

YOUR LAWN

Get Your Sprinkler System Set For Cold Weather

(NAPSA)—The sprinkler system that spent all summer keeping your lawn and landscape beautiful—while saving water, time and money—now needs a little help getting ready to withstand the onset of winter and colder temperatures.

Here are tips from the experts at Rain Bird that can help protect your irrigation system:

- **Stay In Control**—If you have an automatic system, then you will need to “shut down” the controller (timer). Most controllers have a “rain” or “off” mode that simply shuts off the signals to the valves. The controller continues to keep time, the programming information (start times, valve run times, etc.) isn’t lost and the clock continues to run. The only change is that the valves will not activate.

An alternative to using that mode is to simply shut off the power to the controller. If you do, you’ll need to reprogram the time and potentially all the other settings when the weather warms up.

- **Insulate Your Assets**—Shut off the water supply to the irrigation system and protect the main shutoff valve against freezing. Make sure the valve is wrapped with insulation (foam insulation tape and a plastic bag). If you don’t have a main shutoff valve, install one and consider it a preventative investment.

Any aboveground piping needs to be insulated as well. Self-sticking, foam-insulating tape or foam-insulating tubes commonly found at home supply stores work well.

- **Drain The Pipes**—People in very cold areas often remove



It’s a cool idea for homeowners to know how to prepare their sprinkler systems for cold weather.

the water from the pipes and sprinklers so it doesn’t freeze and cause the pipes to burst. There are several ways to drain pipes: manual drain valves, automatic drain valves or the compressed air blowout method. Since there could be potential safety risks, contacting an irrigation specialist is a good idea.

- **Protect Backflow Preventers**—Insulate backflow preventers and valves if they are above ground. You can also use insulation tape for this, but be careful not to block the air vents and drain outlets on backflow preventers.

It’s important to consult an irrigation specialist, such as those at Rain Bird, before you attempt to winterize your system.

- **Learn More**—For more irrigation tips as well as information on where to find a specialist to help you winterize your system, visit www.rainbird.com or call (800) RAINBIRD.