

Helpful Hints

How To Winterize Potable Water Systems

by Nicole Gorsuch

(NAPSA)—Taking a few steps now could save you big bucks next spring on your RV, boat, pool, vacation home or any other seasonal equipment or dwellings—especially when it comes to water system maintenance and avoiding burst or damaged pipes.

Here's how to prepare your potable water system for freezing temperatures safely, effectively and with the lowest environmental impact:

Thoroughly flush and drain pipes and fixtures: Water freezes at 32°F, so leave as little in your system as possible.

Install a water heater bypass: You may need to install a water heater bypass to reduce the amount of winterization fluid required and to protect only the parts of the system vulnerable to freeze damage.

By installing a bypass loop with valves at each end, you will isolate the water system from the heater tank. This allows winterization fluid to be pumped into the system without first filling the tank with fluid. This can save you several gallons of fluid. Make sure your system is capable of accommodating the normal expansion of winterization fluid, which occurs during periods of winter storage. Contacting a qualified plumber for assistance isn't a bad idea either.

Use specially formulated propylene glycol winterization fluid: Choosing the right winterization fluid product is important to ensure the safety of people or pets that might come in contact with and swallow spilled or stored liquid. The right type of winterization fluid can also prevent harmful pollution of ground or surface water in the event of a spill.

A high-quality propylene glycol winterization fluid can provide freeze and burst protection as low as -50°F, and is generally safe for people and the environment. For example, DOWFROST™ RVR, available at Wal-Mart, AutoZone, O'Reilly Auto Parts, Pep Boys and other retailers, is specially formulated for use in RVs and other seasonal equipment and is readily biodegradable to help protect the



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environment. It is safe for incidental contact with people or animals and is practically nontoxic to aquatic life. It also has the added benefit of reducing the nation's dependence on petroleum-based chemicals, because it supplements the propylene glycol with renewable plant-based ingredients.

Flush your system thoroughly in the spring: When winter is over, drain and then flush all the winterization fluid from your water system, using plenty of clean water. Capture the winterization fluid and any contaminated water used to flush the system and dispose of the waste liquid properly.

Don't use automotive anti-freeze for water system winterization: Most auto antifreeze is made from ethylene glycol, which is more toxic than propylene glycol and can be more harmful to the environment. Also, don't use windshield washer fluid either, as it can freeze solid at subzero temperatures.

Consult the instruction manual: To avoid any unnecessary surprises, be aware of and follow any specific instructions provided by the equipment manufacturer. For more information, visit www.dowfrostrvr.com.

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