn off main water valve.
- Run water in all fixtures including sinks, showers, bathtubs, laundry sinks, floor drains (possibly in laundry, utility or garage) that have not been used to provide a water trap and prevent dangerous sewer gases from entering the home.

APPLIANCES

- Check refrigerator for perishables.
- Check microwave for forgotten items.
- Check oven for forgotten items
- Check coffee pot and filter.
- Check dishwasher, do not start before leaving.
- Check washer for clothes to dry.
- Check dryer for items that may be needed at home.

HEATING, VENTILATING AND AIR CONDITIONING

- Check thermostat(s) for proper settings

MISCELLANEOUS

- Check all windows to ensure they are locked
- Check all exterior doors to ensure they are locked (anti vandal stops for sliding doors)
- Open all bathroom doors to allow concentrated moisture levels to dissipate
- Empty all garbage receptacles and bring to dumpster or curb
- Check humidity gauge and empty dehumidifier condensate tank if necessary.

ARRIVAL CHECK LIST

- Turn on breaker to “well pump” (if you have a private well).
- Open main water valve if home is serviced by municipal water or a common private well. **Check carefully for possible plumbing leaks, do not turn on water and leave the home without checking for leaks!!!**
- Run hot water until there is a steady stream of water before turning on hot water heater, **failure to do this may seriously damage the water heater.**
- Turn on hot water heater; see procedures pertaining to what type of water heater you have listed above (you will have hot water in about 1 hour).
- Run water in all fixtures including sinks, showers, bathtubs, laundry sinks, floor drains (possibly in laundry, utility or garage) that have not been used to provide a water trap and prevent dangerous sewer gases from entering the home.
- Check humidity gauge (not to exceed 50%), check dehumidifier and empty if necessary.

Enjoy Your Time In Door County!



Electric Water Heater



Power Vent Gas Water Heater



Conventional Natural Gas or Propane Water Heater