



Barkee@Home

May Newsletter



Spring Home Maintenance Tips

It's spring, and time to think about your home maintenance projects. A well maintained home is much less likely to experience emergencies, and cause family injuries, than one that's cluttered and rundown. Consider these maintenance tips:

Safety Equipment

- Monthly check fire extinguishers - Make sure pressure is at proper levels.
- Monthly test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors - Press test button and listen for alarm.
- Practice fire drill - Involve children in mapping escape routes.
- Replenish survival pantry.

The Plumbing System

- Check pipes, valves, and fixtures for leaks – Look for corrosion, vibration, slow leaks, or failed valves.
- Open and close main and secondary water valves - Close and open each valve to ensure that each is in working order.
- Test water heater safety relief valve - Lift handle on valve. If water comes out, valve is in good working order. If no water is discharged, replace valve immediately.
- Drain sludge out of water heater - Mineral sludge can build up in bottom of water heater and reduce efficiency.
- Every 2-3 years have septic tank pumped - Solids that build up in septic tank can eventually block tank outlets. Call professional to pump out your tank.

The Heating and Air Conditioning Systems

- Have ductwork professionally cleaned every 2-5 years.
- Clean or replace air filters - Clogged furnace or air conditioning filter will reduce systems efficiency and degrade indoor air quality.
- Heat pump and central air conditioning systems - Cut grass and other foliage away from outdoor unit.
- Room air conditioners - Seal gaps between unit and adjoining wall or window.

General Maintenance

- Inspect for termites, carpenter ants, and wood rot.
- Wash and repair vinyl, aluminum, or clapboard siding.
- Check roof for damaged shingles - Repair damaged shingles immediately before leaks develop.
- Check underside of roof (in attic) for water stains - Water stains indicate leak that can leak to wood rot.
- Coat wood decks with water repellent.
- Clean and repair rain gutters and downspouts.

Source: The Family Handyman, The Do-It-Yourself Guide to Home Emergencies, by Don Best.

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We hope you will find this newsletter informative. Through our periodic Barkee@Home newsletters, we pass on home maintenance tips, safety ideas, information on product recalls, etc., of interest to families and homeowners. **Just another way we are striving to be your homeownership partner.**

For additional home maintenance tips, as well as other helpful homeowner Internet links, please visit our Web site at:

www.BarkeeInspect.com

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