

RV Winterizing Tips

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I know there's always been a debate on winterizing your RV with antifreeze vs. blowing the lines with compressed air. I've done both but have a preference for the antifreeze method. For me, there's something comforting about seeing that pink fluid running from your faucets, in your toilet, and through your ice maker line. Anyway, I did have issues priming the pump on our 5th wheel using the "Winterize" input, so I figured that running a hose to the gallon antifreeze jug was not efficient. Recently, I came up with what has proved to be what I consider the perfect answer - elevating the antifreeze to a level higher than the pump.

So, here's my solution:



- 1) I did install a secondary on/off switch in the outside bay to better control the pump and eliminate running back and forth inside to the wall mounted control panel pump switch.
- 2) I found a see-through 5-gallon paint bucket at Lowe's to hold my antifreeze. I added a standard water shutoff valve sealing with rubber washers on both inside and outside of the bucket.
- 3) To raise the bucket above the pump I used a regular bar stool and added four lengths of pipe to raise the stool to the desired height.
- 4) A 5-foot hose is then connected to the "Winterize" connector on the RV.

Winterization Steps:

- 1) Drain and flush the gray and black holding tanks.
- 2) Drain the fresh water holding tank leaving drain plug open.
- 3) Switch the water heater to the "Bypass" mode. Unscrew the water heater plug and completely drain the water heater.
- 4) Check all your inside faucets and make certain they are in the "Off" position.
- 5) Turn the outside pump power switch to "Off" and the inside pump power switch to "On".
- 6) Position the bucket, connect the hose to the "Winterize" connector, and add 3-4 gallons of antifreeze.
- 7) Open the bucket valve.
- 8) Turn "On" the outside pump power switch and let it run until it reaches the shutoff pressure.
- 9) Open "Cold" then "Hot" outside faucet/shower valves until the pink antifreeze flows.
- 10) Open inside faucets (Kitchen, Bathroom, Shower, Washing Machine, etc.) until the pink antifreeze flows.
- 11) Add two cups of pink antifreeze to each sink drain (don't forget the washer drain) to make certain the traps are full.
- 12) Occasionally monitor the antifreeze level in the bucket to make certain you have enough to continue the process.
- 13) Flush the toilet until pink antifreeze flows freely (this insures you have antifreeze in the small flush bulb at the toilet rear).
- 14) If you have an Ice Maker allow it make ice so the pink antifreeze will fill the small 1/4" line. Then, shut off the flow to the Ice Maker.
- 15) If you have the ability to fill your Fresh Water Tank from City Water, switch the valve to the "Fill" position and watch for pink antifreeze to flow from the Fresh Water Tank drain valve. Then switch back to the "Normal" position.
- 16) After all lines have been filled with pink antifreeze; close the bucket valve, switch the outside and inside pump power switches to "Off", and remove the winterizing hose.

There may be a few details missing for your particular RV, but hopefully this gives you an idea for how to proceed. I found that this takes about 3 to 3 1/2 gallons of the pink antifreeze rather than the 4+ I was using previously; and, it was much quicker. FYI, I do purchase the cheaper brand from Walmart instead of the name brand saving almost \$2.00 per gallon.