



Opening Your Summer Property for the Season

A seasonal inspection checklist focused on fire and flood prevention, and identifying winter damage before it becomes a bigger problem.

● High priority — fire/flood risk

● Medium priority — winter damage

● Routine check

Water & Plumbing

FLOOD RISK

- ☐ ● Inspect all exposed pipes for cracks, splits, or frost damage
Burst pipes from freeze-thaw are a leading cause of summer flood damage
- ☐ ● Turn on main water supply slowly and check for leaks at all joints
Monitor for 15 minutes before leaving the area
- ☐ ● Inspect washing machine supply hoses for bulging or cracking
Replace if hoses are more than 5 years old
- ☐ ● Check under all sinks and around toilet bases for soft flooring or staining
Signs of a slow winter leak that went undetected
- ☐ ● Test sump pump operation and inspect pit for debris
Run a bucket of water through to confirm float activation
- ☐ ● Inspect water heater for rust, scale buildup, or leaking pressure relief valve
- ☐ ● Clear gutters and downspouts of winter debris
Blocked drainage forces water against the foundation
- ☐ ● Check that downspout extensions direct water at least 6 ft from foundation
- ☐ ● Inspect window wells for standing water or debris
- ☐ ● Test all shut-off valves to confirm they turn freely
Frozen or stuck valves are a serious problem in an emergency
- ☐ ● Reconnect any pipes or fixtures you winterized with compressed air

Fire Safety & Electrical

FIRE RISK

- ☐ ● Test all smoke detectors and replace batteries
Replace detectors older than 10 years; install CO detector if any gas appliances
- ☐ ● Test carbon monoxide detectors
- ☐ ● Inspect electrical panel for signs of moisture, corrosion, or rodent damage
Chewed wiring is an immediate fire hazard — call an electrician if found
- ☐ ● Check all GFCI outlets near water sources (kitchen, baths, exterior)
Press test/reset buttons to confirm they trip and reset properly
- ☐ ● Inspect dryer vent from exterior — confirm it opens freely and is clear of nests
Blocked dryer vents cause hundreds of house fires annually
- ☐ ● Inspect fireplace/wood stove flue for animal nests, creosote buildup, or cracks
Have professionally swept if used regularly the prior season

- ☐ ● Check propane/natural gas connections and fittings for leaks (soap test)
Mix dish soap and water — bubbles indicate a leak

- ☐ ● Verify fire extinguisher charge and inspection date
Replace or recharge if expired or discharged

- ☐ ● Inspect exterior for dry brush, debris, or stored materials within 10 ft of structure

- ☐ ● Check that all exterior vents have intact screens
Birds and rodents nesting in vents create significant fire risk

- ☐ ● Inspect BBQ/outdoor cooking area — clean grease traps before first use

Roof, Structure & Exterior

WINTER DAMAGE

- ☐ ● Walk the roofline from ground level — look for lifted, cracked, or missing shingles
Ice dams and snow load can displace shingles over winter

- ☐ ● Inspect attic for daylight, moisture staining, or mold after winter
Ice dams frequently cause attic water intrusion not visible from below

- ☐ ● Check ceiling surfaces in all rooms for new water staining or bubbling paint

- ☐ ● Inspect foundation perimeter for new cracks, efflorescence, or heaving
Freeze-thaw cycles can open new cracks in one season

- ☐ ● Check all exterior caulking around windows, doors, and penetrations
Reapply anywhere caulk has cracked or separated

- ☐ ● Inspect deck/porch for rotted boards, raised fasteners, and structural connections

- ☐ ● Check exterior stairs, handrails, and ramps for frost heave movement

- ☐ ● Inspect driveway and walkways for new cracking or frost heave

HVAC & Ventilation

FIRE / FLOOD RISK

- ☐ ● Replace furnace/air handler filter before first use of season
A clogged filter restricts airflow and can cause heat exchanger failure or fire

- ☐ ● Inspect furnace heat exchanger for cracks (call HVAC tech if unsure)
Cracked heat exchangers allow combustion gases into living areas

- ☐ ● Check condensate drain line on A/C or heat pump — clear any blockage
Blocked condensate lines overflow and cause water damage to ceilings/floors

- ☐ ● Inspect chimney exterior for mortar damage, missing caps, or animal activity

- ☐ ● Confirm all supply and return vents are open and unobstructed

- ☐ ● Turn on A/C and run for 15 minutes — confirm drainage is flowing properly

Pest & Wildlife Inspection

WINTER DAMAGE

- ☐ ● Inspect kitchen cabinetry, pantry, and drawers for rodent droppings or chew marks
Hantavirus risk — use gloves and mask when cleaning rodent evidence



● Check behind appliances for rodent nesting — especially the stove

Rodent nests inside appliances are a leading fire cause in vacation properties



● Inspect wiring visible in basement or crawl space for chew damage



● Look for wasp, hornet, or bird nests in eaves, overhangs, and vents



● Check for carpenter ant activity — frass (sawdust) near wood structures



● Inspect crawl space or basement for evidence of winter rodent activity

Appliances & General Systems

GENERAL
READINESS



● Run the dishwasher through a full cycle — check for leaks at door and under unit



● Check refrigerator door seals and condenser coils for dust buildup



● Test all stove burners and oven ignitors



● Run all faucets for 2–3 minutes to flush standing water from pipes



● Flush all toilets — inspect tanks and bases for any leaking



● Check septic alarm (if applicable) and schedule pump-out if overdue



● Test all exterior lighting including motion sensors



● Confirm internet/alarm/security systems are operational

If you discover water damage, fire damage, mold, or other restoration needs, contact Total Restoration Services promptly. Early intervention reduces repair costs and prevents secondary damage. Serving the North Okanagan, Shuswap & Thompson regions since 2002.