
Birchwater Lake House

How things work

The printable copy of the house guide. The same notes live in the digital welcome book on your phone, where they stay current; this one is for the kitchen counter.

Thermostat and heat

The thermostat is on the wall by the stairs. It sits at 68 during the day and drops to 62 overnight on its own.

- To warm the house faster, press the up arrow to 70. It holds there for two hours, then returns to the schedule.
- The baseboard heaters in the bedrooms have their own dials. Turn them to the middle mark and give them twenty minutes.
- There is no air conditioning. Open the upstairs windows and the deck door together and the lake breeze pulls straight through the house.

The fireplace

The living room fireplace burns wood. Split logs are stacked under the deck; the kindling bin and matches are beside the hearth.

- Open the flue first. The lever inside the top of the firebox pulls toward you until it clicks.
- Build it small. Two logs and a handful of kindling is plenty for this room.
- Keep the screen closed while it burns, and keep towels and bags off the hearth stone.
- Let the fire burn down before bed. Leave the flue open until the ashes are cold, the next morning at the earliest.
- Ashes go in the metal bucket by the deck door, never in the trash.

Washer and dryer

Stacked in the hall closet across from the bathroom. Detergent pods are on the shelf above, one per load. The dryer lint screen pulls out from the top; please clear it before each load. Quick wash is the right setting for almost everything, because the septic system does not love long cycles.

The espresso machine

- Power on and wait for the light to go solid, about 90 seconds.

- Drop a pod in the portafilter and twist it in firmly to the right.
- Put a cup on the tray and press the two-cup button once.
- Purge the steam wand over the tray for a second before and after frothing.

Pods and descaling notes are in the drawer under the machine.

Septic system

The house is on a septic system. Only toilet paper goes down the toilets, nothing greasy goes down the kitchen sink, and the dishwasher and washer run one at a time.

Water shutoff and breakers

The main water shutoff is the red lever in the utility closet under the stairs. The breaker panel is on the garage wall beside the side door; every switch is labeled. If the power drops during a storm, check the panel before calling anyone.

Wifi

The network name and password are on the wifi page of the digital book and on the card beside the router. They are left off this sheet on purpose, since printed pages get photographed.

Something broken or worn out? The note form at the bottom of the digital welcome book reaches us fastest.