

Winter Property Management Tips

16 December 2022 - UK & Ireland

With freezing temperatures continuing to be forecast by the Met Office and Met Éireann, we have collated some tips for winter property management, looking at each of the main perils:

Fire

Residents:

- Don't leave appliances running or plugged in unattended, particularly when you are sleeping, including tumble dryers, electric clothes drying racks, Christmas tree lights, charging electronic devices
- Regularly clean out the filters on devices, again, such as tumble dryers
- Never leave a lit candle unattended or close to flammables
- Use adequate ember protection on heat sources, including wood burners, and don't have furniture or flammables close to it
- If using a chimney, regularly clean it and check that it is lined
- If using a fire, have a working carbon monoxide monitor
- Don't overload extension leads with more extension leads.

Maintenance:

- Maintain temperatures to avoid freezing of wet sprinkler systems.

Accidental Damage

Maintenance:

- Consider how to safely remove snow from roofs, including employing a competent contractor, to avoid risk of continued accumulation.

Escape of Water

- Check your external, roof space and basement pipework is lagged
- If your pipes do freeze, ensure all your taps are turned off
- Control your heating with thermostat so it doesn't go below around 15 degrees (check your insurer guidance)
- Isolate your water and drain the system if suitable when leaving a property empty (check your insurer guidance for specific number of unoccupied days covered and conditions).

Surge Management

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Theft

Residents:

- Lights can act as a deterrent so consider their usage, consider having external lights on sensors
- Ensure all windows and doors are always secured
- Keep valuables out of sight from windows and doors
- In multi-resident areas, ensure access points and external buildings are always locked.

Maintenance:

- Check all CCTV equipment is working, recording and cameras have clear views.

Flood/Storm

Residents:

Check if your property is at risk of flooding, and for warnings, in [England](#), [Northern Ireland](#), [Scotland](#), [Wales](#), [Republic of Ireland](#) so you can prepare by:

1. Planning for all people and pets to stay on higher levels
2. Moving valuables to higher levels.

Maintenance:

- Ensure all storm drains are cleared of vegetation
- Make sure your rainwater gullies are clear and flashing is secured and adequate as it should be, with leaf guard cowls
- Reviewing condition of flat roofs, fence panels and diseased trees
- Tie down garden furniture, dismantle garden trampolines
- If in a known flood zone/area ensure flood resilience measures such a flood gates and sump pumps are in working order.

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