



WINTER ACTION SHEET

In order to try and avoid the unnecessary expense of a call out, the London Team offers the following advice:

PROBLEM 1: LEAKS

Leaks have a habit of happening when people go away and, if you're in a block of flats, this can cause damage to a neighbouring property. Where access is needed to a property, the police have the right to break-in, causing additional damage and cost. It's also worth remembering that householders are liable for damage caused to another property by leaks from their own.

ADVICE

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PROBLEM 2: BURST PIPES

In freezing temperatures, external pipes are particularly vulnerable. Water freezes inside and causes the metal to expand and split, in some cases. When the temperatures rise above freezing, the pipes leak.

ADVICE

If you are away when the weather is expected to turn very cold then leaving your heating on a very low setting can prevent the water inside the pipes from freezing and also reduce the amount of power required to warm the home on your return.

Check the pipes going from your boiler to outside drains and make sure they are insulated. Modern boilers are very efficient but as they need to have a pipe that leads to a drain, this can sometimes freeze, blocking the boiler and causing problems. Simply insulating this with some cheap pipe lagging foam can help to prevent this and in cold weather it's worth checking and defrosting the pipe with warm water.

PROBLEM 3: BLOCKED TOILETS

Be careful what you flush down the toilet. Avoid anything other than toilet paper. Paper towels or baby wipes can cause an excellent plug which is extremely difficult to shift. Seasonal guests and parties can increase the strain on your drains.

ADVICE

Make sure you've got bins in bathrooms and if you're expecting guests with very young children, keep some extra sealable waste bags for them to use for wipes.



PROBLEM 4: BLOCKED SINKS

Avoid pouring hot fat and other food waste down plugholes. It will quickly cool and solidify. For some reason, London Team plumbers have found that Christmas Day is especially bad for this as the mixture of food, drink and a festive atmosphere leads to people forgetting or taking less care.

ADVICE

Let everything cool then bag it up and put it for composting or in the bin.

PROBLEM 5: AIR LOCKS

Cold water tanks can also run dry when there are more people in the house than usual, a problem which can also cause airlocks in the plumbing. These air locks prevent water running freely from the tap and it appears there is no water left at all.

ADVICE

Try to make sure that baths and clothes washing times are staggered to allow the water system to refill the tank. As little as ten minutes between showers should be enough.

PROBLEM 6: ELECTRICITY TRIPS

Make sure you know where the location of circuit breakers in your home and check that these have not tripped if you're having electrical problems. It's wise to check that cupboards with electrical switches aren't too cluttered. The London Team frequently finds that objects can fall over and flick switches!

PROBLEM 7: OUTLET PIPES

If you have a boiler with a condensate pipe, check that the pipe is plastic. Sometimes copper pipes are used and these are unsuitable as drainage outlets from boilers as they can corrode.

ADVICE

If you're not sure, get an expert to look as this could lead to expensive problems.

PROBLEM 8: GUTTERING LEAKS

Heavy downfalls of rain can push leaves through drainpipes and cause blockages.

ADVICE

clear leaves from gutters, if it's safe for you to do so. If not, get an expert in to do this – puddles of water on the roof can cause major leaks and damp.

PROBLEM 9: FIRE PREVENTION

Unplugging electrical items if you are going away is always advisable from a safety perspective.