

Before You Go • Check List

Eriesense™

short trips •

- Make sure windows and doors are securely locked.
- Leave an outside light on, ideally one that's motion-sensored.
- Put food away and clear out all crumbs so rodents and ants don't take up residence.
- Unplug small appliances and shut off computers to prevent fire hazards and save on electricity.
- Put lights on timers.
- Arrange for the mail to be stopped or picked up by a trusted neighbor.

longer trips • (or closing down a vacation home)

- Remove all food from the house. If you are going to be gone days instead of weeks and must store staples like sugar and oatmeal, put them in sealed metal, glass or thick plastic containers.
- Empty and defrost the refrigerator and freezer. Place a box of baking soda or a tub of charcoal briquettes inside to absorb odors.
- Cover upholstered furniture with sheets so dust doesn't settle in the fabric. Tilt your mattresses up against the walls so air can circulate around them.
- Open all interior doors, including closets, to increase air flow.
- Pour a 50-50 mix of antifreeze and water into drains if your home is in a freeze area. (Check with the sewer company first—it may have a nontoxic alternative.)
- Drain water from the plumbing system and turn off water at the main line if you're closing a home during the winter season. Complete this task even if you don't expect pipes to freeze, to prevent a pipe from springing a leak.
- Leave the furnace on low. In areas with high winter humidity where mold and mildew can grow, leaving the furnace on at low temperature (55), rather than turning it off entirely can help prevent damage. Install a low-temperature thermostat if you plan to keep the furnace running over winter. If not, shut off the gas or propane at the main.
- Bring in lounge chairs, umbrellas, grills, toys, garden hoses and other outdoor items. Store outdoor equipment in a locked shed. If your home has a satellite dish, disconnect it and bring it inside.
- Trim trees away from the house and clean out the rain gutters. Think about placing screen covers over the gutters so they don't clog with leaves if autumn is approaching. Put shutters on windows if necessary.
- Cover your whole-house attic fan with heavy plastic if the house is idle in winter. Follow manufacturer instructions for outdoor air conditioner care and maintenance.
- Give a set of keys, along with your contact information, to a trusted local contact or hire a security company to check on your place occasionally.
- Hire a gardening service or neighbor to mow the grass if you will be gone for an extended period of time during the growing season.