



Protecting Your Home – The Biggest Investment of Your Life

Your home is the most expensive investment you will make in your life. In order to protect your investment it is necessary to properly maintain your home. The following information is based on the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation website with respect to spring and summer maintenance. I hope you will find this information useful. Move to the top of the list any item that will prevent moisture penetration into your home. Moisture causes many problems and potentially major damage.

Spring is the time to check your home with respect to winter damage. This will assist you in planning your “To Do” List for the summer months ahead.

Spring

- Have fireplace or wood stove and chimney cleaned and serviced as needed.
- Shut down, drain and clean furnace humidifier, and close the furnace humidifier damper on units with central air conditioning.
- Switch on power to air conditioning and check system. Have it serviced every two or three years.
- Clean or replace air-conditioning filter, if applicable.
- Check dehumidifier and drain — clean if necessary.
- Turn OFF gas furnace and fireplace pilot lights where possible.
- Have well water tested for quality. It is recommended that you test for bacteria every six months.
- Check smoke, carbon monoxide and security alarms, and replace batteries.
- Clean windows, screens and hardware, and replace storm windows with screens. Check screens first and repair or replace if needed.
- Open valve to outside hose connection after all danger of frost has passed.
- Examine the foundation walls for cracks, leaks or signs of moisture, and repair as required.
- Ensure sump pump is operating properly before the spring thaw sets in. Ensure discharge pipe is connected and allows water to drain away from the foundation.
- Re-level any exterior steps or decks that moved as a result of frost or settling.
- Check for and seal off any holes in exterior cladding that could be an entry point for small pests, such as bats and squirrels.
- Check eavestroughs and downspouts for loose joints and secure attachment to your home, clear any obstructions, and ensure water flows away from your foundation.
- Clear all drainage ditches and culverts of debris.
- Repair and paint fences as necessary — allow wood fences to dry adequately before tackling this task.
- Undertake spring landscape maintenance and, if necessary, fertilize young trees.
- Check and clean or replace furnace air filters each month during the heating season. Ventilation system, such as heat recovery ventilator filters should be checked every two months.

Summer

- Monitor basement humidity and avoid relative humidity levels above 60 per cent. Use a dehumidifier to maintain relative humidity below 60 per cent.
- Clean or replace air-conditioning filter, and clean or replace ventilation system filters if necessary.
- Check basement pipes for condensation or dripping and, if necessary, take corrective action; for example, reduce humidity and/or insulate cold water pipes.
- Check the basement floor drain to ensure the trap contains water; refill with water if necessary.
- If you have a plumbing fixture that is not used frequently, for example, a laundry tub or spare bathroom sink, tub or shower stall, run some water briefly to keep water in the trap.
- Deep clean carpets and rugs.
- Vacuum bathroom fan grille.
- Disconnect the duct connected to your clothes dryer, and vacuum lint from duct, the areas surrounding your dryer and your dryer's vent hood outside.
- Check security of all guardrails and handrails.
- Check smooth functioning of all windows, and lubricate as required.
- Inspect window putty on outside of glass panes of older houses, and replace if needed.
- Sand and touch up paint on windows and doors.
- Lubricate door hinges, and tighten screws as needed.
- Check for and replace damaged caulking and weather stripping around mechanical and electrical services, windows and doorways, including the doorway between the garage and the house. See the "About Your House" fact sheet "Attached Garages and Indoor Air Quality on the CMHC website for more information on preventing garage-to-house air transfer.
- Lubricate garage door hardware, and ensure it is operating properly.
- Lubricate automatic garage door opener motor, chain and other moving parts, and ensure that the auto-reverse mechanism is properly adjusted.
- Inspect electrical service lines for secure attachment where they enter your house, and make sure there is no water leakage into the house along the electrical conduit. Check for overhanging tree branches that may need to be removed by a qualified specialist to avoid electrical hazards.
- Check exterior wood siding and trim for signs of deterioration; clean, replace or refinish as needed.
- Remove any plants that contact — and roots that penetrate — the siding or brick.
- From the ground, check the general condition of the roof and note any sagging that could indicate structural problems requiring further investigation from inside the attic. Note the condition of shingles for possible repair or replacement, and examine roof flashings, such as at chimney and roof joints, for any signs of cracking or leakage.
- Check the chimney cap and the caulking between the cap and the chimney.
- Repair driveway and walkways as needed.
- Repair any damaged steps.

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