

Your Yard

Set Your Irrigation System Up For The Season

(NAPSA)—To keep the grass greener on your side of the fence next spring, there are a few steps you should take now.

For example, if you use a sprinkler system to help keep your lawn in great shape, there are certain tasks you must perform to protect your system before winter arrives.

Experts recommend that you winterize your system around the middle of autumn to make certain that the job is done before any freezing occurs. The process mainly consists of getting all the water out of the lines. When water is left in the system and freezes, it can damage the valves, pipes and other system components.

Here are some tips from the experts at Rain Bird:

- **Start by turning off the timer.** Automatic irrigation systems have a controller or timer. Most controllers have a “rain” or “off” mode that shuts off the signals to the valves. Turning it “off” allows the controller to keep all the essential programming information stored. The only change is that the valves will not turn on. If you unplug or cut the power to your controller, you may need to reprogram it in the spring.

- **Make sure the water is off.** Shutting off the irrigation main water supply helps to protect the system from damage. If your system doesn't have a main shutoff valve, it's a good idea to install one to protect your investment.

- **Wrap it up.** It's a good idea to insulate any aboveground



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pipes, backflow preventers and valves by wrapping them with foam insulation tape and a plastic bag.

- **Next, drain the pipes.** People who live in regions that freeze should remove the water from pipes to protect them from freezing and bursting.

There are several ways to drain pipes, including opening the valves manually and using compressed air to “blow out” the system. Since there can be some risk involved, it's always a good idea to contact an irrigation contractor who specializes in winterization.

- **Learn more.** For more irrigation tips as well as information on where to find a specialist, visit www.rainbird.com or call (800) RAINBIRD.