It’s a Dirty Job, But Someone Has to Do It

Winterizing Martin Housing

Clean
-Scrape out cavities and nest trays
-Scrub inside and out with 10% bleach solution (1 pt bleach:9 pts water) and rinse well
-Dry well before covering

Maintain
-Check cables, ropes & pulleys for signs of wear, replace if needed
-Oil pulleys, winches & poles to make sure parts move smoothly
-Touch up paint or sand and preserve natural gourds if needed

Cover/Store
-Store housing indoors if possible or use a house cover
-Lower housing and block cavities to prevent other species from nesting
-Remove and store predator guards

Assess
Time to expand? If your colony is filled to 75% capacity and you can manage a larger colony, consider adding more housing

When?
In the Fall, after martins have migrated from your area

Why?
Cleaning removes parasites from old nesting material and storing housing protects it from the elements.

Cleaning Supply List

Bucket

9:1 water/bleach solution
1 part bleach:9 parts water

Surgical mask (optional)

Rubber gloves

Oil/lubricant
(for metal parts and cable)

Paint scraper

Hose

Wipes

Towels for drying