



Spring Maintenance 2010

Preventive maintenance is crucial to the value of your home. Keep your place in tip-top shape with regular check-ups to save you the headache and cost of emergency repairs.

Divert Water – Gutters do their job best when clean. Check yours for foliage build-up, particularly if trees hover over the roof. Trapped moisture can leave a house susceptible to moss and mildew and cause major damage to your roof and walls. While you're at it, make sure the downspout is clean and pointing 2-2-1/2 feet away from foundation walls.

Retain the Roof - It's easy to take for granted the one thing that shields you from the elements. But doing so could cost you unnecessary repair costs. Be diligent about roof maintenance.

Check Your Paint Job – Look for chipped, cracked paint along the exterior of your home. Scrape off any failing paint. Sand it down so there are no rough edges, prime the bare wood surface and paint it with a high quality paint product. Don't wait until siding accumulates too much dirt. Brighten up the house with a good power washing.

Love Your Lawn – Trim overgrown trees and hedges away from your home to discourage the growth of mildew and moisture. Branches should be at least 7 feet away from the exterior of your house to prolong the life of your siding and roof. Get rid of out-of-control vines, as they can help crack siding and allow moisture and pests entry into your home.

Keep the Air Fresh – With warm, sticky days ahead, do yourself a favor and give your air conditioning unit a little TLC. Not only does it cool you down, but an efficient air conditioner removes moisture and humidity from your home, which in excess, can damage its foundation. So if you aren't changing air filters monthly, start now.

Watch Windows and Doors – Investigate all doors and windows for leaks and drafts, particularly near the corners. Look for peeling and chipping paint, which can signal water intrusion. Seal any open areas between the frame and the wall to keep out water, which can deteriorate building materials. Neglecting these tasks can open up potential for environmental hazards like mold growth.

Take a Peek at the Plumbing - Check for leaking faucets or sweating pipes, clogged drains and faulty water drainage systems. On laundry day, look at the washing machine hoses for bulges, cracks or dampness. Check under the kitchen sink for leaks, and make note of wetness around the dishwasher. Inspect your water heater for leaks and corrosion.

Tackle the Tiles – While you're in spring-cleaning mode, pay attention to worn grout between floor tiles in the bathroom or kitchen. A small crack in the grout or caulk can lead to an expensive repair later. If necessary, re-seal as soon as possible.