



THE HUNT TEAM



Re/Max Hallmark York Group Realty Ltd., Brokerage  
Re/Max Hallmark Realty Ltd., Brokerage

## Your Complete Cottage Opening Checklist



It's cottage season in Ontario! This is the time of year for sun, sand, barbecuing and all-around cottage fun. But before you can get to the fun, there's some work to be done – the cottage needs to be opened, and that means cleaning, preparing, and making sure everything's good to go for the summer.

The best way to keep from getting overwhelmed is by using a to-do list – before you pile in the car for that trip up north, bring this checklist with you to ensure a smooth start to cottage season.

### Before You Leave

Your work starts before you even leave for the cottage! To avoid the gut-sinking realization that you've forgotten something, go through a pre-trip checklist:

- Find all the keys that you'll need for the cottage, and bring them with you – there's nothing worse than getting all the way there and realizing your keys are sitting at home in a drawer!
- Gather all the cleaning supplies you will need for your cottage spruce-up and bring them along.
- bring any tools that you might need for minor repairs.
- If necessary, make a call to your hydro company to make sure your hydro is good to go.
- Make sure that your insurance is in order and up to date.

### When You Get There

When you get to the cottage, it's inspection time. Here are some things to look for, both outside and inside your home-away-from-home:

#### Exterior

- Do a complete walk-around – check your cottage's exterior for damage, including windows, doors, the patio, deck, siding, and roof.
- Check for damage to phone and power lines.
- Check for signs of vandalism, or a break in.
- Check for pests – if you see signs of aphids, ants, or other critters, it's best to deal with them sooner rather than later.

[www.theHUNTison.ca](http://www.theHUNTison.ca)

Helen Hunt

Sales Representative

15004 Yonge Street, Aurora, Ontario L4G 1M6 Office 905 727 1941 Cell 416 417 5864 Fax 905 841 6018 [helen@theHUNTison.ca](mailto:helen@theHUNTison.ca)

Steve Hunt

Sales Representative "In Muskoka"

114 Medora St. Port Carling, Ontario P0B 1J0 Office 705 765 6801 Cell 705 706 1771 Fax 705 765 6253 [steve@propertiesofmuskoka.com](mailto:steve@propertiesofmuskoka.com)



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## Interior

- Check for pests – especially mice – inside your cottage, too.
- Check for water damage.
- If you notice anything that needs repairs, make a note.
- List any supplies that you'll need for the upcoming cottage season, like batteries, a first aid kit, etc.

## Cleaning Up

Before breaking out the barbecue, or settling down on the patio, it's a good idea to do a thorough cottage clean-up, both inside and out:

### Inside

- Dust everything – there's sure to be plenty of dust accumulation after a long, musty winter.
- Vacuum every room in your cottage.
- Disinfect surfaces in your bathroom and kitchen.
- Open up kitchen and bathroom cabinets and drawers and, if necessary, clean these as well. Check for evidence of pests, as mice and other rodents can make their way into your drawers and cabinets.
- Before turning on the fridge, give it a thorough cleaning.
- If you have the time and energy, wash all your windows (inside and out) and clean baseboards and window trim.

### Outside

- Clean your eavestroughs, getting rid of leaves and other debris.
- Mow and rake the lawn – remove leaves and anything else that the spring thaw has left behind.
- Power wash the deck – if you feel it's necessary, give it another coat of stain for the summer.
- Wash your outdoor furniture before putting it outside for the season.
- Spruce up your flowerbeds – remove dead leaves, twigs, and other debris.
- If you're up for it, give your trees and shrubs a trim.

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## Mechanical Start-Up

After inspecting the interior and exterior of your cottage, the next order of business is to turn on your water and electricity:

- Check your heating, cooling, plumbing and electrical systems for damage before turning anything on.
- Turn the power on – replace the fuses in the electrical panel, then switch the main breaker on
- Then, plug in all appliances, and make sure they're functional – go from room to room and check that all lights are working.

Note: if you notice a burning smell, or see any flickering lights, sparking fixtures, or damaged electrical cords, turn the power back off and address the issue before moving on.

- Next, turn the water on – it's wise to check for leaks at this point, so that you can take care of any issues right away.
- Finally, test your heating and/or cooling systems to make sure they're functioning properly.

## Safety Check-Up

Before opening up your cottage paradise, it's vital to make sure all your safety provisions are in order:

- Check your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors – if needed, replace the batteries.
- If there are any flashlights lying around, replace their batteries as well.
- Replace filters that are in need of changing.
- Make sure your fire extinguisher is easily accessible and is properly charged.

## Airing It Out

The last order of business? Let your cottage breathe after a long winter:

- Open all the windows and doors to let the air circulate throughout every room.
- Check for mold and mildew – if you notice any musty smells, you should address these right away.
- Check bathrooms and windows for mold as well.
- For many Canadians, a cottage is a much-needed summer getaway. With a little bit of time and patience, you can make sure your home away from home is properly prepped for the sunny season to come.

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