

Each season your home goes through changes in temperatures, weather conditions, aging, and of course human abuse! In order to keep all your components of your home running smoothly, and to avoid costly repairs later, it's helpful to conduct seasonal maintenance actions each season. As the summer continues, this is a perfect time to prepare for fall.

1.) Examine your roof/gutters/downspouts for debris: Your roof is often forgotten about because it is not at eye level to give you a subtle reminder every time you walk past it. Clear leaves, dirt, and pine needles from gutters and examine downspouts for damage or loose pieces. Check the flashing around your chimney and any openings in the roof, such as skylights for leaking problems.

2.) Examine the grounds of your property: Before the grass is covered with snow, or it is too cold to venture outside, check walkways for cracks and loose paver material. Fix walkway and entryway areas before slippery weather can cause a tripping or falling accident.

3.) Change the filters in your home: If you have a central air conditioning system, change the air filter regularly. If you have a window air conditioning unit, remove from the window or place a waterproof cover over it to prevent damage. Change filters in stove vents, clothes dryers and room fans if applicable. Clean air filters will keep your family healthier in the fall months.

4.) Still have leaky faucets? Repair them now: Before the temperatures start to dip low, examine leaky faucets in the kitchen, bathrooms, and utility room locations. Most likely the time and money spent now to fix will be less than a broken pipe in the dead of winter!

5.) Prepare your fireplace: For some people they use their fireplace more than their central heater in the fall and winter months. Discard old ashes and ensure the damper is open to allow air to freely move through the chimney. If the air is becoming cold, close back the damper after cleaning. Check the damper handle and springs to ensure the flue is operating correctly. Hire a professional chimney sweep if needed.

6.) Drain your hot water heater: If you live in an area with hard water extra amounts of sediments could be building up in your tank. Now is a perfect time to drain and make sure rust is not developing in your tank as well. If your hot water heater is extremely old or is rusting considering a new one that will be more cost effective and energy efficient.

7.) Check windows and doors for drafts: The majority of conditioned air in your home is lost through the windows and doors. Go through your home and open windows to ensure the seal and caulking around the window frame is in good condition. Think of adding heavier drapery around windows that are extra drafty, to help block some air infiltration.

8.) Clean and store seasonal outdoor furniture: Once you have taken your last plunge in the pool this summer, power wash outdoor furniture and cushions. Once dry, store cushions in dry area to prevent cracking, and fading

over the fall and winter months. One spring comes along next year, you will be pleased that you stored them and they're ready for use!

9.)Have garden power tools serviced: Once your grass begins to enter the dormant stage, take your lawnmower, trimmer, and other tools to get their blades sharpened and fluids recapped off. In the market for new garden power tools, buy now when the season is almost over... you will find great deals!

10.) Take care of your irrigation/lawn needs: Depending on where you live, the climate for your lawn and its irrigation system may need to be checked. Consider having an irrigation service professional fix broken heads before the cold weather sets in. If you want to prevent spring weeds and winter lawn damage, don't forget to fertilize. Visit your local garden center to find out information on what type of fertilizer to use and when to spread it.

Courtesy of Freshhome.com