

Get Hopping on Summer Home Maintenance

Summer is here and while most of us look forward to picnics, outings, camping and vacations, it's smart to also do a few nips and tucks on your home.

Take the time when the weather is nice to inspect and tackle any maintenance now, well ahead of fall and winter, and to fix any problems before they become major repair projects. Here are some tips that you can follow:

The top

Start by either climbing up and inspecting the roof or viewing it from the ground. Look for signs of wear on the shingles, curling, cracking or protruding nails.

Also check the valleys where two rooflines intersect. Check the metal, flashings around chimneys and flues, as well as the rubber boots around plumbing vents.

Inspect flashing around skylights and caulk any areas that may leak.

Clean and inspect your rain gutters. Get rid of all the debris that's collected and make sure that downspouts carry water from the gutters and that water doesn't pool up.

Fix any issues as needed.

The middle

Inspect your house exterior for loose or rotting siding or window frames. Look for dry rot as well on patio flooring and beams. Power-wash siding or brick to get rid of dust, dirt, tree sap, bird droppings and other residue.

Look for chipped, peeling or flaking paint on your siding. Check for loose vinyl or aluminum siding.

Check for broken storm windows and screens. If you bring screens out in the summer, inspect them for damage before installing.

Check window glazing and make sure it's not cracking or falling apart. If you find problems, remove the old glazing and use putty to reseal.

The bottom

Close foundation vents and uncover basement windows if you have them.

Check brick tuckpointing. Also, inspect foundation for cracks or leaks. Foundation cracks can create an entry point for groundwater and insects. Repair as needed.

Inspect the crawlspaces for signs of flooding or water leaks. Fix as necessary.

If you have washed out areas next to the foundation, you should fill and compact them. Make sure that you maintain a slope away from the foundation in all areas around your home.

Plumbing, HVAC and electrical

Clean out the faucet traps (the small screen on the end of your faucet) to get rid of any mineral deposits and other debris. Make sure to buy a box of faucet traps to replace the old ones.

Clean the clothes dryer vent and exhaust duct to get rid of any lint or dust clogging them.

Turn off the power to the outside unit of the central air condition system and spray the outside coils with water.

Also, you should take time to remove the filter and check inside the filter box to make sure it's clean. If it isn't, call a professional to clean and service the unit. Make sure to change the filter every three months.

Inspect overhead electrical wires leading to your home to make sure they are not close to or contacting tree limbs. If they do, contact your power company.

Patio and yard

Conduct an inspection of any outdoor play equipment to make sure it's safe. Look for loose or broken pieces, rusting, wood splintering or protruding nails. Fix any issues you encounter.

Walk the perimeter of your back yard and inspect the fence. Fix any loose boards or posts. Also repair and reinforce any broken or loose parts. If the stain or paint is fading or chipping, repaint or restain the fence.

Inspect walkways and your driveway for cracks. Refill as needed.

The takeaway

When you own a home, chores can seem endless, but most important is keeping up on needed maintenance. Take the opportunity that summer weather provides and do preventative maintenance to keep small problems from becoming big “B” and costly “B” ones.

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