

## Winter is Coming, Be Prepared

October 17, 2022 | Margit Whitlock, AIA | Architectural Concepts

### Winterize and Don't

#### Demise

What do the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and the Lion King all have in common? They all taught us to "Be Prepared!" And now is the time to do just that! While your guests are in the throws of enjoying the changing leaves and crisp fall air, it is time to get



### Time to get out the TOOLS! And Winterize your Resort

to work behind the scenes to ensure your resort will weather the winter well. Now is the time to get Clear, Insulate it, and Service all systems at your resort.

### Let's be Clear!!

#### Roof

Let's start at the top! If your resort is located anywhere above the 32°F line, which includes most of the United States (with the exception of the Southern parts of Florida, Texas, and most Western parts of California) then freezing temperatures can bring the unexpected. Make sure you know the maximum load for your roof. Knowing how much your roof can hold of fresh snow, packed snow or ice will determine when to jump into action and get to clearing the roof this winter. If you don't know the load, consult a structural engineer. And while you are at it, get a roof inspection to be sure everything is in good shape. Fixes are much easier when there isn't weather to contend with.

#### Gutters

To ensure your roof performs well with rain and runoff, get a good look at your gutters. Make sure anything collected during the dry season is removed so water can run through easily. Perform any necessary maintenance and repair now and avoid an unnecessary downpour on your guests.

#### Chimney

While you are looking up, get a good look at your chimney. Nothing says "cozy winter" like a wood-burning fireplace. If your resort is lucky enough to have one, get it inspected now, so at the first drop of the temperature, it can be lit care-free.

#### Landscaping

Now is the time to pay attention to your trees, and not just the ones that are decorated with lights and ornaments in the winter season. All bushes and trees around your buildings and powerlines to need to be trimmed back to avoid an unnecessary power outage and damage to your building and roof. Consider your exterior pathways. Make repairs to paths and stairs so ice does not compound the risk of trip hazards and ensure lighting is sufficient on those paths for the longer nights to come.

## **Insulate It**

### **Plumbing**

Frozen plumbing is annoying when it won't flow and disastrous when it explodes. Avoid both, with a professional inspection ahead of time of your freeze protection devices and fire protection sprinkler systems. Then wrap those pipes with good insulation.

### **Windows & Doors & More**

Leaking isn't only a problem with pipes, cold air leaking into the building and warm air escaping will reveal itself in your wintertime energy expenditure. Save money on the Q4 utility bill now by sealing up cracks and weatherstripping windows and doors. Electrical outlets on exterior walls can be a major source air thoroughfare make sure they are insulated. Then climb into the attic to be sure all openings are insulated.

## **Service It**

### **Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC)**

Get your HVAC system regular preventative maintenance taken care of before entering the peak season and tend to the air filters and fan coils now. If your property doesn't already have a go-to HVAC servicer, now is the time to get them on board and negotiate emergency rates in advance.

### **Generators**

See that you have your professionals on board for your generator as well. Generators should be on a weekly maintenance plan and tested regularly. But it is always a good idea to have a back up to your back up. In addition to the permanent generator, be sure to have portable ones stored in dry locations and tested regularly as well.

## **Do it for your Guests and Owners**

Don't forget to winterize the amenities for your guests! Nothing says "We Love You" more than a cozy blanket. Add warm winter throws to the bedding or sofas in the guestrooms. Stock the room with extra cocoa and marshmallows, pumpkin spice coffee and other seasonal favorites relevant to your location. Make your guests stay warm by winterizing your resort merchandise. Custom design and order branded sweaters, jackets, beanies, and scarves; a fun way to show ownership pride! Sometimes the smallest gestures make the biggest impact. Remember it is about the "Guest Experience" and even though winterizing is an unseen and often unappreciated task, being prepared frees up staff to tend to your guests with the peace of mind that your resort is in tip top shape.

Of course, there are always more ways to be prepared. While you are winterizing your resort and in the flow of preparing, think about disaster preparedness for our property as well. The basics are covered in this Resort Trades article: [Are You Prepared if Mother Nature Comes Calling?](#) (resorttrades.com)

For more enjoyable reading about this exciting topic: Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IIBHS) [Nine budget-friendly ways to prepare your commercial building BEFORE the winter season](#) – [DISASTERSAFETY.ORG](http://DISASTERSAFETY.ORG)

*Author Bio: Margit Whitlock is Principal and Creative Director for Architecture and Interior Design at Architectural Concepts Inc., a San Diego, CA-based Architectural and Interior Design Firm specializing in hospitality design. Ms. Whitlock is an accomplished speaker with engagements at multiple ARDA conventions, HD Boutique show as well as being frequently published in magazines such as Developments, Resort Trades, Hotel Business, Hiatus, Vacation Industry Review and Resort Management and Operations.*