

## What to do in a winter emergency?

Being located in Ottawa Canada, where winter low temperatures can drop to 40 below (and that is really, really cold weather in Fahrenheit or Celsius) Purewater has plenty of experience dealing with hot tubs that stop working when the mercury is low. We try to be available for service quickly and efficiently, but we don't have a 24 hour service department, and as such, provide you with the following tips and suggestions to help you deal with a troublesome tub, at least until help can arrive.

If you have a problem with your hot tub in extreme cold weather, the first step to take is always to stabilize the situation and prevent ice or freezing damage. You may not be able to get a service person right away, but if you are able to keep the tub equipment warm (as below) you put yourself in a position to minimize the potential damage and have the issue corrected quickly, easily, and cheaply. Do not rush to drain the hot tub! Unless you know for certain that you will have no power for an extended period of time (i.e. 4 or 5 days with no power) we do not recommend that you drain the hot tub; it is much riskier to drain and improperly winterize a tub than to keep it full with an external heat source. A spa full of warm water will take much longer to freeze than an empty one.

If circumstances force you to drain the tub, try to do it using a sump pump rather than relying on the slow gravity drain. If there is no power to your property a generator would be a huge help at this stage. It is important to work quickly in cold weather. Use a wet/dry vac to blow out all lines, be sure to disconnect and drain all unions and plugs in the cabinet area once the tub is substantially purged. Finally, reinstall all plugs and reconnect all unions, then pour 4 or more gallons of pool and spa antifreeze into the tub via the skimmer and jet openings to help protect against ice damage.

Most winter emergencies do not require draining. They are typically caused by an interruption in power or a surge in power that causes the very sensitive GFCI breaker to power off. GFCI's have to be manually reset, so once they trip, they will stay off until you reset them. Sometimes an appliance failure within the spa can cause problems, a pump or heater can fail, a relay, control circuit, or even things like a dirty filter or too little water in the spa.

In an idle spa ice will begin to form, starting in the outer extremities, often in the thinner lines and tubes close to the outside wall. If the spa has been idle for a while and the interior water temperature is cold (below 70 degrees) frost or ice may have already started to form.

Before you reset the GFCI or turn on the main pumps, check the spa cabinet (the area where your pumps and equipment are located, usually behind a screwed-on panel directly below your spa topside control / display). If the cabinet is cold, put a small space heater inside and let it run on a low power / medium heat setting for several hours before you start the spa. Be sure to reinstall the cabinet door as best you can, and / or put blankets or tarps around the area to allow the heat to stay inside the equipment bay. This will allow any ice to clear, and prevent and further freezing. Engaging your pumps when there is significant ice in the lines can cause the fuse to blow, or pumps to jam, overheat and burn out.

If you are able to reset the GFCI and things start up and run normally, simply check the spa a little more frequently over the next couple of days to ensure that the circumstances that caused the breaker to reset were a “one-off”. If the breaker keeps on tripping, contact our service department, but do keep your space heater set up to prevent further issues.

If the hot tub is getting power from the GFCI and simply not functioning, keep heat going to it via the space heater and contact our service department. Again, as long as you are keeping the cabinet area warm you will prevent significant / substantial damage.

Be advised that many newer multi-pump spas may have 2 or more separate locations for pumps under the skirt. In these cases, multiple small heaters may be required. Ensure that if you do require more than one space heater that they are plugged into separate circuits (not the same plug on the side of the house), as more than 1 heater on the same circuit will trip the breaker in your home for those plugs, turning the heaters off.

During regular office hours (Monday to Friday, 8 to 5), the best way to reach us is by telephone at 613-726-0099 Extension 1. Outside of these hours, send an email to [spaservice@purewatermail.com](mailto:spaservice@purewatermail.com), which is monitored for emergency calls.