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Winterizing checklist

Center pivots, pumps and main lines. Do it after harvest and before the first hard freeze.

Field / pivot _____

Done by _____

Date _____

The three jobs: get the water out of everything that can hold it, service everything that moves, and lock everything that could be switched on by accident. Frozen water expands and cracks pipes, pump housings and valves.

Before you shut down

- [ ] Run a catch-can test while the system still runs, to check the water goes on evenly
- [ ] Walk the pivot: leaks, damaged pipe, missing or broken sprinklers. Compare with the sprinkler chart
- [ ] Write down the flow meter reading: _____
- [ ] List this season's problems and plan a fix for each one

Center pivot or linear

- [ ] If the water is poor or the well pumps sand, flush the system and clean the sand trap
- [ ] Remove the plugs and drain all above-ground pipe, valves, sprinklers and the booster pump
- [ ] Drain water from the wheel gearboxes and top up the oil (change it yearly or every 1,000 h). Check the seals
- [ ] Service drive lines and tower motors. Check knuckles, shields and tire pressure
- [ ] Check boots, gaskets, mid-drains and the span-to-span grounding
- [ ] Turn the power off, then test the emergency stop and auto-reverse
- [ ] Fill rutted wheel tracks so they firm up over winter
- [ ] Park parallel to the prevailing wind, on level ground and not in a wheel track
- [ ] Clear weeds around the pivot point and the well. Keep cattle away

Pump, well and main line

- [ ] Drain the casing of above-ground centrifugal pumps (plug at the bottom)
- [ ] Drain every low point of the main line and open all valves. A closed valve traps water and can crack
- [ ] Drain the flow meter, pressure gauges and air-relief valves
- [ ] Engines: clean, change the oil, service the air filter. Diesel packing should drip about 40–45 drops a minute
- [ ] Cover power units against animals, moisture and dirt
- [ ] Surface water: pull and drain the suction line, check the intake screen, cover the open ends

Electrical and chemigation

- [ ] Lock the control box in the OFF position. Use lockout and tagout
- [ ] Check panel wiring, tighten loose contacts, add silica gel packs, seal openings against rodents
- [ ] Check the grounding connection and the ground rod
- [ ] Flush injection pumps and lines with clean water. Drain and rinse the tanks. Store venturi injectors indoors

Before you leave

- [ ] Walk the whole system once more: no low point, isolated pipe or closed valve still holding water
- [ ] Cover every opening so rodents can’t nest in cases, ports and motors
- [ ] Order worn parts now. Sprinklers need replacing every 7,000–10,000 hours

Notes and parts to order

Full guide with drip systems, engines and safety notes:
irrigationtrends.com/knowledgebase/how-to-winterize-an-irrigation-system
Based on University of Georgia Extension, University of Nebraska-Lincoln and NC State Extension publications.
Free calculators and the weekly newsletter: **irrigationtrends.com/tools** · **irrigationtrends.com/subscribe**