

Do I Need to Winterize my Spa?

Many Coloradoan's feel that there's nothing better than enjoying a relaxing soak in a spa while it's snowing! And, if you're planning on spending most of the winter at home, we recommend that you keep your spa filled and running, even if you don't expect to use it as much. Top-tier spa manufacturers are building very energy efficient spas that must comply with the California Energy Commission's requirements for efficiency, the strictest standards in our country. (Beware if you own a spa that does not have the CEC stamp of approval; you will likely pay more than necessary each month to power your spa.) The brands that we represent require a very small amount of electricity to remain hot and clean, even in our cold Colorado months. Furthermore, to properly winterize a spa is time consuming and complicated to perform. In the long run, the time and effort spent winterizing a hot tub may not be worth the few dollars you save on your electric bill.

If you plan on being gone for several weeks, then you might consider lowering your heater setting to 80F. This is a much simpler means to reduce energy consumption and still keep your spa operating as usual so it's easier to resume using your spa when you return. Before leaving town, make sure the water is adequately sanitized, the filters are clean, and the hot tub is covered by a high-quality spa cover in good condition. Be sure to lock your cover in place with the included locks or with our wind straps. **Call us at (303) HOT – TUBS (303-468-8827) to discuss a specific plan for your needs.**

However, if you plan on spending the winter in a warmer state, then you should have your spa properly winterized by a professional company that stocks spare parts for your brand of spa in case something is needed right away. Or, if you're comfortable performing this work yourself, please follow the steps below and call us if you have any questions. In cold climates, there is a distinct difference between a spa that has been drained, and one that is properly winterized. Any water in the spa's plumbing and equipment can freeze and expand, causing the lines and/or equipment to crack or burst. These damages are excluded in every spa manufacturer's warranty.



Required Tools: Shop vac (be sure to remove the filter from inside the shop vac first), Philips screwdriver or drill, garden hose, filter wrench, pliers. A sump pump will make emptying the spa much faster and easier. Colorado Custom Spas sells all of these items if you don't already have them. Call (303) HOT – TUBS.

General Winterization Procedure for Most Hot Tubs

1. Turn the power off at your breaker.
2. Drain your spa using your desired method. (Ex. Submersible pump, drain hose, siphon, etc.)
3. Remove the cap on drain hose and set aside. Replace cap after completing all steps below.
4. Remove the cabinet panel located under the topside control panel. On some spa models, pumps may be located on more than one side so you may need to remove other panels. **(See figure 1.)**
5. Locate the heater tube assembly (stainless steel tube below control box) and identify the split-nut connecting the heater tube to the 2" plumbing line. **(See figure 2.)** If the split-nut is not able to be removed, then the pump union is also an acceptable connection to remove.
6. Remove the split nuts on the heater and pump intakes using an oil filter wrench. Be careful not to lose or damage the gasket. **(See figure 5.)** *TIP: If gaskets are over 2 years old, replace with new ones.*
7. Locate the bleeder plug located on the wet end of all pumps near the bottom. **(See Figure 3)**
8. Use a pair of pliers and gently loosen the bleeder plug on all pumps until water starts coming out. Be careful not to break off the tab on the bleeder plug(s), especially on very cold days.
9. If your spas has an air blower, please call us for specific winterization instructions.
10. Remove all jets if possible, or ensure all jets are in the open position. Work from top to bottom using a shop vac to suck water from every jet, especially the lower jets. **(See figure 4.)** *TIP: Follow the water. Plumbing manifolds, equipment and fittings near the bottom are the most common parts damaged due to freezing. So, take your time on this step to avoid expensive repairs.*
11. Disconnect the plumbing lines going to all pumps and vacuum/blow out any water.
12. Buy appropriate-sized plugs for filter (and Jetpak) inlets. Use shop vac at pump end and suction end of plumbing so you can properly vacuum/blow water out of bottom suctions.
13. Set your shop vac to blow and insert the hose into all jets, plumbing lines, pumps and equipment to blow out any water. Remove water fall valves and/or diverter valves to vacuum then blow out any water. Replace valves and valve caps when complete.
14. Replace split nuts a little more than hand tight. *TIP: To avoid pinching/damaging the gasket when reconnecting everything, apply a small amount of lubricant (ex. Petroleum jelly) to the gasket face and ensure gasket is seated properly before tightening.*
15. Replace the bleeder plug(s) hand tight.
16. If you are concerned that you didn't remove all water from plumbing system, you can use a funnel to pour RV Anti-Freeze down jet openings, filter intakes, directly into pumps, etc. (NOTE: When you are ready to use the spa again, you'll need to remove any trace of antifreeze from the spa before it's safe for use. Fill with water, add 2x the normal chlorine amount to neutralize the antifreeze and let it circulate for a day, then use **Total Cleanse System Flush** and drain your spa. Refill your spa with fresh water and start up as normal.)
17. Reattach the front cabinet panel.
18. Remove filter(s) (and Jetpaks on Bullfrog Spas), and store inside above freezing temperature.
19. Secure the spa cover so NO water can enter the spa while not in use. *TIP: Wind straps and a Spa Cap are very helpful to help ensure that moisture cannot enter the spa.*
20. To prevent damage to your spa cover from snow load, insert bracing in the footwell that can help support the bottom of the spa cover. (Ex. Styrofoam blocks, stack of crates, etc.) Or you can place sheets of plywood on top of the cover, then cover the entire spa with a plastic tarp.

21. **TIP:** Winterizing your spa also presents a great time to use Total Cleanse System Flush, replace your spa filters, and clean/treat your spa cover with 303 Aerospace Protectant or 303 Fabric Guard.



Figure 1 – Many spas have multiple pumps

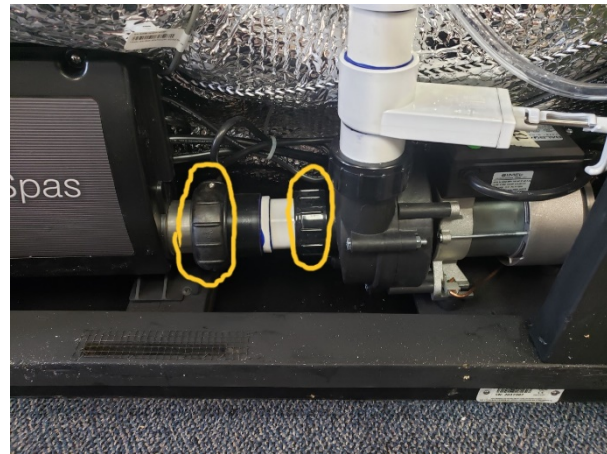


Figure 2 – Heater and pump unions



Figure 3 – Pump drain plug



Figure 4 – Lower level jets



Figure 5 – Disconnect & vacuum all plumbing lines.

This is a lot of information and it's important to carefully follow each step to prevent freeze damage and ensure a successful outcome. We're here to help 7-days-a-week, so please do not hesitate to call us at (303) HOT – TUBS, (303-468-8827.)