



— *Your* —
Home Maintenance
Checklist
— *for* —
Every Season



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— Take a — Seasonal Approach — to — Maintaining Your Home



Owning a home comes with a lot of responsibilities. The tasks are constant and year-round in nature, and by embracing rather than postponing them, you'll not only keep you and your loved ones safe, but also **help your biggest investment – your house – retain its value.**

And it's easier than you might think! The real trick is to **complete preventative projects each season.** They're manageable jobs you can do yourself and are far less expensive than the costly repairs that could be required if proper maintenance is neglected. So look at it as a chance to **tackle simple projects that can help avoid much larger issues down the road.**

These projects don't need to feel like a cumbersome chore, and dividing them into simple seasonal tasks is a great way to let your pride of ownership show.

Just follow these seasonal checklists to help keep your house in tip-top shape all year long.



Your List

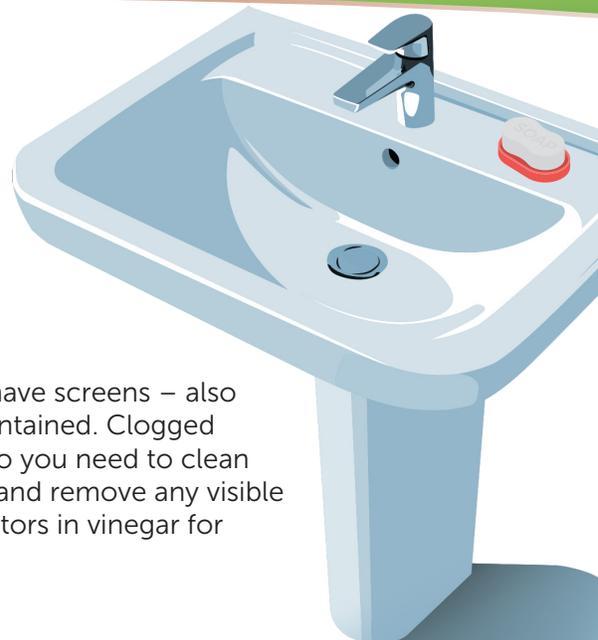
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Summer

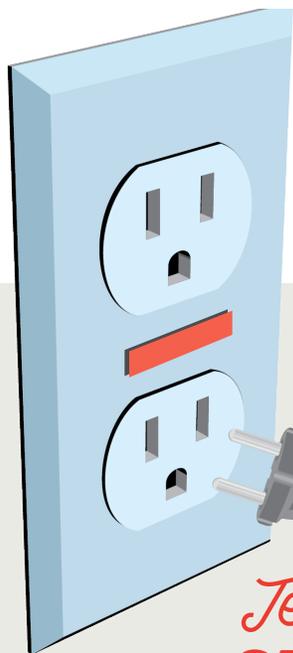
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Clean Faucet Screens/Aerators



Like your windows and doors, your faucets also have screens – also known as aerators – that should be regularly maintained. Clogged faucet screens won't deliver full blasts of water, so you need to clean them at least once a year. Unscrew the aerators, and remove any visible debris. If you can't clean it by hand, soak the aerators in vinegar for about 30 minutes.



Test
**GFCI
Outlets**

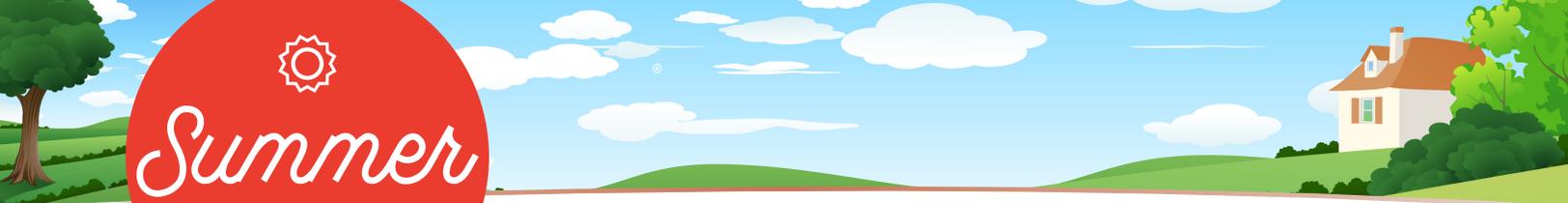
Kitchens, bathrooms, and other areas that may be exposed to moisture should be equipped with ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlets. They're designed to avoid electrical shocks and minimize the possibility of fires by shutting off the flow of electricity when a ground fault occurs. To test if they're functioning correctly, plug in a hair dryer – or similar small appliance – turn it on, then press the test button on the outlet. If the plugged-in appliance shuts off, the outlet is working as it should; if not, it [should be replaced](#).

Inspect Interior Plumbing

Look under each sink in your house to make sure there are no signs of leaks. Check your ceilings for any water stains, which would indicate a leak in the wall. Water loves to take unexpected paths when it travels, and a leak in one room may have originated in another. If you are having trouble locating the source of a leak or experience trouble fixing a leak you have found, it's time to call a licensed plumber.



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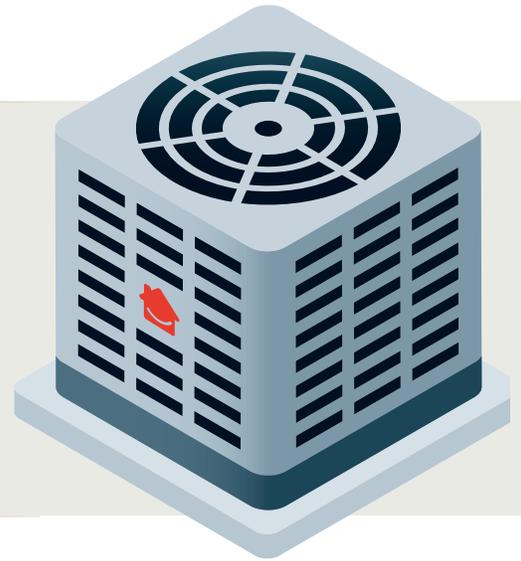


Lubricate Garage Door **Rollers, Hinges, and Springs**

Your garage door is one of the largest moving parts of your house, and the key to its health is simple lubrication. The springs, rollers, tracks and hinges all need some attention to keep the garage door functioning smoothly. Spray each part with a synthetic garage door lubricant to keep your door gliding up and down without any creaks or groans.

Change Your **HVAC Filters**

Replacing the filters in your system is crucial to ensuring optimum efficiency. Dirty or clogged filters could obstruct the normal airflow cycle and increase malfunction and flammability risks.

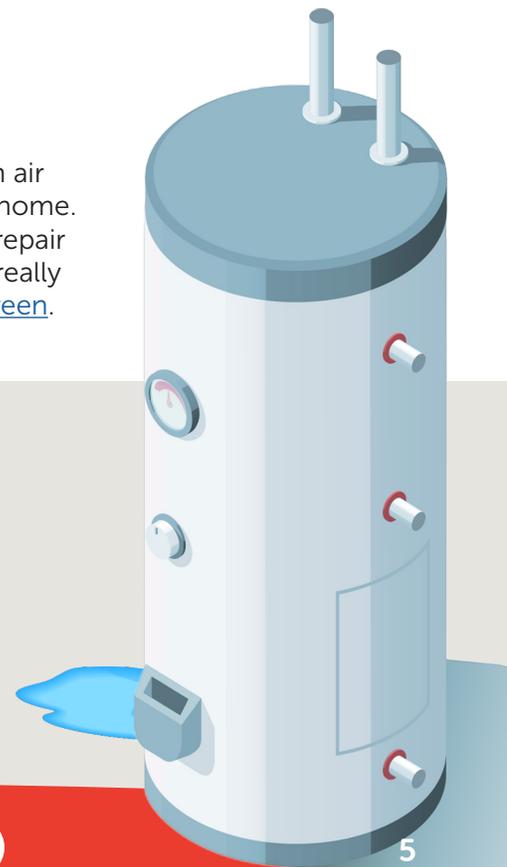


Patch Window **and Door Screens**

As you open up the windows and doors to let the fresh air in, you definitely don't want to invite insects into your home. Examine each window and door screen for holes and repair any you find with a simple screen patch. If it's looking really bad, you may want to consider [replacing the entire screen](#).

Flush Your **Water Heater**

To keep your water heater operating at peak efficiency, drain about a quarter of the tank to remove sediment and debris. Turn off the cold-water supply, attach a garden hose to the drain valve, and drain the tank water into a bucket until the water is clear. If the water remains cloudy, briefly open the water supply valve to stir up remaining sediment, and drain the tank again. This also makes the unit operate more quietly.



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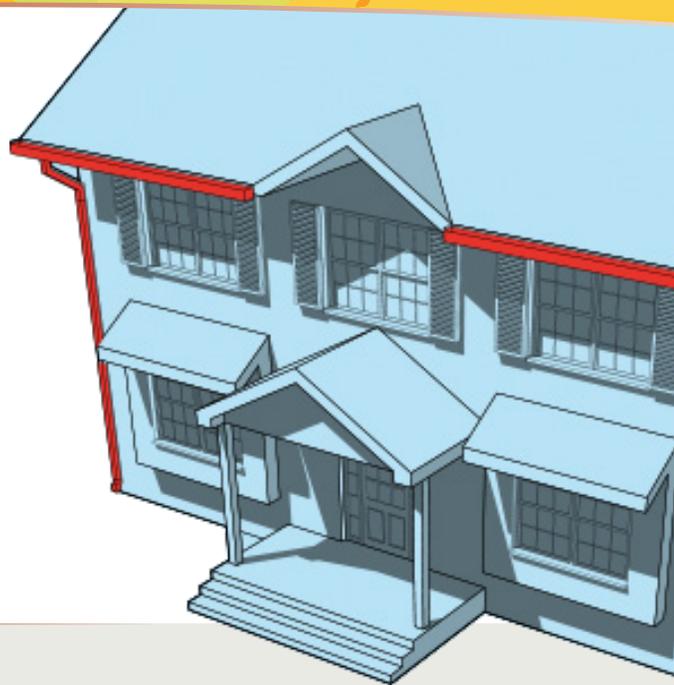


Your List for *Fall*



Clean the Gutters

Yes, you cleaned them in the spring, but now it's time to get your gutters prepared for the winter months. Falling leaves and debris can fill gutters and clog downspouts. In snowy climates, ice dams are the main hazard associated with clogged gutters going into winter. Remove all leaves and other debris from your gutters to keep them flowing freely.

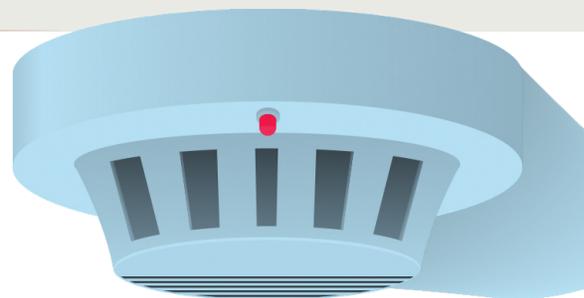


Protect Your Pipes



Water pipes in crawl spaces, attics, or basements can be prone to freezing in the winter. To help prevent that from happening, wrap the pipes with foam or another type of insulation, and plug any drafty cracks or holes in walls near your pipes. Outdoor pipes, like those for sprinkler systems, should be drained and their water source turned off to prevent them from freezing or bursting in the winter. A plumber or landscaper can do this for you if you're uncomfortable handling it yourself.

Change the Batteries in Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors



Even if your [alarms are still functioning properly](#), you should replace their batteries at least once a year. Doing it routinely in the fall when you turn back the clocks is an easy way to remember this one!



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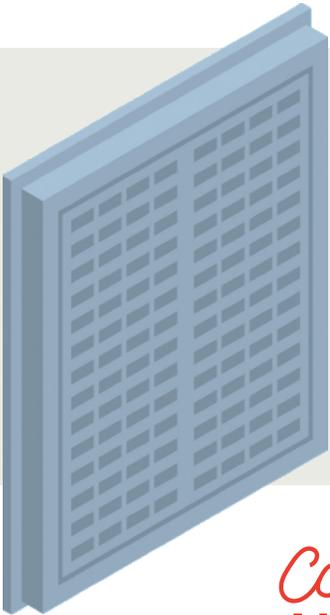


Fall

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Clean the Flue/Chimney

You'll be using your furnace (or fireplace, if you have one) during the winter months, and now is the time to get it ready to handle all that exhaust. You'll have to call a professional for this one, as they remove creosote that has built up inside and check for other potential hazards such as bird nests and debris.

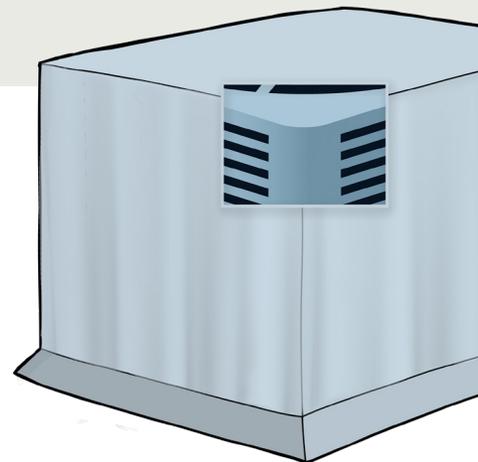


Change Your HVAC Filters

Replacing the filters in your system is crucial to ensuring optimum efficiency. Dirty or clogged filters could obstruct the normal airflow cycle and increase malfunction and flammability risks.

Cover Central Air Conditioning Condensers

If you have a central air system, put a protective cover over your outdoor condenser. This protects it from the harsh winter elements and helps prolong the life of your unit. There are even quite a few decorative options to choose from.



Clean Your Dryer Vent

The U.S. Fire Administration reports that every year more than 2,900 home fires are started by clothes dryers, and the leading cause is a buildup of lint due to lack of simple maintenance by the homeowner. Plus, a [dirty or clogged vent](#) also reduces your dryer's performance.

 [Click to see plans in your area](#)



Your List
for
Winter

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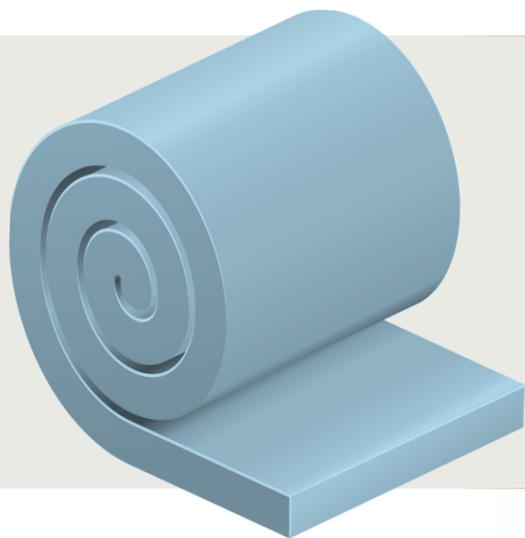
Install a Smart Thermostat

Winter is the perfect time to install and enjoy a smart thermostat that will help you conserve energy. Through advanced features like geofencing and adaptive operation, it helps reduce both your monthly bills and your carbon footprint. With accurate readings and programmable settings, a smart thermostat allows you to maintain the utmost levels of comfort while you're home and save electricity while you're away. Plus, they're [simple to install](#) and easy to use.



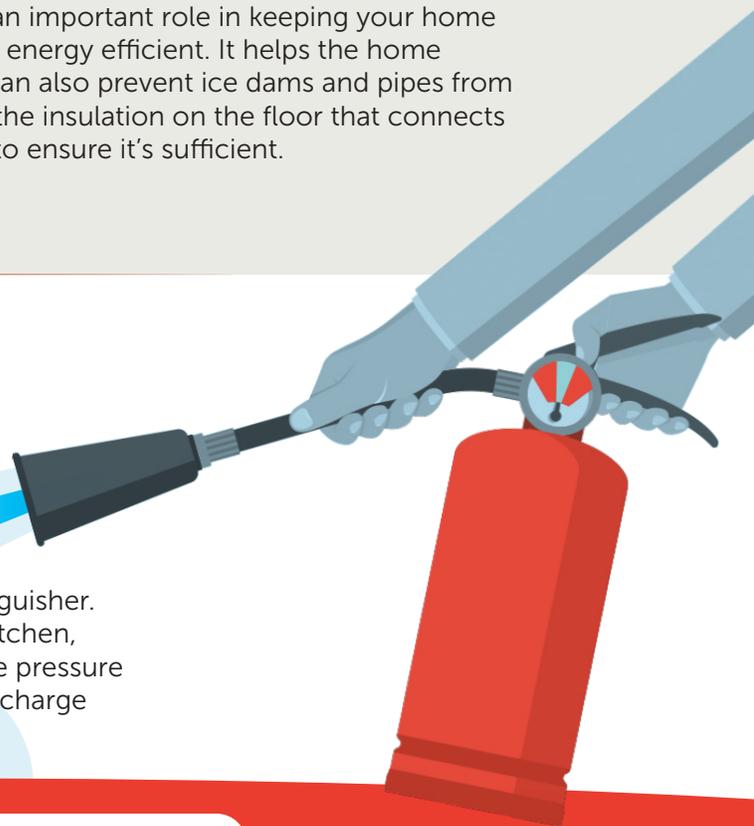
Add Insulation

[Insulation](#) plays an important role in keeping your home comfortable and energy efficient. It helps the home retain heat and can also prevent ice dams and pipes from freezing. Check the insulation on the floor that connects to your roofline to ensure it's sufficient.



Check Your Fire Extinguishers

Every home should be equipped with at least one fire extinguisher. If you don't have one, purchase one and keep it near the kitchen, but having one per floor is ideal. Check the indicator on the pressure gauge to make sure the extinguisher is charged and the discharge nozzle is not clogged.

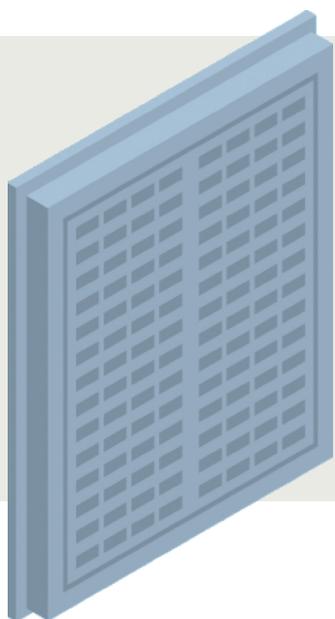
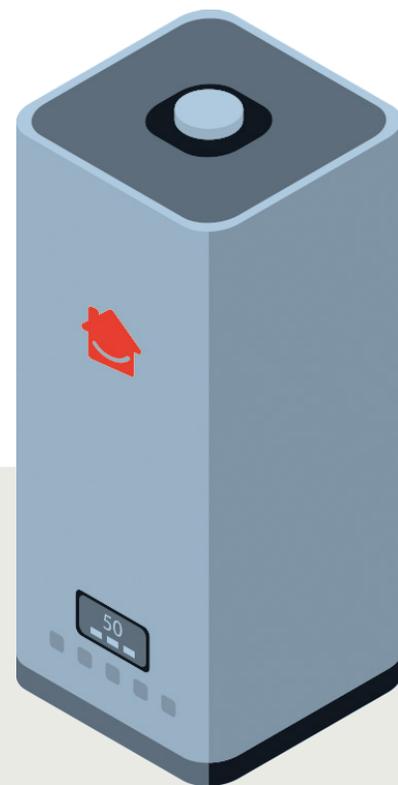


[Click to see plans in your area](#)



Test Your Humidifier(s)

Winter air is naturally dry, and turning on the heat in your home only adds to the dryness. That dry air is not only bad for your health, but also makes fine wood more susceptible to cracking. Test your humidifier to make sure it's functioning properly, and remove any mineral deposits with vinegar.

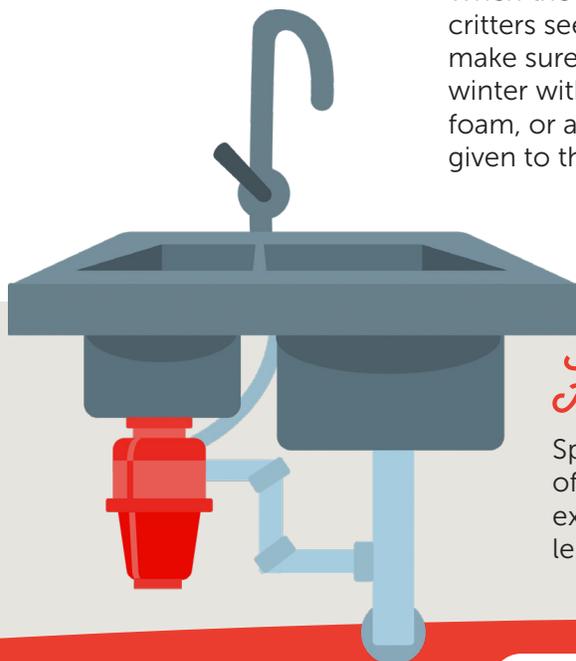
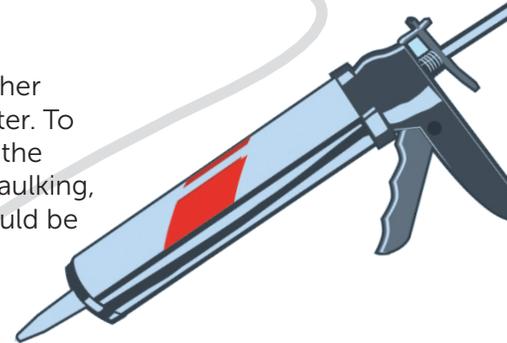


Change Your HVAC Filters

[Replacing the filters](#) in your system is crucial to ensuring optimum efficiency, and it's not just a once-a-year activity. Seasons change, and your filters should too. Dirty or clogged filters could obstruct the normal airflow cycle and increase malfunction and flammability risks.

Seal Cracks and Holes

When the weather turns frigid, small rodents and other critters seek a warm environment for food and shelter. To make sure they don't infiltrate your house to spend the winter with you, seal exterior cracks or holes with caulking, foam, or another type of filler. Special attention should be given to the areas where pipes enter the house.



Flush Your Garbage Disposal

Sprinkle about half a cup of baking soda all over the sink and add a cup of white vinegar. And yes, it will fizz like an elementary school science experiment! Wash it down the drain with boiling water, then drop a cut lemon into the garbage disposal to kill bacteria and eliminate bad smells.



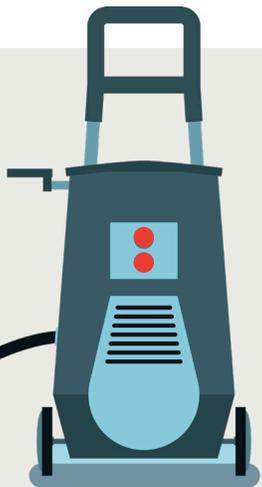
Your List
— for —

Spring

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Perform an Exterior Inspection

Spring is the perfect time to walk around your house and check for any signs of winter damage. Look for broken or missing shingles on the roof, loose siding on the house, and signs of masonry cracks in the foundation.



Power Wash Your House

Wash away winter grime by using a power washer on your siding. Use a low pressure setting to prevent exterior damage, and spot-clean heavily soiled areas. To better protect your house and your loved ones, use an environmentally friendly solvent as an alternative to harsh chemicals.

Patio or Deck *Repair*

When you're done with the house, use the power washer on your patio or deck to get it ready for spring. Then look for signs of cracked wood or loose nails on wooden decks, and replace any damaged planks. Treat the deck with borate for algae to protect against rot, let it dry for a few days, then seal it. For masonry patios, check for signs of loose stones or cracks, and repair them to prevent the damage spreading to other areas.



[Click to see plans in your area](#)

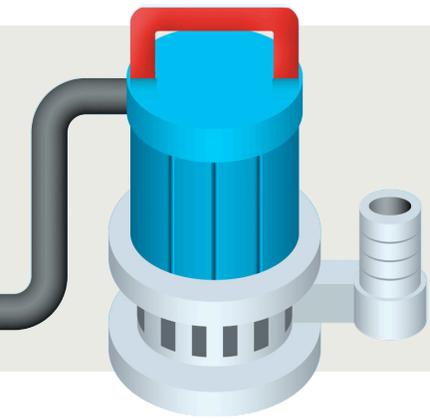


Spring

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Check the Weather Stripping on Doors and Windows

Take a look at the stripping on your door and window frames that may have been cracked, broken, or dislodged during the winter months. By replacing any damaged sections, you'll seal gaps and [make your house more energy efficient](#).



Test Your Sump Pump

Inspect the sump pump in your basement to ensure it's draining properly. Add water to the system to raise the pump's float and check that it activates the motor, activates the pump, and evacuates the water. Then venture outside to the system's drainage area and ensure it's not obstructed by any debris.

Change Your HVAC Filters

Yes, this is a seasonal activity, so be prepared! Replacing the filters in your system is crucial to ensuring optimum efficiency. Dirty or clogged filters could obstruct the normal airflow cycle and increase malfunction and flammability risks.



Clean the Gutters

Everything from snow melt to spring showers brings the potential for a lot of water to run through your downspouts, and gutters control how it flows away from your house. Clogged gutters can cause your roof to leak or water to penetrate inside your house, and keeping them clean helps protect your roof, siding, and foundation. If any portion of your gutters are broken or damaged, have them replaced to prevent drainage issues.



[Click to see plans in your area](#)



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— *for* Every Season —

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Have a Plan
— *for* —
Unexpected
Repairs

Pick Your Plan

Repairs to the plumbing, heating and cooling, and electrical systems on your property may be your responsibility. Breakdowns may be costly and result in unplanned expenses. [Coverage is available](#) for these systems, and no property check is required.

Systems in your home can break down without warning. It is important that you be prepared should it happen to you. That's why HomeServe offers optional coverage to help homeowners avoid paying for covered repairs.