

HOME MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

Summer

- Check basement humidity level. Sustain safe humidity levels by using a dehumidifier.
- Hire professional to clean and inspect the furnace and air conditioning system.
- Wash stove's exhaust fan filter and underneath kitchen range hood.
- Make sure basement pipes do not have condensation or dripping.
- Ensure basement floor drain trap contains water.
- Check all faucets for leaks and run water briefly out of faucets that are used infrequently.
- Pour a non-corrosive drain cleaner down the sink to prevent drain obstructions
- Deep clean carpets.
- Clean bathroom fans.
- Vacuum lint from dryer duct, surrounding area, and the dryer vent on your home's exterior.
- Vacuum refrigerator coils.
- Inspect water lines to washing machine for leaks.
- Make sure handrails are still sturdy.
- Inspect home's foundation for signs of termites.
- Lubricate window hinges, door hinges, garage doors and chains. Tighten any loose screws.
- Check brick or masonry exterior for cracks or missing mortar.
- Check exterior wood siding or trim, scrape and repaint if there has been deterioration or damage.
- Inspect caulking and weather-stripping around windows and doors.
- Check for any holes in cladding (wall surfaces, soffits and fascia, windows and doors, trim, flashings and caulking) that vermin could enter.
- Wash house exterior.
- Remove plants that touch or perforate the side of the house.
- Check the general condition of the roof: sagging, shingle condition, cracks, leaks, etc.
- Inspect and clean the chimneys, chimney caps and surrounding caulking.
- Inspect attic fan and roof-mounted turbine vent operation.
- Make necessary driveway and sidewalk and step repairs.
- Clean and seal any decking you have.
- Clean and repair patio furniture.
- Verify that light timers and motion sensors are functioning properly.
- Plan interior decorating and remodeling projects. Get estimates for work to be done in the fall.

Fall

- Paint rooms while still able to open windows.
- Open furnace humidifier damper on central air conditioning units.
- Disconnect electricity to forced air furnace motor to inspect fan belt and to clean fan blades. Vacuum inside ducts. If gas furnace, turn pilot light on.
- Clean humidifier.
- Lubricate hot water heating system's circulating pump.
- Check thermostat batteries and set for winter.
- Check batteries on carbon monoxide detector, smoke detector, and security alarm.
- Test well water for quality (test for bacteria every six months).
- Verify that sump pump and line are operating correctly, with discharge pipe draining water away from foundation.
- Check home fire extinguisher gauges, recharge or replace as necessary.
- Swap out window screens and replace with storm windows, after inspecting and making repairs.
- Verify that all windows and exterior doors shut tightly. Repair weather-stripping if necessary.
- Remove window air conditioning units or cover with plastic for winter.
- Make sure the ground around the foundation is properly sloped away from the house to prevent water from draining into the basement.
- Clean leaves out of rain gutters and downspouts.
- Make sure chimneys are clear of nests.
- Measure the sludge and scum in your septic tank to see if tank needs to be emptied before spring (should be pumped every three years).
- Prepare outside for winter: protect plants, trees and bushes, store outdoor furniture.
- Drain and store garden hoses. Close water valve. Drain the exterior faucet.
- Ready snowblower and other winter equipment.

Winter

- Inspect furnace air filters each month in use. Clean or replace as necessary.
- Consult the owner's manual of your hot water tank for directions on draining water from the clean-out valve to ensure proper efficiency.
- Clean humidifier (two or three times) throughout winter.
- Make sure your home's moisture levels stay within an appropriate range. Watch out for condensation.
- Ensure plumbing shut-off valves are working.
- Run water briefly out of faucets that are used infrequently.
- Pour a non-corrosive drain cleaner down the sink to prevent drain obstructions.
- Check for leaks behind washing machine and in cabinets under bathroom and kitchen sinks. Also clean drains in bathtubs, showers and dishwasher.
- Clean grout and caulk around tubs, showers and sinks, repairing as necessary.
- Vacuum bathroom fans, fire and smoke detectors, and radiator grills on refrigerators and freezers.
- Plan fire escape routes, making sure doors, windows and locks are working properly.
- Inspect furniture and cabinets for loose knobs.
- Make sure basement floor drain trap contains water.
- Make sure water cannot seep under the insulation surrounding exterior pipes.
- Make note of ice accumulation and cold air leaks around doors and windows. Repair in spring.
- Test all seasonal lighting. Replace if cords or plugs are worn or warm to the touch.
- Check all ground-fault circuit interrupter outlets.
- Make an inventory of everything in your house for insurance purposes.
- Monitor your roof after snowfalls to make sure there is not a lot of snow build up or ice damming.
- Check exterior vents to make sure there are no snow blockages.

Spring

- Test your hot water heater's temperature and pressure relief valve to make sure it is not stuck.
- Turn gas furnace and fireplace pilot lights off. Clean furnace humidifier.
- Check air conditioning system (should be serviced every two to three years). Replace forced air filter. Clean debris from condenser or heat pump.
- Clean or replace air conditioning filter.
- Set thermostat and automatic sprinkler system.
- Test well water for quality (test for bacteria every six months).
- Check water softener clock.
- Clean and service chimneys if needed.
- Check batteries on carbon monoxide detector, smoke detector, and security alarms.
- Examine weather-stripping around windows and doors.
- Clean and repair windows and screens before you replace storm windows with screens.
- Open valve to exterior faucets after threat of frost is over.
- Check to make sure garden hoses don't leak.
- Investigate home foundation for cracks and basement walls for signs of moisture.
- Clean out rain gutters and downspouts, making sure they are properly secured to your home.
- Verify that sump pump and line are operating correctly, with discharge pipe draining water away from foundation.
- Wash and seal any decking.
- Verify that fire extinguishers are still in working condition.
- Inspect washing machine water hoses, replacing damaged ones.
- Remove mineral deposits from showerheads and faucets.
- Dust ceiling fans.

Top Ten Steps to Improve the Indoor Air Quality of Your Home

1. Make sure fireplaces, wood stoves, furnaces, water heaters and dryers are well vented to outside.
2. Purchase carbon monoxide detectors to install near bedrooms.
3. Prohibit people from smoking within your home.
4. Control the humidity level of your home.
5. Rectify excess moisture problems before mold and mildew grow.
6. Clean the outdoor vent of your clothes dryer.
7. Make sure your home has plenty of fresh air and air movement.
8. Test your home for radon. Kits are available at hardware stores.
9. Check cleaners and other household chemicals for product warnings.
10. If built before 1978, test your home for lead.