



VACATION PREP: PEST-PROOF YOUR HOME BEFORE YOU LEAVE

A CHECKLIST FOR MINNESOTA HOMEOWNERS



Going on vacation should be relaxing—not stressful because of pests waiting at home. Before you leave, a few preventative steps can protect your house from rodents, insects, and wildlife intrusion. Use this checklist to minimize risks while you're away.

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Secure Entry Points

- Check all doors and windows for proper seals.
- Close vents or gaps around pipes and cables.
- Repair damaged screens and weather stripping.
- Ensure garage doors and pet doors are fully closed or locked.

Remove Food Sources

- Store pantry items, pet food, and birdseed in sealed containers.
- Clean countertops and floors to remove crumbs or spills.
- Take out the trash and recycling before leaving.
- Avoid leaving fallen fruit or garden produce in the yard.



Manage Moisture

- Fix leaking faucets, pipes, and irrigation systems.
- Empty or remove standing water in gutters, planters, or birdbaths.
- Ensure downspouts direct water away from the foundation.

Moisture attracts insects and rodents and can create mold or mildew while you're gone.



Yard and Outdoor Prep

- Trim trees and shrubs away from the house.
- Store firewood at least 20 feet from the home.
- Remove debris, fallen branches, and yard clutter.
- Close compost bins securely.

Interior Checks

- Inspect the attic, basement, and crawl spaces for signs of pest activity.
- Remove pet bowls or water sources, unless someone is monitoring them.
- Keep interior lights on timers to deter intruders.
- Ensure window wells and vents are screened and secure.



Professional Support

- Schedule a pest inspection if you notice prior activity.
- Ask a professional about preventative treatments for insects or rodents.
- Consider wildlife-proofing measures if your home is prone to animal intrusion.

Last-Minute Tips

- Let a trusted neighbor know your plans so they can monitor the property.
- Avoid leaving open doors or windows for ventilation while away.
- Keep valuables stored securely—sometimes pests are drawn to cluttered storage areas.