

Vacant unit winter checklist

A vacant unit still has to be kept warm enough not to freeze, and nobody is inside to notice a small leak before it becomes a large one. This checklist runs on a set visit schedule instead.

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Roundhouse Maintenance Group, <https://roundhousegroup.ca/resources/vacant-unit-winter-checklist/>

Before the unit sits empty

- Leave the heat on and set to a minimum temperature, never off, for any period through the heating season.
 - Shut off water to any fixture that will not be used, where the layout allows it without affecting other units.
 - Check for any known freeze risk area: an exterior wall pipe run, an unheated room, a garage with plumbing.
 - Confirm windows and doors close and lock properly.
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Visit schedule while it is empty

- Check on a set interval through the winter months, more often in an older building or a unit with a known freeze history.
 - On each visit: confirm heat is running, check under sinks and around the water heater for any sign of a leak, and confirm no window has been left open.
 - Log the date and what was checked, so a gap in the record is visible.
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If something is found

- A frozen or burst pipe is treated as an emergency call, not a routine one.
- A dropped thermostat or a failed heating system in a vacant unit still needs a same day response in freezing weather.

 Message us

Before the next tenant moves in

- Run the heating and cooling systems and confirm both work before move-in day.
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and replace batteries.
- Complete the move-in inspection record before handing over the keys.

See HVAC, heating and cooling and the Toronto rental maintenance calendar.

Sources

City of Toronto By-law 1511-2025, Chapter 497, Indoor Temperature Standards, in force June 1, 2026 <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/bylaws/2025/law1511.pdf>

Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 629, Property Standards, sections 629-24 and 629-37 https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/municode/1184_629.pdf