

Check Off List For Closing Your Tanglewood Home For The Summer

Check Off Once Completed	
	Have your home inspected often and especially after a thunder storm. Either hire one of the many Home Watchers available in Tanglewood or have a good year-round friend handle. Remember that person has to go in your home to check on it often. Leave keys, summer address, emails, phone numbers on how they can get in touch with you. Leave all the names and phone numbers a House Watcher or friend would need to take care of a problem that may occur. The House Watcher should know who handles your sprinklers, roof, yard care, bug control and name of your handyman. Let several neighbors know who house sits for you, so if they see a problem they can report it. Remember why you leave for the summer? Florida is warm and humid.
	Cancel mail and give forwarding address to Post Office. If possible have a friend or house watcher make sure your mail is really stopped and not left in mailbox. Notify the Business Office when you will be away and returning. Make sure they have an up-to-date emergency list for you.
	Stop Cable or Satellite TV Services or place on vacation.
	Stop Newspaper(s). If possible have a friend or house watcher make sure your newspaper is really stopped and not left. Have them check for any phone books or flyers left at your door. This is a sure give away that you are not at home!
	Cancel land line telephone service and get a new phone number when you come back. Can also forward land line calls to cell (still pay monthly charge). Can keep same land line phone number by paying a monthly fee. Check with your phone provider. Remove batteries from unused phones and clocks.
	Flush all toilets several times then flush a cup of bleach, so it will stay in the traps. Wrap the toilet bowl with plastic wrap (Press 'n Seal works great) and the tank top. Do not put bleach in the toilet tanks as it will eat the gaskets. Just remove the tank lid, wrap and replace lid.
	Leave appliances unplugged while you are gone to protect from electrical current surges during summer storms and energy drain. Unplug lamps, etc. that are not needed. During the summer, we can get a number of lighting strikes!
	Turn water off at the main junction at the street, garage, or under house. Some houses have shut offs, under the sinks.
	Turn off inside breaker for all unneeded items. Make sure the Hot Water breakers are off. Make sure A/C, sprinkler pump and pole light are on!
	If leaving electric to some outlets on, place timers to go on and off so it appears you are still home.
	Close blinds and/or curtains to keep sun out.
	Place a new bulb in your yard light and leave an extra bulb for whoever is watching your house.
	Vacuum and empty bag, this can grow mold over time.
	Return any library books or other items borrowed from our library or the public library. Make sure DVD's are inside the box before returning.
	Empty all wastebaskets. Make sure all trash is removed from home. If necessary have a neighbor place your trash out for pick up.
	Food soils and body oils left on towels, bedsheets, articles of clothing, or furnishings absorb water out of humid air and attract mildew fungi and pests such as roaches and ants. It's important to clean thoroughly before you leave. When appropriate, clean using a mild bleach solution or hot sudsy water.
	Vacuum upholstered furniture well (even crevice areas). If there are spots and stains, remove or clean before closing the home. This becomes bug food! Use a commercial upholstery cleaner following manufacturers instructions. Clean and leave a light coating of wax on surfaces of wood furniture. Cover furniture, if desired.
	Clean all appliances thoroughly. To remove spatters in a microwave, heat a cup of water in a cool microwave for two minutes on high. Condensation on the walls will loosen spatters. Wash with sudsy water, rinse and dry. If portable model, leave it unplugged. Clean the lint filter in the dryer. Clean range and if self-cleaning, run through it's cycle. Clean portable appliances thoroughly. Be sure to open the trap door under the toaster to remove crumbs and clean.

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	<p>Dishwasher: Remove any food particles from the filter, if one is present in the bottom of the dishwasher. Run the dishwasher through a short cycle. After a few minutes into the cycle, turn off the dishwasher, open the door and clean out around the door gasket and under the bottom of the door to remove any residual soil that might mold in these areas. Complete the cycle. Unlatch the door, but leave it closed to release the pressure on the door seal.</p>
	<p>Open closet and cabinet doors to ventilate especially under the sinks. Place fabric softener sheets in clothing drawers.</p>
	<p>Disposal: Run ice cubes thru the garbage disposal unit to clean it. Run a solution of baking soda and water through the disposer and leave the stopper in place to prevent water from the trap beneath the disposer from evaporating during the summer. If possible, have someone run it, once a month and/or turn on disposal and lubricate with a little WD 40 or run ice cubes thru. If water is turned off, water will have to be brought in and used as well as ice cubes, if needed.</p>
	<p>Place ant and roach traps at all venerable points in the home.</p>
	<p>Unopened cans and jars of food can be left on shelves, if the use by date will not expire while you are away. Give any unopened foods to a friend or one of the food pantries, if they will expire. Give opened containers to a friend or trash. Put spices and dry foods in sealed bags/containers.</p>
	<p>Fresh and perishable foods should be eaten or discarded. Give away or toss opened bottles and jars of salad dressings, condiments, etc., in the refrigerator. It will cost less to replace them, if you are gone for the season than to run your refrigerator. Clean the refrigerator interior with a solution of 1 tablespoon of baking soda in 1 quart of water to neutralize food soils and prevent odors or follow your manufacturers instructions. Dry thoroughly. Remove and clean the defrost pan behind the grill at the bottom of your refrigerator, if appropriate. Turn refrigerator off. Turn off ice maker. Leave doors ajar with an open box of baking soda in it, making sure it can not close. Some people will pull refrigerator out, clean behind and leave out until returning.</p>
	<p>Make sure that your outside A/C is able to have air circulate around it. Bushes will grow quickly in the summer and must be trimmed to help prevent A/C problems. There are several people in the park that will install a short fence around you're A/C, after bushes are removed, so you do not have to worry about keeping bushes trimmed all year. Make sure you have someone checking and trimming bushes during the summer, if necessary.</p>
	<p>Just before you leave is a good time for an air conditioner check-up by a professional. You should change the air conditioning filter or if washable, wash it. An accumulation of dirt plus the summer heat and humidity can cause mildew and mold growth which can spread through the house.</p>
	<p>Make arrangements for lawn, shrub and insect services. Your house must look like you are still living here. Cut flowers and bushes back. Weed and fertilize trees and plants. Arrange to have yard mowed and cared for. Bushes and trees trimmed as needed. Outside plants grow very quickly during the summer rainy season! Do something with all your live interior plants and any outside hanging plants or in pots. Weeds grow really fast during the summer, so your lawn needs weeding often.</p>
	<p>Put away wind chimes, furniture, flags, hoses and anything else which may be outside. Remember that we can have high winds and bad heavy rains or even a hurricane, while you are gone. If heavy winds would move it, remove it!</p>
	<p>Make sure that all important personal papers are packed to take North. Remember if doing your taxes up North take everything you will need that is here in Tanglewood.</p>
	<p>Check /Adjust timers on sprinklers. While away make sure someone is checking to make sure all are working properly.</p>
	<p>Electric Golf Carts: Add distilled water to batteries and charge fully before removing the negative and positive cables off for the summer.</p>
	<p>Lock all doors, including front, back, garage side door, door from garage to house. Lock all windows - after locking, try to open to make sure they are locked! Sliding glass doors should have a bolt-type lock to prevent its being lifted out of its track and/or a jamming bar in the inside track.</p>
	<p>Power wash house before leaving, so mold will not grow during the summer or at least is controlled.</p>
	<p>Bikes can rust if left in the garage or outside during the summer. If possible, clean and bring inside. If any batteries are in a light attached to bike, remove.</p>

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	Place moisture absorbers such as kitty litter, DampRid moisture absorber and/or activated charcoal from an aquarium store in a few areas including enclosed patios if your home does not have a humidistat. May have to purchase extra so house watcher or friend can change, as needed. Set air conditioner (A/C) to 80 degrees.
	Many Tanglewood homes have had a humidistat installed. While the thermostat on your A/C measures the temperature inside the home, a humidistat measures the humidity. If the temperature is high but the humidity level is low, the humidistat does not allow the air conditioner to run. This prevents using electricity to cool your home when you aren't there. If, however, the humidity level inside the home creeps into the range where mold and mildew could become a problem, the humidistat runs the air conditioner until the humidity level is reduced. In this way, you protect your home from mold problems while you are away without having to maintain a specific temperature in the home. Check your humidistat for proper settings. This can be a real energy saver. To operate your Humidistat when away: Turn Thermostat to cool, fan to auto, set temperature to 80 degrees , humidistat to 70. To operate your Humidistat when home: Turn Humidistat to on, set temperature as desired.
	Make sure drains are open before turning water back on when you return, in case some valves are on.
	Remember getting a house watcher can be money well spent!
	Enjoy your vacation but come back soon!