

## Before You Leave. . .

- **Refrigerator:** Empty the refrigerator of all perishable items (meats, eggs, milk, etc.). If residents are going to be away for more than one month, shut off the refrigerator completely from the circuit breaker panel and leave the refrigerator and freezer doors open. If the resident prefers to keep the refrigerator on, set it at its warmest setting. If residents prefer to keep their refrigerator off, they should clean the interior with a solution of one tablespoon of baking soda in one quart of water, dry thoroughly, and leave the doors open. Turn off the circuit breaker to the refrigerator. Remove all food from the freezer and refrigerator and leave the door(s) propped open.
- **Icemaker:** If the refrigerator has an automatic ice maker, switch it to the “off” position.
- **Food:** Flour, sugars, and salt should be stored in tightly sealed containers. Dispose of cereals, crackers, and pastas to avoid household pests. Fresh and perishable foods should be eaten or discarded. Give away or discard opened bottles and jars of salad dressings, condiments, and other perishable items. Replacing these items will cost less than paying to keep your refrigerator running during the two to three months you are gone.
- **Cable or satellite boxes:** Unplug or turn off cable or satellite to avoid paying for energy you aren't using. Contact the cable/satellite company to inform them.
- **Water heater:** Turn off the circuit breaker to the water heater.
- **Small appliances and electronics:** Unplug small appliances. Leave appliances unplugged while you are gone to protect them from electrical-current surges during storms.
- **Water Valves:** Turn off the main water valve unless you have an automatic fire-sprinkler system. If you do have an automatic fire-sprinkler system, turn off the water valves to your washing machine, kitchen and bathroom sinks, dishwasher, and toilets.
- **Instant Hot Water:** If you have an instant hot water dispenser or filter under your kitchen sink, unplug it or turn it off at the electrical circuit breaker.
- **Dishwasher:** Empty it and leave the door open.
- **Washing machine/Toilets:** Leave the lid open to the washing machine. Turn off the water supply valves to all fixtures (sinks, washing machine, toilets, etc.).
- **Air-conditioning:** Florida is warm and humid. Set the unit air-conditioning thermostat at approximately 70–75 degrees. If the unit has a humidistat, set the air-conditioning thermostat and humidistat at 70 degrees. Pests and mildew and bacteria will live in humid conditions. Residents should not turn off their AC! They should ensure the drain pan is clear prior to vacating their unit and sign up for a preventative maintenance plan.
- **Change AC filter.** If it is washable, then wash it. An accumulation of dirt plus the summer heat and humidity can lead to mildew and mold growth, which can spread throughout the home.
- **Thermostats:** For programmable or smart thermostats, set AC to run at 72 degrees for just two hours each morning before sunrise and at 75 degrees for the remainder of the time. Change batteries on digital thermostats. For non-programmable thermostats, it is suggested you set AC at 75 degrees.
- **Closets/Cabinets:** Open closets and cabinet doors just to keep fresh air moving in and out of those areas.
- **Management Office/Keys:** If the resident has a housekeeper, personal representative, or anyone else taking care of the apartment in their absence, the resident needs to notify the office and provide them with keys to the apartment.

- Ensure that the office has the proper key to the apartment door and vehicle in the event of emergencies or flooding in the garage area. The key will only be used in the event of an emergency or maintenance inspections or repairs.
- Leave a key to the resident's vehicle in the unit next to the remote control for the roll up shutters in the event of a hurricane or emergency and in case management needs to relocate the vehicle.
- Ideally, residents can leave a key with someone they trust—a relative, friend, or neighbor—who can enter the home once or twice a month to check on appliances, sinks, air-conditioning systems, and other possible sources of problems.
- **Emergency Contact Number:** Please make sure that the office has an emergency contact number for the resident while they are away.
- **Mail:** Fill out a Mail Forward Form from the Post Office or visit <https://www.usps.com/manage/forward.htm> if you would like your mail forwarded to an alternate address. Whether you're making a long-term move, or you'll just be at a new address for just a few months, USPS® mail and package forwarding services can send your mail to you.
- **Newspaper:** Stop or redirect newspaper delivery.
- **Hurricane Preparedness:** As a precautionary measure to prevent water seepage during a tropical storm, the association recommends that towels be placed in all door tracks to absorb water.
- **Hurricane Storm Shutters:** Closing and opening storm shutters may be the sole responsibility of the unit owner and/or his authorized representative to do so. Make arrangements and notify the office.
- **House Sitter/Representative:** The unit owners should seek a reliable house sitter, someone who can visit the unit while you are away to check on possible problems that pop up, such as plumbing leaks and storm damage.
- **Doors & Windows:** Residents should close drapes and blinds. Make sure all doors and windows are locked and sealed.
- **Smoke Detectors:** Replace smoke detector batteries.
- Update Mailing & Email Addresses for Association Voting and Correspondence

\*These tips are intended as guidelines to help residents save energy, prevent mold growth, and avoid issues. However, because each situation is unique, we cannot guarantee any particular result will be achieved by following these tips, and each association should draft and customize site-specific guidelines.

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