

# Seasonal Checklist for Michigan Residents

Use this checklist to stay on top of routine, year-round maintenance and prepare for common seasonal plumbing problems ahead of time to keep your family safe and your money in the bank. Should you feel unsure about any of these steps, call a WaterWork emergency plumber immediately. **Always proceed with caution.**

## Winter

Time to insulate and hibernate!

- Frozen/Burst Pipes**
  - Disconnect hoses and other attachments.
  - Insulate pipes with heat tape, wraps or Styrofoam.
  - Turn up the heat in your home if pipes seem too cold.
  - Open cabinets or pipe enclosures to expose them to hot air.
  - Turn off all water if you are gone for significant periods of time.
  - Should pipes freeze but have NO damage, try running a blow dryer on low heat setting along the length of the pipe until it thaws.
  
- Keep Cold Air Out**
  - Seal leaks around doors and windows.
  
- Inspect/Clean Sump Pump**
  - Inspect sump pump and clean out if clogged.
  - Consider wrapping with insulation - if exposed to extreme cold, sump pump can stop operating.
  
- Crawl Space**
  - Insulate any exposed pipes with heat tape as they're not protected from cold air like those inside your home.
  
- Water Heaters**
  - Keep housing room warm by sealing drafts and raising temp.
  - Inspect for damage or sediment buildup.
  - If water is still cold, consider turning up the water heater's thermostat by 5-10 degrees. Be mindful of scalding and pay attention to owner's manual.



## Spring

Time to clean gutters and stay dry!

### **Flooding**

Heavy rainfall can spell trouble for basements. Prepare by:

- Flushing corrosion and sediment deposits from water heater.
- Detecting and repairing leaky faucets.
- Taking measures to divert excess snow melt away from home.
- Keeping an eye on basement dampness/leaks and handling the problem immediately by calling a WaterWork plumber to come take a look before the problem gets worse.

### **Gutters**

- Clean leaves and sticks out of all gutters so that rainfall can flow easily.
- Make sure downspouts are elongated and pointing away from house.

### **Backflow Season**

- Time to test your backflow prevention device - call a plumber to make sure your family's drinking water is safe.
- Though rare, should your backflow prevention be failing, call a plumber immediately to inspect and replace it.

### **Rain Collection**

- Spring is an excellent time to install a rain collection system to use on your lawn and gardens and save money on your water bill.
- If you're not comfortable building a DIY rain barrel system, call a
- WaterWork plumber to come out and quickly install a rain collection solution for you.

### **Sump Pump & Backup Pumps**

- Test sump pump and backup systems by pouring water into them to see if they turn on.
- If they work, quickly shut them off and drain the water. If not, call a plumber to come out and inspect the units for the root cause.



## Summer

Time to repair and maintain!

### Landscaping

- Keep flower bed mulch away from siding and other building materials that will soak it up (about 6 inches).
- Use heavy mulch instead of light chips that can wash into drains and gutters causing clogs.
- Grade beds and lawn so that water from downspouts flows away from your home.

### Tree Roots

- Call WaterWork to schedule your yearly clean out and drain snaking to ensure tree roots are not growing into your underground pipes. (May consider doing this twice a year if you have a lot of trees or long running pipes.)

### Sprinkler Systems

- Summer is good time to install and repair or remove sprinkler systems. Ensure sprinklers are placed so that the water is not hitting your foundation.

### Standing Water

Should you see standing water, call a plumber immediately and consider the following causes:

- Leaky or broken pipes
- Poor soil quality
- Poor lawn grading
- Malfunctioning irrigation
- Sewage line issues

### Installations & Repairs

- Take advantage of ideal weather to tackle overdue repairs/problems.
- Check basements, bathrooms and kitchens for water damage, mold, leaks, etc.
- Check water heater for leaks and damage/aging.



## Fall

Time to check and prep!

### Gutters

- Leaves are falling so it is time to yet again clean out gutters.
- Make sure all water flow pathways are free for upcoming snow melt to travel with ease away from your home's foundation.

### Outside Backflow Preventers

- Install/replace backflow preventers before winter comes.
- It's a good idea to take care of any outdoor plumbing issues this time of year. Once the ground freezes, plumbers may not be able to service certain areas.

### Outside Hoses, Pipes & Faucets

- Disconnect any water hoses outside the house.
- Shut off water flow to outside pipes and clear any residue water.
- Insulate faucets with Styrofoam kits available at hardware stores.

### Leaks

- Take care of small leaks.
- Helpful Tip:** Before you go to sleep at night, check the water gauge and take the reading. When you wake up, see if the reading on the gauge has changed. If it has, then there is a leak in your home.

### Winterization

- Wrap/Insulate pipes.
- Clean water heater by flushing out water in pipes.
- Get sump pump inspected and cleaned.

### When Going Away for the Winter:

- Shut off main water valve.
- Drain all water from pipes.
- Keep heat on and set thermostat to 55 degrees at the lowest.

