

## Preparing Your Backyard for Winter

by (ARA)

As the weather cools, many homeowners already have a system in place to help prepare their home's exterior for the looming winter season. Making sure outdoor furniture is stored away and bushes and young trees are wrapped in burlap are just a few common tasks many homeowners automatically check off. However, many are unaware that their exterior wood surfaces, like decks or fences, also require special protection from winter's elements.

The optimum time to apply wood finishes, like the Flood Company's CWF-UV5, is the fall when temperatures are cool. Providing special protection like this to exterior wood surfaces helps guard from harsh winter weather conditions and UV rays while beautifying the look of your home.

Don't neglect outdoor wood surfaces: The Flood Company, a manufacturer of premium wood care products, offers products and tips to help homeowners protect their exterior wood from harsh weather conditions. It is important to remember that the ultra-violet rays of winter can be just as damaging to unprotected wood as the summer sun, causing it to crack, blister, flake and peel. Homeowners can guard against winter damage by staining or re-staining wood surfaces to keep them protected and looking new. However, homeowners should keep in mind that improper preparation can prevent the stain from bonding with the wood, resulting in cracking and peeling. "In their zest to prepare gardens and landscaping for the winter freeze, many homeowners neglect their outdoor wood surfaces," says Gary Finseth, vice president of marketing for The Flood Company, manufacturer of premium wood care products. "Many homeowners are surprised to learn that fall is actually the ideal time to stain or re-stain the deck. But before beginning, keep in mind that new decks, old unfinished decks and old finished decks all have to be treated differently." Finseth recommends wood cleaners that are specially designed for unfinished decks to remove dirt and natural contaminants. This not only prepares the surface for staining, but also brightens it. For a deck that is already stained, first remove the old finish so the new one can properly adhere to the wood. Products like Flood's CWF-UV5 Premium Wood Finish rejuvenate the look of an old deck while offering optimal protection. The best results are achieved by using the right prep product in combination with the right finish product. Once the deck is prepared, homeowners will also want to make sure that other exterior areas receive proper care and attention. Vinyl furniture will need to be washed and stored indoors. Inspect wood furniture for damage and do any necessary repairs before it is covered or stored for winter. Wooden fencing should be handled similarly to the deck. Quick, easy and not to mention inexpensive, these tasks will prepare and beautify any home's exterior wood and ensure its enjoyment in the coming spring and summer months. For printable guides on exterior home maintenance and tips, visit [www.flood.com](http://www.flood.com).

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