



Handy Cottage Hints—Closing for the Winter

Many first-time cottage owners may not be aware of some of the things that experienced cottagers take for granted. Here are some thoughts with respect to “closing up” for the winter to share with clients new to the cottage experience.

- Arrange a meeting with the vendor of the cottage to get their detailed instructions on shutting down the water system. A video camera or tape recorder can come in handy at this time.
- Place all linens and towels in mouse proof containers over the winter. A simple green garbage bag is **not** good enough. It is amazing how these creatures find their way in.
- Keep your cottage vented during the winter months. Leave two windows open 1/8 inch at opposite ends of the building, on the North and South side. As most storms come from the East or West, you do not want to leave these windows unsealed.
- If your cottage is not heated during the winter months, remove **ALL** food items that will freeze. There has been more than one first time owner close the door in October, head South for the winter, only to return to a mess in the spring caused by exploded pop cans etc.
- Have someone you trust monitor the cottage when you are away. There are house insurance implications here, as well as monitoring the snow load on the roof.
- If your cottage is heated during the winter, consider installing a temperature alarm to alert you to power outages. These systems use the phone line to warn you of temperature drops. You want to have time to react to prevent frozen pipes.
- If you decide to visit your unheated cottage for a winter get-a-way, avoid taking a shower, washing clothes, or cooking meals that generate a lot of moisture, shortly before you leave. After you leave, this extra moisture will condense, potentially causing mold growth.

Are You Having a Bad Air Day?

Indoor Air Quality can be a tough topic to “sell” in Muskoka when the sun is shining, the windows are wide open and summer has at long last arrived. However, here are some good reasons why you shouldn’t just ignore this subject:

- As Canadians we spend **90%** of our time inside!
- Asthma in our children quadrupled between 1978 and 1996. (Source: Health Canada, 1999).

Now if you have a client with a child who suffers from asthma, Indoor Air Quality is going to be a very real concern for them. When searching for a new home, you will be able to help them in not only finding the “right” home for them, but in finding a “healthy” home for their family.

This is where BCS Home Inspection Services comes in. We are able to offer two different services to your clients:

- An Indoor Air Quality “snapshot” 3 hour test that can be done in conjunction with their home inspection. This can give them a quick overview of the air quality in the home.
- A comprehensive 3 day (72 hour) test. This option goes into more detail as it is possible to track the indoor air quality in three different locations of the home for a period of 24 hours in each location.

The Canary Air Quality Assurance system we use is able to analyze six key air quality factors recognized as critical by the Canadian Healthy Indoors Partnership (HIP):

- Temperature
- Humidity
- Carbon dioxide
- Carbon monoxide
- Particulates; and
- Volatile Organic Compounds.

The Canary System complies with guidelines set by CMHC (Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation), Health Canada’s Guidelines for Residential Indoor Air Quality, and ASHRAE (The American Society of Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers).

Note that improper temperatures and humidity levels can lead to the development of mold in the home.

Wood Energy Technology Transfer (WETT) Certified

Just a reminder that BCS Home Inspection Service is WETT certified to do “Basic Inspection” on wood burning appliances as part of a home inspection, or as a stand-alone request. A detailed written report will be provided to the client.

BCS Home Inspection Services
We have your clients’ needs covered!
1-866-545-6077

