

**A "SNOWBIRD'S" CHECKLIST FOR LEAVING YOUR HOME FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME**

**While every attempt has been made to make the following information helpful, relative and accurate, responsibility and risk for the use of this data rests with you, the homeowner. The information provided below is a suggestion only.**

Item No.		✓
1	Bring in anything located outdoors (lawn furniture, planters, grills, lawn ornaments, fan blades inside to avoid them being blown around during strong winds).	
2	Lock all doors and windows. Install wood dowel in tracks to restrain sliding doors and windows.	
3	Arrange for tree and shrub trimming	
4	Inspect roof, downspouts and gutters (remove leaves).	
5	Check timer for sprinkler. Verify that all sprinkler heads work properly. Check rain sensor.	
6	Some residents like to have a professional pest-control firm spray around the house before they leave. Others distribute the pesticide around the house themselves.	
7	Make sure your air conditioner is working properly and in good condition. Install a new air filter or clean your permanent filter. Set the thermostat at 85 degrees. (This is the recommended setting by A/C contractors.) You want to do whatever you can to avoid mold. If you have a humidistat (highly recommended by A/C contractors), set it at 60 percent.	
8	Turn off the water at the main shutoff. Turn off water valves to washing machine, dishwasher, sinks, and toilets.	
9	Clean your dishwasher thoroughly, paying attention to the edges of the door. Blot up any residual water in the bottom after you run your last load.	
10	Open the doors to the washer and dryer, the dishwasher, and any other appliance that typically seals up.	
11	Make sure the washing machine is fully drained so mold will not grow.	
12	Cover all sinks, toilet bowls, toilet tanks, and floor drains with plastic cling wrap. This prevents water evaporating from the trap, allowing sewer gases and bugs into your home. Do not put bleach tablets in the toilet tank.	
13	Thoroughly clean all appliances. This means everything. Don't forget the toaster, blender, mixer, microwave oven, toaster oven, and range (including oven and broiler, as well as burners and drip pans). Any food particles or residue can attract pests.	
14	Clean food out of cupboards, freezers and refrigerator.	
15	There are two philosophies on what to do with the refrigerator. One is to leave it empty, unplugged, making sure the icemaker water supply is off, and prop the door open. The second idea is to turn the dial to the warmest temperature setting, turn off the icemaker and fill both the freezer and refrigerator with jugs of water. Some who use this method recommend placing a dish of either activated charcoal or baking soda inside to absorb odors. If you decide on this option do not turn off the circuit breaker.	
16	Shut off the breaker for the hot water heater. Some water heaters also have a "Vacation" setting that you can use instead of turning it all the way off.	
17	Turn off breakers for all circuits not needing power.	
18	Unplug all appliances, TVs, computers, lamps, radios, washers, dryers and small electronics.	
19	Turn off telephone ringers.	
20	Put a timer on at least one light, set to come on and off to make the home appear occupied. Ask neighbors to check the bulb and replace if it burns out. Remember to leave the breaker for that outlet turned on.	

21	Properly dispose of any bags of garbage. Spray waste baskets and garbage cans with Lysol or other disinfectant spray.	
22	Vacuum carpets and floors. Remove the vacuum cleaner bag and replace with a fresh one. Clean all floor coverings and all surfaces to ensure that no food particles or stains attract bugs or cause mildew.	
23	Make sure all curtains and blinds are closed to prevent anyone from seeing inside, and to keep out as much sun and heat as possible.	
24	Pull furniture away from the walls and pull out loose cushions on couches and chairs. This allows air circulation that will retard mold and mildew. Cover furniture with dust covers.	
25	Strip beds to allow mattresses to air out	
26	Open all closet doors and dresser drawers so air circulates. Leave no clothes on wire hangers and none in garment bags, unless you leave them unzipped. Rust stains and mildew are often permanent.	
27	Some people recommend leaving ceiling fans on at the lowest setting, to promote air circulation.	
28	Place ant traps near piping or where pipe holes exist in the flooring or wall.	
29	Some people like to set out containers around the interior of the house with activated charcoal to absorb odors and moisture. It has also been recommended that cat litter in containers around the house will control moisture and odors.	
30	Do not leave anything that does not like heat, such as candles, by a window.	
31	Change all batteries and purchase backups where applicable: smoke detectors, ac thermostat/humidistat, alarm (main and key pads).	
32	If leaving a car behind prepare it for long-term storage.	
33	Unplug the garage door opener.	
34	Stop mail or have it forwarded. Cancel newspaper subscriptions.	
35	In case of summer storms or inclement weather, be sure to take photos or video of both the inside and outside of your home and take important insurance documents with you when you leave. These two actions will help with any storm related claims should they arise. Also take pictures and/or video of the contents inside your home as well.	
36	Take all small valuables with you. Also important documents, new prescriptions and home insurance information.	
37	Bring a list of important phone numbers to your winter home, such as the utility companies, and neighbors' phone numbers.	
38	Notify your neighbors. Give them emergency contact information, a departure date and estimated return date. Ask several neighbors to keep an eye on your home. Make sure that at least one (better to have two or more) has keys. Ask one to check on the inside occasionally for leaks, infestations and burglaries.	