

Prepare your home for extreme temperatures

Investing in hazard mitigation is one of the most effective ways to protect your home and save money in the long run. By taking steps to prepare for extreme weather

conditions, you can enhance the safety, comfort and resilience of your home.

PREPARING FOR EXTREME COLD WEATHER

Preparing your home for cold weather is critical to maintaining comfort and preventing costly damage. Here are some key steps you can take:

- **Winterize windows:** Windows account for 25%-30% of heat loss in a home. To reduce this, consider two options:
 - ◊ **Permanent solution:** Invest in better insulated windows.
 - ◊ **Short-term solution:** Apply removable window film to insulate and prevent cold air from entering your home through the window.
- **Check weather stripping:** Examine the weather stripping around doors and windows to ensure a proper seal, keeping cold air out and warm air in.
- **Insulate pipes:** Protect pipes from freezing by insulating ones in unheated areas like garages or crawl spaces.

- **Inspect attic insulation:** Ensure your attic has enough insulation to maintain a comfortable temperature in the home without overworking your HVAC system.
- **Maintain your heating system:** Make sure your heating system is in good condition before the cold weather sets in. Regular maintenance and inspection of air ducts, heating systems and water heaters can make sure the systems are running efficiently.
- **Seal gaps and cracks:** Inspect your home for any gaps or cracks in walls, floors or ceilings. Use caulk or weather stripping to seal these openings and prevent drafts from reducing your home's energy efficiency.
- **Check the roof:** Ensure your roof is in good condition to withstand the weight of ice. Repair any weak areas to avoid structural damage during the winter.

PREPARING FOR EXTREME HOT WEATHER

Hot weather can strain your home's cooling systems and increase energy costs. Here are some measures to help keep your home cool and efficient:

- **Check weather stripping:** Make sure weather stripping around doors and windows is intact to keep cool air inside and prevent heat from entering your home. If your door is closed and you see light along the cracks of the door frame, your weather stripping needs to be replaced.
- **Inspect insulation:** Just as insulation helps in the winter, it also blocks unwanted heat during the summer. Make sure your attic and walls are adequately insulated to reduce cooling costs.
- **Maintain your cooling system:** Regularly inspect and maintain your air ducts, cooling systems and water heaters to ensure they are operating at peak efficiency. This can significantly reduce energy usage during hot months.
- **Use community resources:** In extreme heat, utilize resources in your community to stay cool if your system malfunctions. For example, libraries and other community centers will set up cooling stations during heatwaves.



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