



VACATION TIP SHEET

When you leave for an extended time it is likely you remember to stop the newspaper and have your mail held or picked up by someone else. But do you ever consider what would happen if you sprung a leak somewhere in your plumbing system? Probably not – unless you have experienced this in the past!

It is a wise idea to shut down your water system before you leave to prevent costly damage from water if you have a leak. I was lucky the day I had an emergency shut off valve to my dishwasher break – I was home! There was hot water spraying and steaming inside my kitchen cabinet. Fortunately it was discovered fairly quickly and I was able to shut my water off and drain the water to avoid any more damage. This event could have had an entirely different outcome had we been away on vacation!

Here is a list of steps you should consider when leaving your home for an extended period of time:

1. Turn the power off to your electric water heater.

This will avoid any chance of the element burning out. Elements in an electric water heater must always be covered with water when they are heating. When the water is off, you should always turn the power to your electric water heater off also.

If you have a natural gas or propane water heater you can turn the thermostat down to the “vacation” setting to save on gas and to avoid having to relight the pilot light when you return.

2. If you have an instant hot water machine, unplug the unit from the power outlet.

3. Close your main emergency valve by putting it in the off position. If you do not have one or you do not know where yours is located, contact At Your Service Plumbing for assistance.

4. Open up a faucet on the lowest floor in order to drain the water system. This is especially true in the winter where extreme weather and power outages can cause water in the lines to freeze.

Another hint for those of you traveling during the winter months is to add anti-freeze to your toilet bowls to avoid the water freezing and cracking the toilet during a power outage and no heat!

5. If you have any type of filtration system you will want to be sure it is turned off also.

6. If you have someone watching your home while you are away, be sure to leave them the phone number of At Your Service Plumbing. We answer our phones 24 hours a day, seven days a week for those needing emergency assistance.

When you return:

1. Turn the main emergency shut off valve back on.

2. Open the faucet that is as far away from the main valve as possible and let the water run until all the air is out of the line.

If you have a single handle faucet open it to the cold side and let it run and then move it to the hot side until the water is flowing freely. If you have a two handle faucet you can open the hot and the cold side at the same time but be sure the air is out of both sides and the water is flowing freely.

3. Turn the power on to your electric water heater. If you have a gas heater turn the thermostat back up to the “normal” setting.

4. Plug in your instant hot water machine.

5. Turn on your filtration system.