

Get Ready for Snow!

You never know at the beginning of the winter season how heavy our snowfall will be at Serene Lakes. Will it be unbelievable, massively inundating, or just incredibly heavy? Sometime in early October, it's a good idea to start your preparations for the coming months. I suggest you make a ritual of this preparation for Mother Winter and develop a check list that you can refine year after year. If you have a similar spring ritual for assessing the damage done by the last winter, the resulting list of repairs is a good place to start your winter preparation.

Most winter damage can be prevented with proper planning and design. Here's the start of a checklist. Any additions are welcome. Feel free to drop me an email.

Snow Stakes. The best material for snow stakes are 2 x 2 wooden poles painted bright orange. Plastic pipe tends not to stay upright very well. Metal pipes are dangerous if hit by a snow blower and can impale someone if fallen upon. For most homes, you should consider putting snow stakes at the following locations:

- a. Where the driveway flare meets the street edge.
- b. At the beginning and end of the driveway straight section.
- c. At the center and each edge of your propane tank.
- d. At the edge of your roof overhang at the front of your house, if it could potentially be impacted by snow removal equipment.

Snow Dump Areas. Look at your roof line. It will tell you where the most massive and possibly destructive accumulation of snow will occur. Snow sliding off a roof can exert tremendous force. Snow dump areas should

be clear of plants that could be damaged or anything that can be smashed.

Door and Window Protection. Windows or doors on the eave ends of slopes may be impacted by snow. Although heat radiating from the house will usually create a gap between snow and the structure, shifting snow or freshly fallen snow can close this gap quickly and dramatically. This can result in damage, such as a broken window or door, which can be catastrophic in the middle of winter in a vacant cabin. Shutters do not need to be solid but can be made out of spaced boards, such as 2 x 4's or 2 x 6's, as long as they are kept several inches clear of the glass. The size of board is determined by its span. Also, remove screens from any windows or doors which will get snow accumulation.

Storage of "Toys." Storing canoes in locations where they will be buried in snow can result in a disappointing revelation come Spring. You can use the underside of a deck as a place to store canoes and other water toys as long as they are up high. Otherwise, it may be necessary to build a protective cover. Even large decks may have significant snow accumulation under them in heavy snow years like last year.

Drainage. Fix any drainage problems, since you will not be able to get at the soil to fix them during the snow season. Otherwise, you will be left with potentially large pools of water up against your house during the spring melt.

Garage Doors. For those of you lucky enough to have a garage, protect your garage

door with a removable barrier system. There

are several design examples around. The most basic idea is to use 2 x 12's, with hand holes cut out, that slide into a grooved track. The barriers should be at least 3 boards high and placed at least 16 inches forward of your garage door to protect it from possible snow removal equipment damage.

hold removable bollards. Don't forget to clean out your garage, since inside parking is a precious commodity during the depths of winter.

Have a great winter!

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The bollards used to hold the snow planks in place can be removable. As an example, check out my design at 4200 Lake Drive, which uses pipes inset into the ground to

