

COMING BACK TO MY SMR HOME CHECKLIST

Assuming you completed our "**Leaving My SMR Home for the Summer Checklist**" before you left, you should be in good shape for your return, BUT anything can happen, especially during the summer Monsoons, so it's a great idea to also do a thorough "check-in" procedure as you arrive back.

-- **BEFORE** you start your self-inspections, get a thorough debrief from your designated House Watcher (who you hopefully instructed to keep a log of any significant issues that might have cropped up). Then proceed with these general areas:

---> **PRE-ARRIVAL**: Before you leave for Tucson, don't forget to schedule turn-ons for any services you had turned off, disconnected, or discontinued (gas, electric, water, cable, newspaper, etc.)

_____ **1. CHECK FOR BREAK-INS** *if no one has been watching your house.*

.....___ **a.** Any signs of forced entry

.....___ **b.** Any evidence of missing items (TIP: this is why we recommend that you take photos or videos **before** you leave -- which also provide claim documentation if you do have any stolen items)

_____ **2. CHECK FOR WATER LEAKS** and the current integrity of connections in all areas (turn on, run, and turn off all connections).

.....___ **a.** Water heater

.....___ **b.** Water pipes to sinks, sewer, and solar water heating

.....___ **c.** All faucets (indoor **and** outdoor)

.....___ **d.** Leakage (skylights, foundation lines, floor/wall/ceiling joints, exterior doors)

.....___ **e.** Connections to dish and clothes washers (test run them)

.....___ **f.** Yard drip systems (They are small tubes, but breaks really leak LOTS of water!)

.....___ **g.** Water filtration systems

.....___ **h.** Water softener systems.

ACTION: If you find possible water leaks, call a licensed plumber for timely repairs. In addition to higher water bills, they can lead to something far more costly to repair -- mold damage!

***TIME SAVER**: At the same time you run the water leak self-inspection above (#1), you can run the mold self-inspection below (#3)

_____ **3. CHECK FOR MOLD DAMAGE** using sight (aided by a strong flashlight) and smell.

Check these areas:

.....___ **a.** Under kitchen and bathroom cabinets

.....___ **b.** Under laundry room, wet-bar, and garage sinks

.....___ **c.** Where water purification filter lines run to a sink or refrigerator outlet

.....___ **d.** Around your water heater.

ACTION: If you find possible mold, always report it to your home insurer. (In most cases you will need a licensed mold removal and restoration contractor.) Letting mold go can result in very expensive repairs.

_____ **4. CHECK FOR DRY ROT** by gently pushing into wood with a thin awl (available at any hardware or building supply store). If it moves into the wood easily (or the wood seems paper-like), it's likely dry rot -- which will spread and can lead to costly repairs. Check these areas:

.....___ **a.** Bottom of porch posts (where water pools)

.....___ **b.** Ends of rafter tails

-__ **c.** All joints and seams around the home
-__ **d.** Wood siding and beams, paying particular attention to where they join other siding or seams and joints around your home (especially at the ground line)

ACTION: Repairs usually involve heavier construction/tools/ladder work, so for safety we suggest you contact a general construction/repair licensed contractor

.....__ **5. CHECK FOR BREAK-INS BY PESTS TOO!** (This is more likely in SMR than people break-ins!)

.....__ **a.** Check for droppings and chewing damage from pack rats. (This is usually more of a garage problem if there are gaps they can enter through, but they may have been hard at work in your yard areas too).

.....__ **b.** If you haven't had regular outside and inside pest control treatments during your absence, you might have to do treatments just before or just after you arrive. (Your Home Watcher can let pest control inside during your absence.)

.....__ **c.** If you don't already have a termite control service protecting your home, it would be very prudent to do a check for:

.....__ **(1)** Thin mud tubes both inside and outside the house (used by termites to go back and forth to a food source -- your home's structure!). Look around the base of the home for mud tubes going from the ground and up the side to where termites enter. Inside, you may find thin tubes coming out from the lower walls or dropping down from the ceiling.

.....__ **(2)** Soft wood that sounds hollow when you tap it (or gives way easily when you probe it with an awl).

.....__ **(3)** Darkening or blistering of wood structures/cracked, bubbling paint

.....__ **(4)** Small piles of feces that resembles sawdust (indicating a nearby termite nest)

.....__ **(5)** Discarded wings near doors or on windowsills, indicating that termite "swarmers" have entered.

ACTION: If you suspect termites, contact a licensed termite service. (Since termite infestations are common in Tucson, we recommend you contract for preventative service even if you don't have termites now.)

- Hopefully, you have found everything in good shape to enjoy your beautiful SMR this winter. When it comes time to leave again for the summer, please refer to our "**SMR Leaving My AZ Home for the Summer Checklist**"