

Annual Home Maintenance Tips

All homes, new or existing, need to be winterized in order to prevent some nasty surprises next spring. You'll be ready for Winter's worst & head off pricey repairs with these simple preventative tips.

HOME SAFETY: Before you close up your house & turn on the heat for the first time, be sure to check all of your safety devices to ensure they are working properly. Replace batteries in smoke detectors & carbon monoxide detectors. Make sure fire extinguishers aren't expired.



EXTERIOR WATER FAUCETS: Remove hoses/attachments from outdoor faucets before the first frost. Leaving them attached can cause water to back up in the faucets & plumbing lines inside the walls which could freeze, expand & crack faucets or pipes. Turn off shutoff valves on water supply lines that lead to the exterior faucets.

SUMP PUMP & CHECK VALVE: We recommend you inspect & test your sump pump & check valve every 90 days. Slowly pour several gallons of water into the sump pit to see if the pump turns on. Make sure that the screws are secure at the check valve clamps.

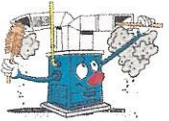
CHECK FOR CRACKS: Grab some tubes of exterior caulk & make a journey around your home's exterior. Seal up cracks between trim & siding, around window & door frames & where pipes & wires enter your house. Preventing moisture from getting inside your walls is one of the least expensive & most important maintenance jobs. You'll also seal air leaks that waste energy.



EXPOSED EXTERIOR WOOD: Exterior wood - decks, doors, windows & other wood exposed to the weather - needs to be maintained. Seal or paint according to manufacturer specifications or recommendations.

INSPECT THE ROOF: Leaves need to be removed from gutters & roof valleys to prevent water back up under shingles & flashings. Soon after a snow or ice storm, snow & ice need to be removed to prevent water back ups as well.

PREPARING YOUR FURNACE: Keeping your furnace free from dust & replacing filters can be a minimal price to pay for maximum heating this winter. Not only is it important to change filters, but furnace maintenance from a professional company will keep your heating bills lower & keep you warm all winter long. If your furnace is equipped with a Humidifier, it is important that you maintain the correct settings & damper position for optimal performance.



SEAL CONCRETE: All outside concrete surfaces, including garages, should be sealed to help extend the life of the surface through the winter & beyond.

WINDOW WELLS: Clear all window wells of leaves & debris. Run water hose into drain pipe for about 5 minutes to be sure pipe is clear & draining properly.

SNOW & ICE REMOVAL FROM CONCRETE SURFACES: No deicing agent should be used on concrete. All types of deicers can damage concrete & are harmful to the environment. Spread sand as an alternative. You can help maintain concrete by shoveling the snow, lessening the chance of it freezing into the surface. Be sure to use a plastic shovel. Never use deicers containing ammonium nitrate or ammonium sulphate. Seal the surface to help protect from the elements.



FERTILIZERS: There are many different types of fertilizers. Some of these do harm to the surface of concrete by penetrating the pores, causing popping - while others will stain the surface, giving the appearance of rust spots. It is important to keep all fertilizer products off exposed concrete to avoid any damage.

TILE & GRANITE: Shower & Kitchen tiles are sealed before you move in; however, we recommend resealing once a year with 511 impregnator which you can get at Lowes. This product may be able to be used to reseal Granite as well. Your tile floors were not sealed - you may use this product to do them too.