

New Homeowner's Guide

Staying on top of your home maintenance can help prevent minor issues from becoming costly major problems later. Here are some tips to help you protect your investment and maximize your enjoyment of your home.

1. Change the air filter every 1-2 months to keep your HVAC system running efficiently. A dirty air filter will decrease the air quality in your home. It also forces the system to work harder, which increases energy bills, causes avoidable repair expenses, and shortens the life of your AC system.
2. Turn off the AC when mowing near the outside unit so grass, dirt, and debris don't get pulled into the condenser. A dirty condenser is less efficient. Have the system cleaned once a year (or Google how to clean it yourself. It's easy.)
3. Check the insulation on the AC refrigerant line. This is the pipe that carries the cold air from the outside unit into the house. It will be the only one with insulation on it. If there is no insulation, it will be wet from condensation if the unit has been running. The foam insulation tube deteriorates over time. It's \$7 +/- at Lowe's or Home Depot and easy to install.
4. Caulk dries and shrinks over time, so regularly inspect windows, doors, and the outside corners of the house for gaps or cracks. Re-caulk any openings to prevent drafts, moisture intrusion, and pests from entering your home. Check the caulk around your tub/shower and sinks as well. WATER IS YOUR ENEMY. *Note: Make sure you're using the correct type of caulk for the interior vs. exterior.*
5. Regularly inspect under sinks and around toilets for signs of leaks. Early detection can prevent major water damage and mold growth. WATER IS YOUR ENEMY.
6. Inspect the roof every year or two, depending on roof age. Don't wait until you see evidence of a leak! As a roof ages, nails may work their way out of the shingles or ridge vent, and deterioration of the sealant around flashing or plumbing vents is very common. This will allow water to penetrate the roof surface. WATER IS YOUR ENEMY.
7. Inspect your home's exterior paint for peeling or chipping. Touch up paint as needed to protect the surface from the elements, especially any wood siding or fascia/trim. Faded or peeling paint will expose the wood to water. Paint is cheaper than lumber. Remember: WATER IS YOUR ENEMY.
8. Keep trees and shrubs trimmed away from your house to prevent damage to the siding and roof. Overgrown branches can also be a pathway for pests. Do not allow limbs- even small ones- to come into contact with the roof or siding.
9. Avoid piling mulch or any type of wood against your home's foundation. This traps moisture against the house and attracts termites and other wood destroying insects.
10. Before freezing weather, disconnect and drain water hoses and use insulating covers on outside faucets or exposed pipes.

11. Drain and flush your water heater once a year to remove sediment buildup. This extends the life of the heater and improves efficiency. (Does not apply to tankless water heaters.)
12. Check weather stripping around doors and replace as needed to prevent drafts and keep the cold air in and hot air out, (or vice versa in winter!)
13. Clean your dryer vent and exhaust duct annually to prevent lint buildup, which can be a fire hazard.

Well-maintained homes are worth more, are easier to sell, and are more comfortable to live in. Everything on this list is easy and affordable unless you ignore it for too long. I'm more than happy to help you find the right people to take care of your home, so call or text me if you need a contact for maintenance/repairs or improvement projects! 601-818-7383

