

Fall Maintenance for Your Home

With the arrival of autumn, there are many things that homeowners can do to protect their homes and save on heating bills during the colder winter months. Water is a home's worst enemy; it can damage a home by penetrating through the roof, siding, windows, etc. causing both rot and mold. Cold air leaking into your home will make your family uncomfortable and will raise your utility bills. Air can leak into your home through doors, windows, cracks in walls, through your home's crawlspace, etc. These leaks can allow as much air into your home as an open window would. Below are ten steps that you can take to protect both your family and your home and to save money on your utility bills.

1. Check your heating system including filters, pilot lights and burners. Gas furnaces, especially older ones, can produce deadly carbon monoxide. Consider having the system serviced by a licensed HVAC technician.
2. Clean and vacuum dust from vents and cold-air returns. Dust build-up in ducts is a major cause of indoor pollutants. Consider hiring a pro to clean your ductwork.
3. Replace your air filter. This will help to keep your ductwork clean and will help your furnace to operate more efficiently.
4. Install weather stripping on leaky doors and windows and caulk cracks and exterior joints around windows and doors. If you can see outside light coming in through a crack or around a closed door, then air will come in, too.
5. Repair damaged trim and siding and paint bare exterior wood on your home. This will keep water from further damaging the wood.
6. Trim trees that are growing close to or rubbing against your home and roof.
7. Clean your gutters to ensure that rain water can drain properly off of your roof and away from your foundation.
8. Rake leaves away from your home. They can hold moisture against your home which can cause damage and attract insects, including termites.
9. Drain the sediment from your water heater to keep it running efficiently.
10. Test and/ or change the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.