

# Getting Your Home Ready for Winter & Extended Vacations

## --- IMPORTANT NOTICE ---

**Brook Hills is an interconnected community where a problem in one home can quickly impact neighboring homes. We recommend the following actions in getting your home ready for winter and extended vacations and we have added a few safety reminders.**

**Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors:** Replace all the batteries in the smoke and carbon monoxide detectors then test them to make sure they are working properly. You may also want buy a fire extinguisher or replace one that may be older than 10 years.

**Plumbing:** Locate your water main in the event you need to shut it off in an emergency. Turning off the water going to the outside faucets and leave the faucet open during the winter. Drain your garden hoses or winterize your sprinkler systems. If you leave your home for an extended time you may want to shut off the water main and turn your water heater on "vacation".

**Thermostats and Temperature Settings:** Change all the batteries in the thermostats. If you leave your home for an extended time, leave the heat on and keep the thermostats set to at least 55 degrees. It is best to leave kitchen and bathroom cabinets and closet doors open to circulate the warm air all through your home.

**Chimney Cleaning:** If you have a wood burning fireplace and the chimney has not been cleaned for a while, call a chimney sweep to remove soot and creosote. Inspect the fireplace damper for proper opening and closing.

**Laundry Vents:** A regular cleaning of the laundry vents by an insured contractor will help to ensure that your dryer is working efficiently, while reducing the risk of a fire in the venting.

**Furnace Inspection:** Have a HVAC professional inspect your furnace, clean the ducts and change the filters. Remove all flammable material from the area surrounding your furnace.

**IMPORTANT: Regular Inspections:** If you will be away for an extended period of time, please make arrangements for a friend, relative or a house sitter to inspect your home on a regular basis. In extremely cold weather daily inspections are recommended. You need to provide names and contact numbers to our Property Manager, Carolynn Dick, so that in an emergency you can be notified. It may be a neighbor who might have water leaking through the ceiling that would cause the Fire Department to forcefully enter your home to stabilize the situation. Any costs incurred for this emergency action is completely the responsibility of the homeowner.

**Prepare an Emergency Kit:** Buy indoor candles and matches for use during a power outage. List the phone numbers for your utility companies and tape them near your phone. Store extra bottled water and non-perishable food supplies (including pet food, if you have a pet), blankets and a first-aid kit in a dry and easy-to-access location. Prepare an evacuation plan in the event of an emergency.

**Steps in an Emergency: A Medical emergency CALL 911 first - A Water Line Break CALL 911 first - A Fire CALL 911 First - ALWAYS CALL 911 FIRST.**