



Homeowner Maintenance Tips

After taking possession of a new home, there are some maintenance and safety suggestions that should be considered. The following checklist should help you undertake these improvements:

- Change the locks on all exterior entrances for improved security.
- Investigate the location of the main shut-offs for the plumbing, heating and electrical systems. If you attended the home inspection, these items would have been pointed out to you.
- Review your home inspection report for any items that require immediate improvement or further investigation. Address these areas as required.
- Undertake improvements to all stairways, decks, porches and landings where there is a risk of falling or stumbling. Ensure that handrails are properly and securely installed.
- Create a plan of action in the event of a fire in your home. Ensure that there is an operable window or door in every room of the house. Consult with your local fire department regarding fire safety issues and what to do in the event of a fire.
- Check that all windows and doors are secure. Improve window hardware as necessary. Security rods can be added to sliding windows and doors.
- Examine the interior of the home for tripping hazards. Loose or torn carpeting and flooring should be repaired.
- Examine the yard and grounds for fire ants, wasps and other insects, especially if the house has been unoccupied. Pay attention in play areas.
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors on each level of the home. Ensure that there is a detector inside all sleeping areas. Replace batteries on any existing smoke detector and test them. Make a note to replace batteries each spring and fall when the clocks are changed forward or back. Doing so at the time change serves as a good reminder.
- If you have a security system, you should consider having a security service provider evaluate your system's performance.
- Install rain caps, vermin screens, and damper flaps on all chimney flues, wall penetrations and dryer/appliance vents, as necessary.

Regular Maintenance

Every Month

- Check that fire extinguisher (s) are fully charged, Re-charge if necessary.
- Examine heating and cooling air filters and replace or clean as necessary.
- Inspect and clean humidifiers and electronic air cleaners if applicable.
- Test and reset ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI) breakers and/or receptacles.
- Test and reset Arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCI) breakers if applicable.

Fall and Winter Maintenance Checklist

Mechanical Systems and Attic Area

- Maintain mechanical, plumbing, electrical equipment and appliances per manufactures instructions.
- Clean and test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Test and reset ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI) breakers.
- Change or clean air conditioner/furnace filter.
- Drain sediment from water heater per manufacture's instructions (local water quality determines needed frequency).
- Check and operate heating system. Have a professional maintain the system if necessary.
- **NOTE;** Sometimes the first time the heater is run during the winter it can set off the smoke alarms. If this occurs, open the windows to allow the house to air out and the alarms should stop sounding.
- Adjust registers and confirm that air returns are clear of furniture or draperies.
- Check drain pans and drain lines for furnace and water heaters, clean of any debris.

Exterior of Your Home

- Wrap/protect exterior pipes from freezing during winter months.
- Adjust sprinkler system for winter schedule.
- Protect plants, sod and trees from winter freezes. Administer seasonal applications per lawn care plan.
- Check foundation, concrete slabs, and yard for settling of backfill soils; fill in as needed to maintain positive drainage.
- Clean gutters and confirm that downspouts and splash blocks drain away from the house.
- Check overhead garage door, tighten bolts as needed, lubricate tension springs with oil based spray oil. (ex. Liquid Wrench). Have other repairs done by professionals.
- Adjust or replace weather stripping on exterior doors as needed.

- Check exterior caulking and paint. Touch up as needed. Clean any mildew or discoloration with mild water/bleach mixture.
- Check exterior stain surfaces (front door) and refinish as needed.
- Wash and clean windows and window screens.

Interior of Your Home

- Follow all instructions for safe operation of any fireplace.
- Decorate safely for the Holidays. Do not overload circuits or use worn extension cords.
- **NOTE:** If your holiday lights are not working, always reset the GFCI outlet located in your garage.
- Check and clean sink faucet aerators.
- Inspect for shrinkage damage such as minor drywall cracks and separations of wood trim, repair as needed.
- Open and close windows regularly to help lubricate the tracks.
- Inspect floor coverings and maintain per manufactures specifications.

Spring and Summer Maintenance Suggestions

Mechanical Systems and Attic Area

- Clean and test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Change or clean air conditioner / furnace filter.
- Drain sediment from water heater per manufacture's instructions (local water quality determines needed frequency).
- Check and operate air conditioning system. Have a professional maintain the system if necessary.
- Adjust registers and confirm that cold air returns are clear of furniture or draperies.
- Check drain pans and drain lines of furnace and water heaters, clean of any debris.

Exterior of Your Home

- Check foundation, concrete slabs, and yard for settling of backfill soils; fill in as needed to maintain positive drainage.
- Test exterior pipes and hose bibs for leakage.
- Start and adjust sprinkler system. Reprogram system for spring and summer watering.
- Regularly check and adjust sprinkler heads for full coverage.
- Maintain sod, plants and trees. Administer seasonal applications per lawn care plan.
- Check overhead garage door, tighten bolts as needed and lubricate springs with oil-based spray. (ex. Liquid Wrench) Have other repairs done by a professional.
- Adjust or replace weather stripping on exterior doors as needed.

