



Home Tips



• CHRISTIAN BUILDING INSPECTORS, INC., 3697 HABERSHAM LANE, DULUTH, GEORGIA 30096, 770-849-0920 • JANUARY 2011 •

Q & A

Understanding Winterizing

It is becoming very common to see homes that have been winterized. With the expanding foreclosure market, more vacant homes are being listed than ever before. With high energy cost, it is only logical to have the utilities turned off. This newsletter will cover problems with winterization as well as myths about dewinterizing.

Some home inspectors cringe when they see the sign that says "Winterized." You never know what to expect. There

WINTERIZED

Do Not Turn On The Water Heater

Only XYZ Company is approved to initiate Water service and activate attached components

The Fee for De-Winterization is \$75.

THE WINTERIZATION PROCESS IS INTENDED TO PROTECT THIS PROPERTY FROM WATER AND PIPE DAMAGE. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO TURN THE WATER ON AS DAMAGE TO THE PROPERTY MAY OCCUR THE WATER SUPPLY HAS BEEN SHUT OFF AND THE WATER HEATER HAS BEEN DRAINED AND ANTI-FREEZE ADDED TO ALL TOILETS, SINKS, TUBS AND TRAPS.

NO INSPECTION OF THE PLUMBING WAS MADE PRIOR TO WINTERIZING THIS PROPERTY. THE WINTERIZATION PROCESS ENSURES THAT NO WATER DAMAGE WILL OCCUR AT THIS PROPERTY FROM THE ABOVE DATE FORWARD. THERE IS NO IMPLIED GUARANTEE OF THE STATUS OF THE PLUMBING PRIOR TO THE ABOVE DATE.

HOW TO DE-WINTERIZE

(This procedure assumes property is the same as when the winterization process was completed.)

1. Re-attach disconnected pipes and close all faucets. Pipe to be re-attached is located:
2. Turn water back on to the property. The water valve is located:
3. Ensure that the hot water heater is filled up prior to turning it on as the heating elements may become damaged if there is no water present.
4. Check the house for leaks. This includes listening for possible leaks in the walls.
5. Fill all toilets and flush.
6. Turn on faucets one at a time and check for leaks.

FOLLOWING THE ABOVE STEPS DOES NOT GUARANTEE THAT WATER WILL BE RESTORED. THESE ARE THE STEPS FOLLOWED IN WINTERIZING THIS PROPERTY. SHOULD PIPE DAMAGE BE DISCOVERED, IT WILL BE THE BUYER'S RESPONSIBILITY.

may be a broken pipe caused by improper winterization that may leak and flood the house as soon as the water is turned back on.

Some companies just turn off the water at the street and only drain the water heater and go through the house opening faucets to drain the water out of the piping. This will drain some of the water, but not all. There may still be areas in the piping located below the lowest faucet that will not be drained. Not to mention areas such as refrigerator ice maker water lines, jetted tub piping and washing machine water hoses.

A better method of winterizing is using air pressure to force the water out of the piping. An air compressor is attached to the piping, and the system is pressurized. Then each fixture is opened until all of the water is removed. The fixture is then closed, and the next fixture is opened.

This works great for items such as ice makers, dishwashers, etc. After all fixtures are checked, you can be pretty much assured all of the water is removed from the water piping. The only items remaining to be winterized are the fixture traps such as sinks, tubs, showers and toilets. Antifreeze is then added to the water that is located in the traps which completes the operation.



DEWINTERIZING

Anyone can dewinterize a home. There is no special tool required or special knowledge needed.

1. The first thing to do is to go through the entire house and turn off all of the water valves and faucets. This is especially important for refrigerator ice maker lines and washing machine valves since they can flood the home in a very short period of time. Next turn off the water valve to the water heater. Be sure to verify the water heater drain valve is closed which may require the use of a screw driver. Go around the outside of the house to close all of the hose bibbs.
2. Go out to the water meter and turn on the water. Verify the meter does not run. If it does, turn the water back off and go back to the house to check to see what you missed. After you have everything turned off, turn the meter back on.
3. Go to the closest hose bibb and open it. Allow the air to escape. When you get a steady flow of water, turn it back off.
4. Open the valve to the water heater and fill the tank. Open a hot water valve from one of the bathrooms to allow the air to escape. When the tank is full, light the burner or turn on the panel breaker.
5. Go around checking each fixture for leaks. Sometimes leaks will not occur during the inspection, but hours later.
6. When finished with the inspection, ask the realtor or the seller if the water should be turned back off. Be sure to keep the heat on to prevent future freezing.

Window Seal Failure

We have three windows with moisture between the glass panes. We heard from friends that there are companies that specialize in this type of repair. Is there a method available to remove the moisture without replacing the glass?

What you are referring to is commonly called "glass pane seal failure." Your windows are double pane glass that have a



vacuum applied to remove the air between the two pieces of glass. With the air removed, no moisture can enter inside the glass. Over time the seals around the two pieces of glass can fail allowing moisture in.

Most windows are warranted against seal failure for ten years. If you look at the strip between the two pieces of glass, you can sometimes see the manufacture month and year.

The only problem is most manufacturers do not put their name on the windows making it impossible to know who to contact if you have a problem.

First, check with your builder, if possible, to see where they purchased the windows. If you can get this information, you stand a good chance of finding the manufacturer. Otherwise, you will just need to replace the glass. There are many glass

companies around Atlanta that do this type of repair. They will come out, measure the window, and order the glass. They will come back out and install it. You do not have to replace the entire window frame. A word of caution: Some companies will quote you very high prices, so be sure to get three quotes.

There have been a couple of companies that claimed to be able to remove the moisture without replacing the glass, but all of the ones I know have gone out of business. If you do find a company, make sure they have been in business for years and check Google or some other search engine for complaints. Also, check with the Better Business Bureau.

FREE DEWINTERIZING

With Any Home Inspection By
Christian Building Inspectors, Inc.

Quote Of The Month

"Do Not Let The Things You
Cannot Change Affect Your
Attitude."

Rod Harrison

A Tip Of The Hat To:

Steve Bing

Virtual Properties Realty

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Thank You

CHRISTIAN BUILDING INSPECTORS, INC.

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