

# Draining Down & Frost Damage.

If your holiday home is to be left unoccupied during the winter months or in cold weather it is necessary to ensure that the water system is drained down when unoccupied to avoid frost damage.

Check your insurance policy to see how cover is provided during periods when the caravan is unoccupied. Your chosen insurer will be able advise you of any exclusions or restrictions.

Your manufacturer's handbook will be able to provide specific guidance about your system. If you are unsure about conducting the process yourself, ask your park for assistance. Many operators offer a winterisation service and it is worth consideration if you don't have the ability, time or equipment to undertake the drain down.

The following is a guide for a successful drain down:

- Turn off the gas supply.
- Turn off the water supply.
- Locate external water drainage plugs underneath your caravan and open them.
- Turn on all taps including the shower and leave open. Make sure that nothing obstructs plugholes and leave the showerhead in the shower tray or bath.
- Flush the toilet and ensure that all water is drained from the cistern.
- The pipe work should be 'blown through' using compressed air to make sure that all water has been removed from your holiday home.
- It is advisable to add a small amount of anti-freeze or salt into any remaining water in the bowl or toilet as well as traps in the sinks and showers.
- Ensure that any water heaters are drained. Having already isolated the gas supply, turn the water temperature control to position 1 (warm) and then having a suitable container below the drain valve, allow the water content to drain by unscrewing the drain down valve. The drain down valve should not be replaced until the water heater is used again.

It is also advisable to ensure that all exposed piping is adequately lagged. When returning to your holiday home, simply reverse the procedure above.

## IMPORTANT

- It is imperative water systems are drained in accordance with manufacturer recommendations to avoid a potential disaster and that it is carried out in a competent manner. We recommend that you employ the services of either a qualified local engineer or instruct the park to undertake the drain down.
- If your holiday home is fitted with a hot water central heating you should note that it is a self-contained pressurised system. A qualified engineer should maintain it regularly. DO NOT remove the drain plugs to your central heating system.
- If you have any doubts, consult your park manager for further advice or for direction to a recognised tradesman.

## **Winter Care in General.**

If you intend to use your holiday home in weather or during periods below freezing point, it is important maintain heating continuously to protect your internal plumbing. Many systems have a 'frost stat' setting that can also be utilised as appropriate.

- Remove soft furnishings and curtains to protect from damp.
- Stand seat cushions up on end to allow air to circulate around them.
- Ensure all fixed ventilation is not obstructed and that internal doors wardrobes and cupboard doors are left ajar to allow an uninterrupted flow of air to circulate throughout the interior.
- Clean and empty the fridge and freezer and wedge open the door.
- Remove all foodstuffs to avoid attracting vermin.
- Turn off the electric supply.
- Clean the gutters and clean the exterior.
- Check all windows and doors are tightly closed and ensure nothing is trapped in them.
- Ensure any loose items are safely secured.
- Ensure that vents are never obstructed. This is a vital safety precaution where as is used.

If at all possible return to your holiday home periodically to check on its condition.