

# Tips and Tricks

## To Help Your Customers Prepare for Winter!

Below are procedures that you can share with your customers to help them choose the right winterization products for their needs. Here are a few ideas on how you can use these tips to add value to your customers or as a prospecting tool for your business:

1. **Print out the preformatted tips page** and give it to your customers when you show up to give an estimate, to provide services, or - mail it along with your invoice if you've already finished a job.
2. **Add your logo, or print company letter and email the preformatted tips page** to any of your existing customers as a reminder about winterizing their irrigation system along with a message that you would be happy to handle their irrigation projects for them. Or you can offer the tips alongside a pre-packaged irrigation or septic service plan where you offer to handle these things for them for a set cost.
3. **Offer these tips to local HOA or neighborhood associations** for use in their newsletter or to post on their message boards along with your contact information in case residents need help with their plumbing, irrigation, or septic projects.

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**Let us help you winterize your system and prepare for the colder months!**



### **How to Winterize Your Sprinkler System**

#### **Step 1: Shut Off the Water**

It will come as no surprise that the first step is turning off the water to the system with a main valve that's usually found near your water meter. If your system has valves to prevent backflow, shut these off too. There are usually two of these valves that lead into the backflow device; be sure to shut them both off. If your system doesn't use potable water, it might not have a backflow preventer.

#### **Step 2: Turn Off the Timer**

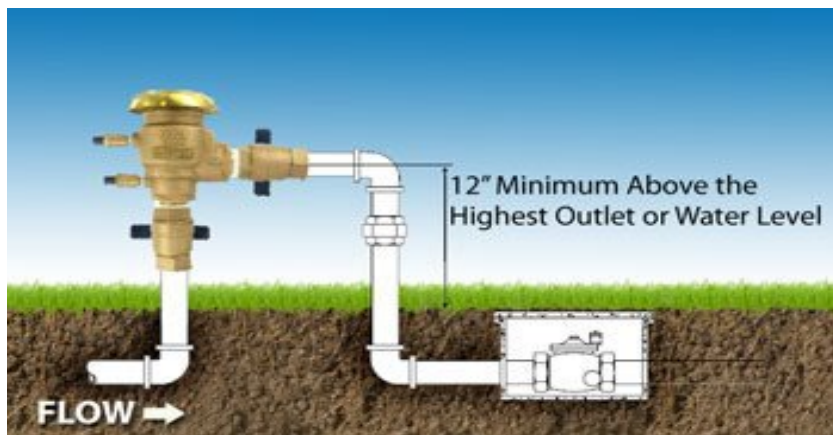
If your system runs on an automatic timer, make sure you shut that off. Some systems have a "rain mode" that allows you to essentially power down the timer without losing any programmed information or settings. Allowing the system to run in rain mode throughout the winter is usually safe and shouldn't run up your energy costs. In the spring, you can turn the rain mode off, and the timer should resume working normally.

### **Step 3: Drain the Water**

It's not enough just to keep water from flowing into the system; you also need to drain out the water that's already in there. This is the biggest and most time-consuming step in the process, but it's absolutely vital. There are three main methods of drainage depending on what type of sprinkler system you have.

### **Step 4: Insulate Above-Ground Components**

Finally, make sure that all the above-ground parts of the sprinkler system are properly insulated from the weather. The main shut-off valve, plus any exposed pipes or backflow preventers, should be wrapped in foam covers or insulation tape. On the backflow preventers, make sure not to block any air vents or drain outlets.



### **Do all sprinkler systems have a master valve?**

Master valves are a common component in most irrigation systems, but they are not always required. A master valve is an automatic valve that is installed at the point where the irrigation system connects to the water supply.

### **Will sprinkler heads freeze?**

Water can also freeze inside sprinkler heads themselves. As the frozen water expands, the pressure from the ice can pop off sprinkler heads

### **How long does it take pipes to freeze at 32 degrees?**

Pipes can freeze in as little as six to eight hours, meaning they can freeze overnight. If the outside temperature is below 32 ° F and your pipes are unprotected, your chances for a frozen pipe increase dramatically.

### **Is there a main shut-off valve for sprinkler system?**

Locate the main shutoff valve on your irrigation system. It is between the main water supply to your home and the sprinkler controller. Alternately, the main shutoff may be located outdoors near a faucet bib. Check for a box in this area which is designed to protect your main valve from the elements.

## How do you winterize a sprinkler system with a backflow preventer?

Turn off water to the backflow preventer. Most have an isolation shutoff valve located below ground before the backflow preventer. Open test cocks on the backflow preventer to drain all the water from it. Once water is drained, close both shutoff valves with a one-quarter counterclockwise turn.

## Should you leave sprinkler valves open in winter?

Manual valves should be left in the open position throughout winter to prevent re-pressurization. Some sprinkler heads have both side and bottom pipe inlets. If you use the side inlet, install a drain valve on the bottom inlet to prevent the case from freezing.



### **How To Drain The Water From Your Backflow Preventer**

**Step 1: Close the main valve and open the drain valve.  
(These are usually located 3-5 feet in the ground.)**

**Step 2: Using a screwdriver, turn the screws in the test  
cocks at an angle as shown in the lines in the  
picture below, and do the same with the shut-off  
valve handles.**

**Note 1: There should be 2 Test cocks and 2 shut-off valves.**

**WARNING: Do Not Close Your Shut-Off Valves And Leave Your  
Water On! Your Backflow Will Freeze And Crack!**

