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RV INDUSTRY SALES AND NEWS REPORT: NOVEMBER 2023

Written By Greg Long

As we roll into November 2023, the RV industry finds itself in a state of correction. RV manufacturers and dealers are currently recovering from the unforeseen challenges posed by the Post-COVID era.

With a perfect storm of supply chain disruptions, fluctuating demand, and ever-changing consumer preferences, the world of RVs has been on a wild rollercoaster ride full of ups and downs.

Bish's RV, with the help of our good friend, Josh the RV Nerd, is here to keep a watchful eye on the latest RV sales data and news and share it with you every month.

We know how important it is to be one step ahead of emerging trends. By understanding what is happening now, we can predict what will most likely happen in the future.

Whether you're looking to buy or sell a camper or simply want to know the latest developments in the RV industry, this report will give you up-to-date information so you can make informed decisions and fuel your passion for all things RV-related.

Let's dive into the RV industry Trends Report for November 2023!

RV Sales: Still on the Decline in 2023

If you've been keeping up with RV news, you know RV sales dropped dramatically in 2022 and have continued to drop in 2023.

RV Sales Backstory: Why the drop in Sales?

Back in 2020, when COVID hit, RV sales skyrocketed as families looked for safe vacation alternatives.

In 2022, COVID restrictions began to lift and RV sales slowed — and have been declining ever since.

Current RV Sales Totals For 2023

Right now, moving into November 2023, RV sales are still declining, but the decline is slowing, indicating that the corrective period the RV industry is currently experiencing is getting closer to becoming balanced.

2023 RV Sales: -16%

Interestingly, both towable and motorized RVs have experienced nearly identical sales declines of around 16%, indicating a consistent market trend.

A Surge in Campground and RV Park Reservations

Campgrounds and RV parks are experiencing a sharp rise in the number of people making reservations, and “RV Parks” is one of the most searched for RV keywords on Google.

What's driving this trend, and what can you expect if you're planning to hit the road in the near future?

EARLY BIRD GETS THE CAMPSITE

According to the Kampgrounds of America (KOA), more than half of RV campers have already made reservations for the upcoming year 2024!

That's right, even before the year begins, campers are locking in their favorite spots. This early booking trend reflects a high level of enthusiasm and commitment to people wanting to get the most use out of their RVs.

ut what about those who haven't booked their 2024 adventures yet?

Surveys are showing most RV owners have a strong intent to camp in 2024. People are actively planning their future camping trips and intend to reserve campsites for their travels.

WINTER CAMPING GAINS POPULARITY

KOA's research also shows a significant 23% uptick in interest in camping during the colder seasons. This trend suggests that campers are willing to embrace the challenges of camping in cooler weather and are seeking unique experiences year-round.

THE MYTH OF THE SHORT-LIVED RV ENTHUSIASM

Many thought the surge in RV interest during the pandemic would be short-lived, with new buyers quickly abandoning their RVs. However, the reality appears to be quite the opposite.

People are not only holding onto their RVs but also actively planning future trips. This may be because they've made an investment in their RVs and want to make the most of it, or simply because they've discovered the joy of camping and want to continue the adventure.

RV Dealer Acquisitions in 2023: A Shifting Landscape

The world of RV dealerships in 2023 is undergoing a significant transformation. Conditions have shifted dramatically from the record-breaking success seen in the years 2020 to 2022.

During that period, dealerships were riding high, enjoying robust sales and thriving business. However, as we've stepped into 2023, the landscape has changed, presenting new challenges and opportunities.

OVERLOADED WITH INVENTORY

One of the key factors contributing to the changing climate is the inventory situation. Many dealerships found themselves overloaded with inventory due to the unprecedented demand for RVs during the pandemic.

But as market conditions evolved, business began to slow down, and higher interest rates impacted affordability. This sudden shift caught some dealerships off guard, and they had to adapt quickly to the changing market dynamics.

BURST OF STORE ACQUISITIONS

In response to these changes, there was initially a burst of store acquisitions by major players in the industry. We've discussed some of these acquisitions in previous articles.

However, as the year progressed, many buyers began to reassess their expansion plans and shifted their focus towards maintaining the health of their existing operations.

“TRIMMING THE FAT”

In fact, some major retailers have taken the approach of “trimming the fat” by closing stores outside of select markets. Recent closures outside of Duluth and Chicago serve as examples of this trend. This strategic move allows these retailers to streamline their operations and allocate resources more efficiently.

CAMPING WORLD'S ACQUISITION

One notable acquisition in recent news is Camping World's announcement of its acquisition of Travelcamp, a chain of RV dealerships along the southern belt of the country.

This acquisition encompasses 12 stores, including locations in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas.

It's a clear sign that larger players are still active in the acquisition game, even as some others take a more cautious approach.

FEWER BUYERS, STABLE INTEREST RATES, AND MORE SELLERS

As we continue into November 2023, the landscape presents a paradox: fewer buyers of RV dealerships, yet interest rates holding steady, and an increasing number of stores looking to sell.

This dynamic may lead to some small to medium-sized independent stores reevaluating their options and potentially closing their doors.

Latest RV Manufacturer News: Innovations and Developments

The world of RV manufacturing is always evolving, with manufacturers continuously working to improve their products and provide exciting innovations. Here's a closer look at some of the recent news and developments from key players in the industry.

The Aluminum Market: Potential for Price Spike Looms Large

The aluminum industry is currently at the center of an investigation that could have far-reaching consequences, potentially leading to a spike in aluminum prices.

The International Trade Commission has initiated a formal investigation in response to a complaint filed by the Aluminum Extruders Council and the United Steelworkers.

This investigation aims to address concerns about unfair trade practices that have allowed 15 foreign companies to significantly undercut U.S.-based aluminum production prices, with disparities ranging from 28% to an astonishing 257%.

The investigation, which is currently underway, holds significant implications for various industries, including the RV sector. Aluminum is a fundamental material used extensively in RV manufacturing due to its lightweight, durability, and cost-effectiveness.

Virtually all RVs incorporate aluminum components in their construction, from structural elements to siding and interior features.

The outcome of this investigation, expected to yield an initial decision by November 20th, could profoundly impact the RV industry's supply chain and manufacturing costs.

Here's a closer look at why this investigation is crucial for the RV industry and how it might affect prices and production.

UNFAIR PRACTICES AND UNDERCUTTING PRICES

The complaint filed by the Aluminum Extruders Council and the United Steelworkers alleges that foreign aluminum producers are engaging in unfair practices that enable them to sell their products in the U.S. market at significantly lower prices compared to domestically produced aluminum.

This practice puts U.S.-based aluminum production at a severe disadvantage, creating a competitive imbalance.

THE RV INDUSTRY'S RELIANCE ON ALUMINUM

The RV industry relies heavily on aluminum for nearly all RVs. It offers an ideal balance of strength and weight, making it a preferred choice for constructing RV frames, chassis, and structural components.

Additionally, aluminum's resistance to corrosion makes it ideal for exterior siding and roofing, ensuring that RVs withstand the rigors of outdoor travel and weather conditions.

Moreover, aluminum plays a crucial role in keeping RVs lightweight, which is essential for fuel efficiency and overall towing performance.

As RV manufacturers strive to create more aerodynamic and fuel-efficient designs, aluminum remains an indispensable material.

POTENTIAL IMPACT ON RV MANUFACTURING COSTS

If the International Trade Commission's investigation reveals that foreign companies are indeed engaging in unfair practices and significantly undercutting U.S. aluminum production prices, it could lead to tariffs or trade sanctions.

These measures, if imposed, would likely result in higher costs for imported aluminum.

For the RV industry, which relies on cost-effective materials to keep the overall manufacturing costs in check, a spike in aluminum prices could present a substantial challenge.

RV manufacturers may face difficult decisions, including whether to absorb the increased material costs or pass them on to consumers in the form of higher RV prices.

MONITORING THE ALUMINUM MARKET

As the investigation unfolds and the initial decision approaches, it's essential for both the RV industry and consumers to monitor developments in the aluminum market closely. The outcome of this investigation could have wide-ranging consequences, affecting not only the RV industry but also various other sectors reliant on aluminum.

The aluminum market's potential for a price spike underscores the intricate global supply chain dynamics and highlights how seemingly unrelated trade investigations can have a ripple effect across industries. For now, the RV industry and aluminum enthusiasts will need to watch and wait to see how this situation unfolds and be prepared to adapt to potential changes in material costs.

Stay Informed: Knowledge is Power!

In the ever-changing world of RVs, staying informed about the latest trends and developments is more crucial than ever.

Knowledge is power, and having a finger on the pulse of the RV industry can make a significant difference in your RV journey. It empowers you to make informed decisions about buying, selling, or simply enjoying the RV lifestyle to the fullest.

At Bish's RV, we're committed to keeping you well-informed and up-to-date on all things RV.

Our monthly RV trend reports are just one way we strive to provide you with valuable insights into the industry. You can count on us to continue delivering the latest news, trends, and insider information, so you're always ahead of the curve.

THE RIGHT TIME TO BUY AN RV

As we look ahead to the coming months, it's worth noting that market conditions in the RV industry are beginning to stabilize.

After a period of rapid change and adjustment, a sense of balance is returning. This stabilization can present a unique opportunity for those considering an RV purchase.

With more predictability in pricing and availability, now may be one of the best times to take the plunge and invest in your RV dreams.

Remember to stay informed, stay inspired, and get ready to embark on new adventures with confidence.

Bish's RV is always here to help you make the most of your RV journey, no matter where the road may lead.

20 Million Americans Planning An RV Holiday Vacation

Nov 16, 2023 RV Industry Association Staff

The 2023 holiday season is expected to be one the busiest on record, with 122 million people or 63% of leisure travelers planning to travel between Thanksgiving and the New Year. Of those travelers, 20 million are planning to go RVing this holiday season, a 30% increase over 2022.

55% of RVers plan to take a trip within three hours of home, allowing for less time on the road and more time enjoying friends and family over the holidays. Millennials are more likely to stay closer to home with 61% planning a trip within 3 hours, while 43% of Boomer respondents said they are planning trips more than 16 hours from home.

According to the just-released RV Industry Association Holiday Travel Intentions Survey, the top reasons people are planning to go RVing are the love of road trips, the desire to travel in comfort, interest in exploring the great outdoors, and the affordability of RV travel. With RV vacations costing up to

60% less than comparable hotel and plane ride trips and a third less than hotel and car ride trips, RVing is an attractive option for people looking for the freedom to travel while also controlling their travel expenses.

Another top reason people are choosing RV travel is their pets. 60% of RVers are planning to bring their pets with them rather than boarding them over the holidays. Of those sharing the trip with their furry family members, 87% will travel with at least one dog and 52% will travel with at least one cat.

Not all will hit the road though. 56% of those planning to use an RV this holiday season will park it at home and use it for guest accommodations. 49% will use it as an extra kitchen for food prep and storage.

“With the rush and stress that comes with traditional travel the holidays, people are choosing RVing as a way to still travel and see friends and family but do so in a more relaxed and comfortable way,” says Craig Kirby, President & CEO of the RV Industry Association. “Whether using an RV for guests or bringing your pets along for the ride, RVing allows people to spend more quality time with those they love this holiday season.”

The best holiday gifts for RVers in 2023

By **Cheri Sicard**

November 17, 2023

Are you looking for the best gifts for RVers this holiday season? This list can help with suggestions for all tastes and budgets. Starting from the least expensive to the most, there's something for every RVer on your list!

Wrap it up in RV gift wrap!



Continue the RV holiday fun by wrapping your gifts in whimsical RV-themed gift wraps like the ones above. You'll find these and many more [RV gift wraps at this link](#).

Best gifts for RVers 2023

RV and Camping Pillow Covers



These pillowcases are made of cotton linen with bright double-sided printing and a durable zipper closing. Features two pockets, great for storing the remote control, phone and

a great place to hide some snacks, glasses, or whatever you need to have close. [Check out the RV and Camping pillow covers.](#)

Camco Flat-Folding Step Stool



This will become your giftee's most used RV accessory. Folds flat to be neatly tucked away into almost any closet or cubby and instantly unfolds into a sturdy step stool. [Learn more about this invaluable RV gift here.](#)

Happy Camper Unisex Pajama Pants



These soft and cozy jammies are machine washable and dryable. Lounge pants are designed for both women and men. Features a wide elastic

waistband to provide a flexible yet snug fit. The silky smooth material delivers a comfortable lightweight feel while side pockets add functionality. [Check out the Happy Camper unisex pajama pants.](#)

RV State Sticker Map



Commemorate each stop on your RV adventures with this weather-resistant United States Sticker Map and accompanying state stickers. The strong adhesive outline applies to any surface and won't fade thanks to the UV protection. Applies to a window or wall. Won't damage surfaces. [Get the RV State Sticker Map.](#)

Personalized RV Doormat



All over printed personalized RV doormat welcomes guests to the campsite in style. Most every part of the design is customizable in order to match your giftee: RV style, name, and hometown. [Order a personalized RV doormat here.](#)

Lazy One Sleep Hoodies



When the weather turns chilly, I practically LIVE in my Lazy One sleep hoodies. I've bought several for gifts, too, and everyone loves this oversized unisex loungewear with whimsical designs and stylish lined hoods. A big kangaroo pocket holds keys and phone and keeps your hands warm around camp. [Check out the many designs of Lazy One sleep hoodies.](#)

Campfire Popcorn Popper Kit



Outdoor gourmet popcorn popper can be used over a campfire, fireplace or even a backyard

grill. It is lightweight, durable, and comes with everything you'll need to create and enjoy tasty popcorn, from the seasoning samplers to the disposable tubs. [Check out the Campfire Popcorn Popper Kit.](#)

JBL Go 3 Waterproof Dustproof Portable Speaker



Wirelessly stream music from your phone, tablet, or any other Bluetooth-enabled device. This tiny speaker delivers surprisingly big audio and punchy bass. USB rechargeable will run up to 5 hours on a single charge. Waterproof and dustproof, this speaker goes anywhere and everywhere. [Check out the JBL waterproof/dustproof speaker here.](#)

Harvest Hosts membership



An annual membership to Harvest Hosts gives your giftee unlimited access to stay overnight at any of the 5022+ stunning camping sites including wineries, breweries, distilleries, restaurants, farms, churches, attractions, and more. [Learn more about Harvest Host or buy a membership](#) (and here's a secret: Get 15% off your membership with code RVTRAVEL).

VIOFO A119 Mini-2 Dash Cam



This small entry-level dash cam has features better than some of its larger competition. The VIOFO dash cam A119 Mini 2 deploys Sony's newest STARVIS 2 IMX675 image sensor. This 2K mini dash cam can eliminate motion blur and shoot clearer details during day and night recording. Offers voice command technology, superb night vision, and much, much more. [Check out the VIOFO A119 Mini-2 Dash Cam here.](#)

Ugreen PowerRoam 1200 portable power station



A portable power station like this one can completely transform the way you RV, and with the optional solar panels you are ready for boondocking out of the box. We especially love Ugreen's power stations because they represent a good value and charge super fast via solar, AC, or 12-volt! [Discover more about the Ugreen PowerRoam 1200 portable power station here.](#)

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO WINTER CAMPING

Winter camping means different things to different people. For some, it is the ultimate outdoor challenge of taking on the weather at its worst, with high-tech gear and an element of danger. For others, it is the opportunity to see nature in a new way, avoid the crowds, and enjoy winter sports with the promise of a cozy cabin, a cup of hot chocolate and a roaring fire at the end of the day.

Camping during the colder months offers a break from the hectic nature of summer and a chance to see beautiful landscapes in a different season. While winter camping is relatively similar to summer camping, there are some significant differences to make a note of to keep yourself, your family and maybe a furry friend or two safe as you enjoy camping in below-freezing weather.

WANT TO TRY WINTER CAMPING? HERE'S EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

Benefits of Winter Camping

How to Camp in Cold Weather

Winter Camping Lodging Options

Winter Camping with Kids

Winter Camping Tips

Book a Winter Camping Trip with KOA

BENEFITS OF WINTER CAMPING

Camping is a fantastic way to get out into nature with friends and family, enjoying the sweet scent of fresh air. Winter camping can be one of the most magical experiences you can have, but it requires meticulous preparation to ensure it is a success.

- **Fewer crowds:** Fewer people camp in the winter than they do in the summer, which means campsites and trails will be less crowded. Winter camping is the ideal trip for those craving relaxation away from life's hustle and bustle. You also have a much better chance of avoiding costly gas or airfare associated with more popular summer vacation times.

- **Breathtaking views:** Summer, fall and spring each boast spectacular views — but few things are as breathtaking as sparkling snow and vivid sunrises. When you camp in the winter, you have the chance to see nature from a different perspective that is easy to miss other times of the year. Winter camping gives you a front-row seat to all the season has to offer. You might even get to see winter wildlife.
- **Outdoor activities:** Winter camping offers a whole new world of recreation. If you choose a campground near the slopes, winter sports like snowboarding and skiing are a great way to stay active and warm. Take in all the winter has to offer by going on a winter hike. If your winter camping trip includes snow, building snowmen and having snowball fights at your campsite are fun options, especially for families with young children. Other cold-weather activities you might consider are snowmobiling, snowshoeing, sledding or hiking.

HOW TO CAMP IN COLD WEATHER

While summer is a popular time for many people to go camping, there is something magical about winter camping. Camping in below freezing weather is a great way to slow down, enjoy the peaceful moments of the winter season and take in the breathtaking landscape surrounding your campsite.

However, if you have never planned a winter camping trip, the process of packing and gathering essentials for camping in freezing temperatures can feel intimidating. Unlike summer camping trips, a lack of preparation can have consequences ranging from feeling chilly to getting stuck in the snow without enough food or water. By thinking ahead and using the tips below, you can ensure your winter camping trip is successful.

CHOOSE A LOCATION

Although some close during the off-season, many campgrounds remain open in winter. Base your destination on availability, as well as the distance it is from your home. Winter often means hazardous road conditions — select a campground that allows for a safe trip to and from your destination. Keep in mind that, in addition to dangerous conditions, roadways may also be busy during certain parts of winter for holiday travel. Some of the best places

to go winter camping are near national parks, which are full of spectacular views and sightseeing.

DECIDE ON A LODGING TYPE

Choose which type of lodging is best for you or your group. If your camping trip includes young children or elderly individuals, an RV Site or Deluxe Cabin may be the best option due to the protective shelter they provide. Alternatively, if your group enjoys the thrill of “roughing it,” Tent Sites offer camping in its purest form. Unique lodging, such as the safari tents or yurts, can also be an ideal choice for those wanting an ultra memorable camping experience. Be sure to check with specific campgrounds to see what they have available.

PLAN YOUR CAMPING GEAR

Are you unsure of what to pack for your winter camping trip? In addition to all regular camping gear, there are a few winter camping essentials you need to bring along:

- **Sunscreen:** Just because the temperatures are cold does not mean you should forego the sunscreen.
- **Lip balm and body lotion:** Cold weather is notorious for causing dry skin — keep your hands and face moisturized with lip balm and body lotion.
- **Matches or lighter:** Bring along matches, a lighter or both to start your campfire.
- **Food, water and cooking utensils:** The type of food and utensils you bring depends on your preferred lodging. For example, some Deluxe Cabins have kitchenettes, so you need fewer utensils.
- **Tarp:** Tarps are a multi-purpose camping tool. For wet, wintry conditions, drape a tarp over the roof of your tent. It can help keep cold and moisture out.
- **Insulated sleeping bag:** An insulated sleeping bag will keep you warm at night.

- **Tent stakes, bed pad and tent heater:** If you are tent camping, tent stakes, a bed pad and a tent heater are necessary to keep your tent warm and secure.
- **Blankets:** When it comes to cold weather camping, the more blankets you have, the better.
- **Personal items:** This includes personal hygiene products, appropriate clothing and indoor entertainment, such as a book or card game.
- **Ice and snow scraper:** Use an ice and snow scraper to brush the snow away from for cars or tents.
- **Thermos:** A thermos will keep your hot beverages warm.

PACK PROPER CLOTHING

For the best winter camping experience, make sure you dress sufficiently to manage the cold weather. The key is to dress in layers:

- **Hat:** Choose a winter hat that covers your ears and is a fleece, wool, fur or a similar fabric.
- **Base layer:** Your base layer is the layer of clothing that rests against your skin. Materials should be thin and moisture-wicking, especially if you are spending time outdoors, where any sweat or moisture on your skin can quickly freeze.
- **Middle layer:** The middle layer is all about insulation, so make sure you choose pieces made from thick and durable fabrics.
- **Outer layer:** Your outer layer is your “shell” layer. The outer layer includes raincoats or winter jackets, whose purpose is to shield you from the elements.
- **Gloves:** Your gloves should fit properly, meaning your fingers almost reach the tips of the glove, but not entirely. There should be a little bit of space between your fingertip and the tip of the glove — this is where you will trap the heat. You should also keep in mind the kinds of activities you will be doing on your camping trip. If you plan to start

your own fire, for example, you should choose a glove that allows plenty of finger movement.

- **Boots:** Choose boots with a snow-focused design. They should be waterproof, well-insulated and fit correctly. Your boots should also have some grip or traction on the bottom.
- **Breathable base layer:** Pack a few base layers that contain materials that will wick away moisture but still provide sufficient warmth. When playing outdoors and working up a sweat, it is important to keep your core warm and dry.
- **Variety of mid layers:** Prepare for fluctuating winter temperatures by packing several different base layers made of insulating and breathable materials, like fleece and wool.
- **Waterproof outer layer:** Choose a winter coat that is waterproof and sufficiently warm to protect against snow and freezing rain.
Warm hat and socks: A lot of body heat can escape from your head and feet if they are not protected. Choose a warm hat and socks to stay cozy in cold temperatures.
- **Extra blankets and clothes:** When the temperature drops in the evening, you can bundle up with extra blankets and warm clothes. If you get wet in the snow or rain, extra clothing is essential to keep you warm.

WINTER CAMPING LODGING OPTIONS AT KOA

KOA offers several lodging options available for your winter camping trip. Maybe you want to experience winter in its fullest with tent camping. Perhaps you prefer to watch the snow sparkle from inside the comfort of your RV or rustic cabin. Whether you are seeking simplicity or luxury, KOA has you covered. Some lodging options available at KOAs across North America include:

CABIN CAMPING

Cabin camping lets your group enjoy nature from the comfort of log-style cabins equipped with electricity and beds. KOA has both Camping Cabins and Deluxe Cabin lodging options.

Traditional Camping Cabins have enough room for four to six people in one or two-bedroom layouts. Bedrooms have either full beds or bunk beds. All Camping Cabins have access to nearby restrooms and showers and also come with a fire feature for cooking s'mores and warming up next to in the evenings.

Deluxe Cabins provide the same protection from outdoor elements, but with private bathrooms and sometimes other convenient features as well. In addition to comfortable beds and varied floor plans, Deluxe Cabins may include extras like TVs, grills, patios, kitchenettes and fire pits.

TENT CAMPING

If you are looking for an adventure, tent camping in the winter is perfect. Tents come in all shapes, sizes and designs, with plenty of three-season and four-season options to withstand heavy winds and snowfall.

When snow is on the ground, be sure to pack it down during your tent setup. Then, stake your tent to the ground to keep it steady. For sleeping arrangements, bring a sleeping pad along with your sleeping bag. Combining the two will keep you insulated and warm throughout the night.

KOA Tent Sites are spacious and level with a picnic table, fire ring and easy access to clean restrooms with hot water. Tent Sites are also located near waterspouts, so you do not have to haul water.

RV CAMPING

If you are looking for an adventure, tent camping in the winter is perfect. Tents come in all shapes, sizes and designs, with plenty of three-season and four-season options to withstand heavy winds and snowfall.

When snow is on the ground, be sure to pack it down during your tent setup. Our KOA RV Sites are clean and level, with Pull-Thru and Back-In sites. Full hookups are available, with 30 or 50-amp service. Some RV Sites also include a KOA Patio® for the ultimate outdoor experience.

RV enthusiasts should consider these key steps for a successful winter adventure:

1. **Winterization:** Ensure your RV is properly winterized to protect it from the cold. This involves installing and upgrading insulation to create a warm and cozy living space. Insulating the base of the RV can also shield it from cold winds and prevent damage to pipes.
2. **Plumbing protection:** Prevent freezing pipes and hoses by using heat tape and insulating them. Utilize your internal freshwater tank and add antifreeze to the holding tank to keep water flowing smoothly.
3. **Engine care:** Before embarking on your winter RV trip, inspect your RV batteries for corrosion or damage. Check the engine's antifreeze and top it off with the right concentration of antifreeze and water.
4. **Tire check:** Ensure your tires are in good condition and properly inflated for safe winter travel.
5. **Furnace maintenance:** Ensure your RV furnace is in good condition. Check for any obstructions that could impede airflow and make sure the air return is clear. Clean the furnace using compressed air or a soft brush to remove dirt and debris.
6. **Comfort and warmth:** To stay warm during winter RV camping, it is crucial to choose the right heater and pack suitable gear. Also, take steps to prevent cold drafts from entering through the windows.

By following these winterization tips, you can have a cozy and enjoyable RV camping experience even in the colder months.

“GLAMPING” AND UNIQUE LODGING OPTIONS

“Glamping” is a combination of “glamorous” and “camping” and represents a type of camping experience that balances a love for the outdoors with comfort and luxury. KOA offers several unique lodging options perfect for campers and “glampers” alike:

- **Yurts:** Originally found in Central Asia, yurts are hut-shaped tents that provide a unique and spacious type of tent camping.
- **Teepees:** Teepees are a unique throwback to an earlier time — but that does not mean they cannot be comfortable. Teepee camping can include

familiar conveniences, like futons or electricity. Some select KOA sites even offer teepee villages for large groups.

- **Tree House:** Tree houses are self-explanatory — imagine your favorite childhood hangout, only bigger and more luxurious.
- **Airstream:** When you camp in an Airstream, you feel a connection to a part of America’s history. Since debuting in 1929, Airstreams have become an American icon. They are similar to an RV, only rounded and covered in aluminum.
- **Camping Caboose:** Some KOA sites offer the option of camping in the renovated caboose of a train. They provide a memorable, historic twist for your next camping excursion.
- **Wall Tent:** A wall tent or a “safari tent” is a tent with four walls. Wall tents are roomy, with enough space to accommodate your favorite amenities. They are a popular lodging choice for glamping trips.

ENSURE YOUR KIDS HAVE A GREAT WINTER CAMPING EXPERIENCE

For families—even those who have spent plenty of time camping in warm weather—the winter brings on a new set of challenges. Clothing and equipment become more critical, and your daily activities require additional thought. Yet for those willing to put in a bit of work, a winter camping trip can be one of the best ways to spend time together as a family. Some tips to help campers of any age have a great time include:

- **Keep it short:** With all the variables in winter camping, it makes sense to start with a night or two to make sure everyone likes it. You’d rather have the kids complaining that they want to stay rather than they want to go home.
- **Have an escape plan:** The weather can take a quick turn for the worse, or you may find that camping in winter conditions is more challenging than you thought. There’s no shame in deciding to head home early or move to a cabin or motel. Your trip should be fun, and if it’s not, quickly make the call to change your plans.

- **Bring extra everything:** You know how likely it is that kids will lose their hats or gloves at some point on the trip. Make sure you have extras. Also expect things to get wet and have backups if you need them, particularly with socks and boots. Wool retains most of its warmth even when wet, so it's a good idea to bring along wool long johns, socks, and sweaters to keep everyone cozy.
- **Have the right gear:** Sleeping bags, tents, stoves, and other camping equipment have ratings for temperatures or weather conditions. Make sure that you have gear that is designed for the conditions.
- **Get the fire going early:** If you are staying in a cabin or yurt, start your fire (or turn on the heat source) as soon as you arrive. Of course, this will warm up the space, but it's also critical to know that it works. If it is not, you will want to get that fixed immediately or make other plans.
- **Lead by example:** Every trip has ups and downs. Things will not always go your way, and the kids pick up on that. If you keep a good attitude, it is easier for the kids to follow your example. When things do go wrong, focus on solving the problem instead of getting angry.
- **Make reservations:** It may be the off-season, but that does not mean you will get the cabin or campground you want if you just show up. Have a reservation so you know your spot is secure.
- **Bring plenty of snacks:** Nothing keeps the kids happier than being well fed. The body demands it in colder temperatures, so prepare for the hunger.
- **Keep it fun:** This is a vacation, after all. Organize activities that everyone enjoys, but give yourself some relaxing downtime. Bring along cards or board games that you all enjoy.

7 TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL CAMPING TRIP

Little things like planning your meals, watching the weather and bringing extra socks and gloves are small steps that can go a long way during your trip. Other tips to consider include:

1. **Select the right location:** Choose campgrounds that remain open during the winter and are accessible safely. National parks offer spectacular winter views.
2. **Choose your lodging:** Decide on the type of lodging that suits your group, whether it is an RV Site, Deluxe Cabin for added shelter, a more rugged experience with Tent Sites or unique options like safari tents or yurts.
3. **Pack smart:** Besides standard camping gear, bring winter essentials like sunscreen, lip balm and body lotion for dry skin. Don't forget matches or a lighter for campfires, and adjust your food and utensil choices based on your lodging.
4. **Prepare your clothing:** Dress in layers, including a warm hat, base layer for moisture-wicking, middle layer for insulation, and a waterproof outer layer. Ensure your gloves and boots are suited for winter activities. It is wise to monitor the weather to ensure you have time to prepare for whatever comes your way.
5. **Stay dry:** Carry tarps to keep your tent dry, and bring insulated sleeping bags for warmth. Tent stakes, a sleeping pad and a tent heater are crucial for cold nights. You might also want to brush up on your fire-building skills since campfires are an excellent source of heat for you and your group of loved ones.
6. **Bring extra blankets:** In colder evenings, extra blankets and clothing can keep you warm, especially if you get wet in snow or rain.
7. **Prepare for indoor entertainment:** Some days may be too cold or rainy to spend outdoors. Bring activities like playing cards, board games or books for indoor entertainment.

With these tips, your winter RV camping adventure will be enjoyable, safe and memorable.

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10 Steps to Properly Store Your RV for Winter Without Doing Damage

by Mike Scarpignato

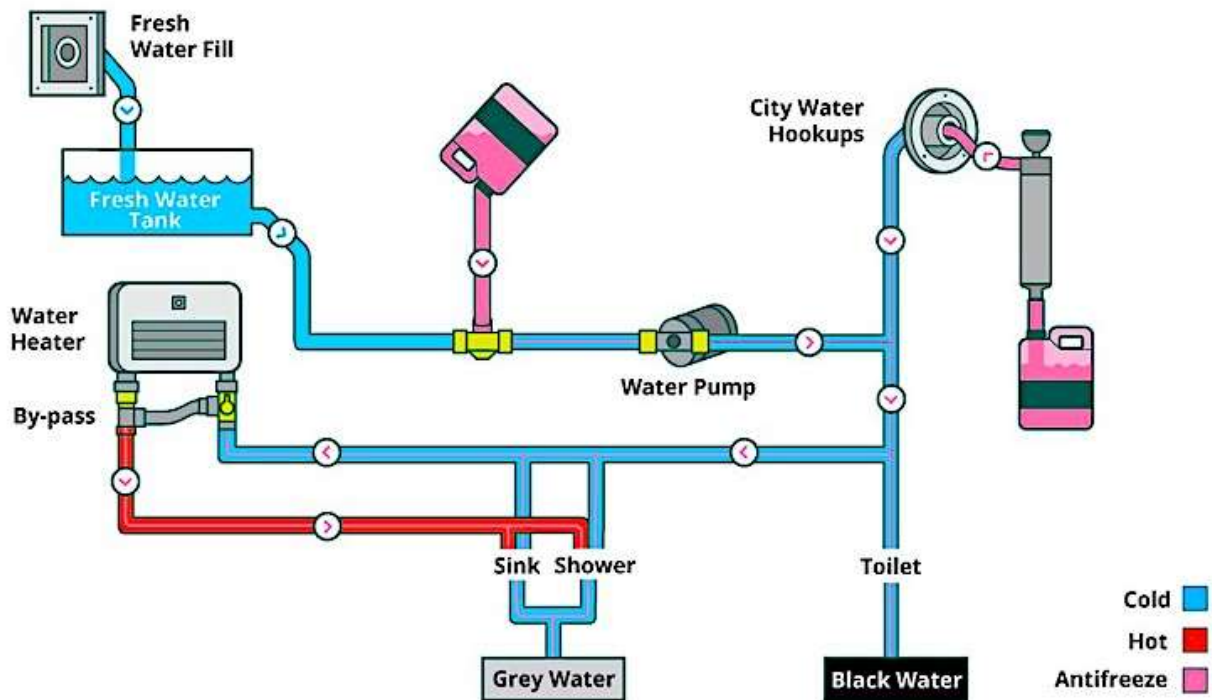
For many RVers, seasoned and beginners alike, preparing and properly storing an RV for wintertime can be a challenging process.

But, it really doesn't have to be.

10 Tips to Prepare and Store Your RV for Winter

Here are the basic steps that we've learned over the years for properly storing our RV for winter:

1. Winterize the Plumbing System



The first step to storing your RV for winter is properly winterizing the plumbing system. This consists of several steps.

Begin by removing inline water filters, bypassing, and flushing out both the gray and black holding tanks as well as the water heater. If your RV doesn't have an in-built flushing system for the black tank, make sure to clean it out manually (with a wand).

After draining the tanks and water heater, it's time to open up the faucets and valves. Using a water pump to push the water out can make the process quick and easy. Afterward, don't forget to recap those faucets and drains.

Next, you will need to add antifreeze to your plumbing system. Depending on your RV this can be done via a by-pass kit or by connecting a tube/hose from the water pump (on the inlet side) to your antifreeze container.

Pressurize the plumbing system by turning on the water pump and slowly open the hot and cold valves one by one until you can see the antifreeze appear where water would normally be. You'll want to start with the closest faucets to the water pump and work your way to the furthest ones.

Finish up this process by flushing the toilet until you see the antifreeze as well as adding a cup of antifreeze to each drain in the RV. Don't forget to flush some antifreeze into the holding tank as well (this prevents any leftover water from freezing and damaging the tank).

2. Remove and Store Your Batteries

Removing and storing your RV batteries for the winter is the second step to preparing your RV for storage over the coldest periods of the year. Refer to your RV owner's manual to get the precise instructions on which order to disconnect them.

After you've successfully removed the batteries it is highly recommended that you charge them completely. Once removed and charged the batteries, store them in a safe and secure location that is both dry and warm (ideally, a garage, shed, or storage unit).

And that's it for step number two. Easy peasy.

3. Add Fuel and Fuel Stabilizer

The third step to properly winterizing your RV is topping off the fuel tank and adding your preferred fuel stabilizer. That said, some folks don't feel the need to add a stabilizer to their fuel. Rather opting to simply fill the tank completely full.

Unfortunately, with the quality of gas today, it will evaporate even if the tank is topped off to the brim. For that reason, it's recommended that you do indeed add a fuel stabilizer before parking your RV in storage for the winter.

4. Keep the Mice Away

Keeping the rodents away from your RV during the wintertime is another essential step you'll need to take to fully protect your rig. The damage that mice are capable of causing to an RV over the wintertime is no laughing matter. Electrical wires and components are among the most costly and common damages inflicted on rigs by these little critters.

Mice will most definitely attempt to find warm and dry shelter during the coldest parts of the year (like your empty RV). So, make sure to check the outside of the RV for any holes or entryways they might be able to find and crawl through. Removing all food from the interior of the RV will also help.

Additionally, setting traps (or poison/bait) around, under, and even inside the RV can help ward the little critters off.

5. Clean, Inspect and Seal the Exterior of the RV

The fifth step to properly storing your RV for winter is cleaning, inspecting, and sealing the exterior of the rig. This step will also reinforce step number four (protecting your RV from rodents).

Start by washing the RV's exterior with soap and water. This is necessary to inspect and properly seal the RV because it is practically impossible to see all of the seals on a dirty rig.

Once the outside of the RV is cleaned, take a nice long look at the entire exterior. Focus on areas such as where fixtures, lights, and other parts overlap or run into folds, sidewalls, or the roof. You are looking for any breaks or cracks in the RV's seals.

Once you've identified worn out or damaged seals you'll want to remove them. Using a putty knife or scraper of some sort is the most efficient way to do so. Afterward, clean the area again and let it completely dry.

Lastly, re-seal the RV via a caulk gun and a product such as Geocel. For the roof, products such as Dicor are preferred for sealing things up. You'll need to give your RV at least two or three hours (up to an entire day) to completely dry after re-sealing it.

6. Choose a Safe Location

Choosing a safe location is perhaps one of the most important steps to storing your RV properly. However, this step might be one that you have little choice over depending on your location and finances.

Many RVers keep their RVs close at hand, as in on their own property. That said, others choose safe and secure storage facilities (both indoor and outdoor spaces are available).

Whatever your situation is, make sure that your RV is stored somewhere that it is unlikely to be damaged by falling trees (or large branches), safe from the weather, and away from rodents if possible.

7. Buy the Right Camper Cover for Winter

Depending on where you will store your RV for the cold months, you may require a heavier or lighter camper cover. And, again, depending on the make and model of your rig, there may be more or fewer options available.

At any rate, before purchasing a cover to help protect your RV through the wintertime, be sure to take into consideration where your rig will be stored, how cold it will be, how exposed it will be to the weather, and any other important factors you can think of.

8. Protect the Tires

After performing all of the above steps, including parking and covering your RV, you'll need to add some extra protection to your rig's tires. Depending on where your RV is stored, the climate, and other factors, such as the brand, type, and age of your tires, this step may be more critical for some RVer owners than others.

Excessive sunlight and harmful UV rays are known to "bake" tires. Likewise, the extreme temperatures of the coldest winter days can crack the sidewalls of tires and otherwise damage your tires in general as well. Adding even the most basic RV tire covers can save you a lot of money by extending the lifespan of your rig's tires.

So, unless your RV cover itself adequately covers and protects your tires, consider investing in a set of RV tire covers.

9. Turn Off the Propane

Turning off the propane supply to your RV is one of the last steps to properly preparing your rig for its winter storage. In most cases, this is one

of the simplest steps. All you have to do is find the propane tanks and flip the shut-off valve.

Some motor homes may have toggles and valves located throughout the RV's interior as well. And while these won't hurt to shut off as well, do not confuse these switches for the master shut-off which is normally always located on the propane tanks themselves (not the ones on the water heaters or other appliances).

If you've any experience with filling your propane tanks, you are more than likely already familiar with this main shut-off valve on the propane tank as it must be turned off while filling the tanks. If you have trouble finding the valve, refer to your propane tank manual. Many times this valve is star-shaped and easy enough to find.

10. Check on Your RV

Last but not least is checking on your RV periodically throughout the wintertime. This is absolutely necessary depending on where you've opted to physically store your RV. That said if your RV is parked on your property, or in a secure storage facility for RVs and boats, this step isn't quite as crucial.

For those storing their RVs in less secure locations, such as the property of a friend or family member, or elsewhere, checking in on your rig from time to time can save you a whole lot of trouble.

The bottom line is that you never know what may be happening with your RV while it's out of your sight. You may have overlooked one of the winterizing details, or, rodents or even rowdy trouble makers may have even gained entry to your RV somehow. Checking in on it regularly will cut back on the chances of nasty surprises once spring rolls around and you return to your RV to get it operational again.

A Final Word About Preparing and Storing Your RV for Winter

Following these 10 steps to properly store your RV for winter will have your RV in the best shape possible when spring arrives. Depending on your rig, and your RV lifestyle, some steps may be removed or added to these 10.

Do you know about a winterizing or storage hack for RVs that you think our audience should know about? If so, we'd love to hear all about it in the comments section below.

Good luck getting your RV adequately prepared and stored for the winter!