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REAL ESTATE

Don't Forget These Maintenance Tasks

Tasks like cleaning out your gutters, dusting and vacuuming your home, and weeding your garden come with regular, visible reminders. But how do you keep up with other seasonal maintenance chores that may not be as noticeable?

Here are some home maintenance tasks that help your home's systems run efficiently, so don't leave them off your to-do list.



LARGE APPLIANCES

- Clean out your dryer vent. (Lint screens should be cleaned after each load of laundry.)
- Vacuum and wipe down the coils on the back of your refrigerator.
- Change or clean the filters in your dishwasher, refrigerator, and range hood.



HVAC

- Vacuum vents and clean out the ducts.
- Replace old air filters (at least every other month).
- Replace weatherstripping to reduce drafts.
- Test your thermostat.



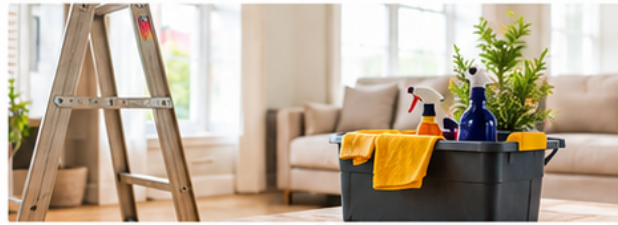
PLUMBING

- Flush the water heater.
- Check for leaks by examining walls, ceilings, cabinets, and pipes.
- If you have sprinklers, test the water pressure.



SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Test your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and replace the batteries if necessary.
- Ensure your security alarms and codes are working.
- Inspect your fence and gate for holes or vulnerabilities.



Keep this checklist handy and review it at least once each season to help keep your home in good condition and your household safe.



How to Prevent Water Damage



Are you worried about water damage in your home? Many homes are more susceptible to water exposure during the latter half of the year due to rain, snow, ice, and other forms of precipitation.

Additionally, undetected plumbing issues can also lead to water damage inside your home.

It's important to consider how excess water can threaten your property, causing roof damage, mold and mildew, and other costly problems.

You can take these four steps to help prevent water damage:

- 1 Keep gutters and downspouts clear.** Clogged gutters can cause rainwater and melting ice to back up instead of draining properly, which can damage your roof and lead to costly repairs.
- 2 Monitor water pressure and plumbing issues.** Catch leaks and other plumbing issues early, before they cause significant damage. Consider installing a water leak detector that can alert you to even the smallest potential problem.
- 3 Maintain your roof and chimney.** Have your roof and chimney inspected annually. Addressing a minor repair today can help prevent major damage during the next storm.
- 4 Look out for mold and mildew.** Check walls and ceilings regularly for signs of mold or mildew, which often indicate a leak or excess moisture. If you notice either, contact a plumbing professional.

If you live in an area prone to flooding or severe weather, consider purchasing flood insurance in addition to your homeowners insurance to help protect your home from weather-related damage.



Does Your Home Need New Windows?



If you've moved into an older home that hasn't been updated (or if you've lived in your home for a long time), you may want to consider updating your windows.

Over time, windows can become drafty, making your home less energy efficient and potentially less comfortable.

Here are some factors to consider before replacing your home's windows:

- **Cost:** This is an important factor, especially if you're replacing windows throughout your entire home. Just remember: Paying less now could mean they won't last as long, leading to higher costs down the road.
- **Type:** Your climate and home's layout will play a role in the type of windows you choose. Picture and bay windows are great for letting in natural light and showcasing views. Casement and double-hung windows can bring in a breeze, while awning and single-hung windows can improve airflow without taking up space.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Choosing windows with high R-values (meaning they reduce heat flow) and low U-values (meaning they provide better insulation) can help keep your home comfortable while lowering your utility bills.
- **Security:** Windows are a major entry point to your home, and they can leave you vulnerable to break-ins, adverse weather and more. Always consider security features and potential risks when picking out new windows.

“Notable, Quotable, Quotes!”

“The art of life lies in a constant readjustment to our surroundings.”

— Kakuzo Okakura

“Once you face your fear,
nothing is ever as hard as you think.”

— Olivia Newton-John

“It isn't where you came from.
It's where you're going that counts.”

— Ella Fitzgerald



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