

Protect Your Condo: Winter Checklist

Condos are not immune to cold weather. What you can do:

- q Make the heat work for you! Heat clings to those high ceilings. Use the ceiling fan winter setting (on the remote, or the small button near the fan motor) to make the fan blades rotate slowly upward. This de-stratifies the heat, without making your room drafty.
- q Hard-to-heat room? It's common if a room lacks its own cold air return. A simple pass-through register (over the door) can help.
- q Use your humidifier. Humid air feels warmer, as we know in summer! (During cold snaps, watch for condensation on windows; humidifier controls have settings which depend on the outside temperature.)
- q Don't forget to change the furnace filter monthly.
- q Pipes often freeze when they're in the outside wall, as is the case for many condo kitchen and bathroom sinks. Leave cabinet doors open during cold snaps.
- q Mold is often due to inside moisture, not leakage. Keep stored items a few inches from any outside walls, especially in basement areas.

Want to make points with your condo board? Protect the building:

- q Keep salt away from the brick and mortar: This can erode masonry and mortar cement in just a few years. Better de-icers prevent damage to concrete.
- q Walk around the property to check for missing vent louvers, forgotten garden hoses, etc. Often in new condo buildings, missing exhaust vent covers, caulk joints, etc. lead to cold drafts and leaks.
- q If gutters ice up, consider an outside outlet and gutter heat cord.
- q Icicles look good on a greeting card, but not falling over your building's door. Keep in mind that roofers, or steam pressure washers, can safely remove snow and ice.
- q Use a graphite lock lubricant (not oily spray!) to prevent frozen locks.
- q Use spray insulation to fill hard to reach gaps under doors, baseboards, around exposed brick, etc. Slowly: That stuff gets bigger!

Above all, if you're unsure about anything, talk with a professional!



Michael Massart, Principal Inspector
773 267 2272
massart@insightfulinspections.com
www.insightfulinspections.com