

## START UP / RETURNING HOME

### How do I check for leaks?

- To check for leaks in your water pipes, follow the same procedure given under the Outside the Home section on the other side of the brochure.
- Check toilets for leaks by using food coloring. Place a few drops of food coloring in the toilet tank. If dye appears in the bowl after 15 minutes, the toilet has a leak. Toilet leaks can usually be repaired by replacing the flapper.
- Dripping or leaking faucets can usually be repaired by replacing the rubber O-ring or washer inside the valve.
- Checking the irrigation system is a must as summer temperatures put stress on the valves, bubbler heads and pipe joints.
  - Check valves for leaks by manually turning on different zones one at a time.
  - Check to see if bubbler, drip and sprinkler heads are still in place and if so, if they are working properly by checking for even flow of water. If they appear clogged, unscrew the heads and wash any debris from them. Calcium buildup can also be a problem, but cleaning them in a mild acid solution such as vinegar can dissolve this away.
  - Also check main irrigation lines for leaks as they can develop over time.
- If the water supply to the reverse osmosis and water softener was turned off when you left, then slowly open the valves one at a time, checking for leaks as you go.
- The reverse osmosis unit should be purged once or twice and disinfected before using.



**Don't let any of these happen to you while you are away.**

Note: The City is not responsible for fixing water related problems that need repair on the residence side of the water meter, which is out by the street. These must be addressed by the land owner. However, for questions on how to find a leak, please call the Water Conservation Officer at (928) 453-6660. If there is a water meter problem at the street, call the Water Division at (928) 855-2618.

For more water conservation information, please go to [www.havasuwatersavers.org](http://www.havasuwatersavers.org)



# Home Water System Checklist to Prepare for Extended Absences

This checklist was developed to help citizens prepare their home and yard for extended periods of vacancy. Many unoccupied homes have experienced unattended water fixture leaks or breaks resulting, at minimum, in water waste and higher water bills. Some cases have resulted in flooded garages or home interiors and still others have affected wall and home foundations through erosion and soil saturation.

**Lake Havasu City  
Public Works Department**

The following checklist provides suggestions of what to inspect, adjust, add, repair or turn off in preparation for leaving the home vacant for extended periods.

## OUTSIDE THE HOME

**Water Meter** - Check for system leaks by:

Read meter, with all water fixtures and appliances turned off. The low flow indicator on the meter, which is either a small blue star or triangle,

★ ▲ , should not rotate if there is no flow – i.e. no leaks. If the indicator is rotating, then water is flowing somewhere in the system.

**In-coming Line, Valve, Pressure Regulator**

**and Hose Bib:** DONE

- Check shut-off valve for leaks (should be a ball valve).
- Check regulator for nominal pressure (i.e. 50-60 psi) with a pressure gauge at hose bib after the regulator.
- Consider a hose bib lock to prevent unwanted access.

**Irrigation:**

- Check to make sure all irrigation valves are working.
- Check for irrigation line leaks or breaks.

**If leaving for the summer:**

- Adjust irrigation timer schedule to fit the season.
- Check bubbler heads for debris and deposits.
- Cap all bubbler heads that are not watering plants.
- Shade exposed pipe from the sun.

**If leaving at other times of the year:**

- Protect exposed pipes from freezing.

**Swimming Pool and Spa:**

- Check the auto-fill valve in your pool.
- Check for leaks in the pump/filter system.
- Set pump circulation time to fit the season.
- Cover pool to reduce evaporation loss.

**Evaporative/Swamp Coolers:**

- Check motor fan belt tension.
- Check condition of cooler pad.
- Float valve working properly.
- Coat tray with submarine sealer to prevent rust.
- In winter, turn off water supply line and drain feed line.

**Decorative Water Features:**

- Check drainage and piping system for leaks/clogs.
- Check auto fill valve/lights.

## INSIDE THE HOME

**Water Softener:**

- Check the hardness (should be ~ 19-20 grains).
- Check time settings (power outage).
- Exercise by-pass valve (lubricate o-rings).

**Or Better**

- Unplug the softener and set by-pass water valve.

**Or if you have a shut-off valve at the softener,**

- Close the shut-off valve and check that the hot and cold water faucets inside the house are really off.\*

\* Except for some older homes, this should prevent water from flowing into the residence, protecting the interior in case a leak develops. A shut-off at this location should still let irrigation systems work outside, whereas closing the main valve to the home may prevent some irrigation valve stations from getting water.

DONE

**Reverse/Osmosis System:**

- Check filters and replace as necessary.
- Check for leaks on tubes and at tube connections.

**Or Better**

- Turn off water valve to R/O system.
- If you do, drain the filter cylinders and dry.\*\*

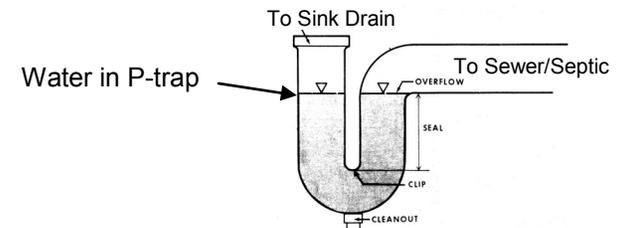
\*\* Water in the filter cylinders could become contaminated if left unused for extended periods. This procedure is for many R/O models, but please consult the manufacturer or service company for your model to make sure what to do.

**Bathroom/Kitchen/Utility:**

- Check connections, faucets and pipes for leaks.
- Check your toilet flapper.

**NOTE:** If you decide to turn your water off to the inside of your house, we highly recommend:

1) That either someone occasionally runs water down all drains and toilets **OR** put in vegetable oil down all drains and toilets so water does not evaporate from the P-trap below them. If it does, then sewer gas could enter the house and you probably will not like the odor.



2) Turn off your water heater so that if the water in the tank accidentally drains out, the heating element does not try to continue to heat and burn out or worse. It will also save on energy costs. Verify with your manufacturer that no harm will occur to water appliances in the house.

DONE