Winterize Your RV: A step-by-step guide.



Winter is coming, which means it's time to take care of your recreational vehicle. Not sure where to start? Pick a day (preferably before the first snowfall) to winterize your RV, and we'll help you do it properly.

To winterize your RV, our experts recommend that you:

1. **Drain water.** To prevent pipes from freezing, then bursting, be sure to:
   • Empty your fresh water holding tank by opening the "petcock."
   • Drain your black and gray holding tanks (at the same time).
   • Move on to the faucets – opening those for the sinks and shower.
   • Flush your toilet a few times to ensure all the water is gone.
   • After you've done your draining, attach a compressed air adapter (or blowout plug) to the water lines. This will force out any remaining water.
   • Replace all caps and close all faucets, plus the petcock.
   • Detach the compressed air adapter.
   Tip: Don't drain the water heater just yet. Wait until after you add anti-freeze.

2. **Add anti-freeze.** Because there are three ways to do this, you can choose your own adventure. Do it a) from the inside using a water pump conversion kit, b) from the outside with a hand pump or c) with or without a bypass. (Note: Without a bypass, you'll have to add a lot more anti-freeze.) Pick your preferred method, then get your step-by-step guide. In the end, you'll pour about three cups of anti-freeze into the toilet and each drain.

3. **Do repairs.** Is anything damaged or broken? Check the roof, vents, air conditioner, and the seals around exterior doors and windows. Update anything that needs attention.

4. **Remove food.** As you go through your cupboards or pantry cabinet, check the expiration dates of everything. Get rid of anything that would go bad, including anything that's already open. (You don't want to attract mice looking for a luxurious place to live!)

5. **Deep clean.** Save yourself some work next spring. Tidy and disinfect storage areas, along with your oven, range and refrigerator. From an exterior perspective, you may even want to clean the awning, then give the entire RV a good wash and wax.

6. **Open the refrigerator and freezer doors.** Don't let mold or mildew ruin your refrigeration.

7. **Close the blinds.** Pull down all the shades to keep sunshine away. Believe it or not, UV rays can degrade your upholstery – even in the winter time.

8. **Park appropriately.** Use your emergency brake and wheel chocks, and leave your RV level on blocks. (This will take the pressure off your tires.) Ideally, you'll also want it to be stabilized. So make sure it doesn't rock when you walk.

For more ways to winterize your RV, consult your specific owner's manual. And for an updated insurance policy, talk to an agent about our recreational vehicle coverage.

Still in the zone? Check our 21 ways to winterize your home.