



## Home Maintenance Tips

### Upon Taking Ownership

After taking possession of your new home or property you should consider doing the following improvements:

- ◆ Change the locks on all exterior doors, for security purposes.
- ◆ Install smoke detectors on each level of the home; install carbon monoxide detectors where any fossil fuels may be burned. I.e. near heater, gas range, near garage entry's, near fireplaces, etc. If these devices are already present, change the batteries and make a note of when you did to schedule future battery replacements the same time next year.
- ◆ Install fire extinguishers near stoves, in garages, and keep one handy near fireplaces and woodstoves.
- ◆ Create a fire exit plan to evacuate your home or business in the event of fire or other emergency.
- ◆ Make repairs of any trip hazards that were not repaired prior to settlement to avoid possible injury. (Both inside and Out).
- ◆ Review your inspection report for any main shutoff location of water, gas, and electrical systems. (These locations will be pointed out to you if you joined your inspector during inspection.)

### Monthly

- ◆ Check that your fire extinguishers are fully charged. Remove and replace heating and cooling filter elements. If they are the reusable type just clean and replace.
- ◆ Inspect and clean electronic air cleaners and humidifiers.
- ◆ Bleed the radiator valves if you have hydronic heating systems in the home.
- ◆ Clean your gutters and downspouts to ensure proper water flow.
- ◆ Check plumbing fixtures for leaks, these are used many times daily and a leak can happen quickly.
- ◆ Check your water bill, sewer bill and energy bills for excessive costs. Often times these can point to a leak or even a failing electrical device, such as your refrigerator.

### Spring and Fall

- ◆ Check your roof and flashings for signs of damage.
- ◆ Check in your attic for evidence of leaks, make sure vents are not clogged, and level out the insulation if necessary. Often times when windy the insulation around your vents will move around. Trim back trees and shrubs away from the home.

- ◆ Check the basement for evidence of leaks.
- ◆ Check all walks for movement and repair any trip hazards that may develop.
- ◆ Clean and operate all windows and doors.
- ◆ Test all GFCI and AFCI devices installed for proper working condition.
- ◆ Shut off exterior hose bibs in the fall; turn back on in the spring.
  
- ◆ Test your TRP (temperature pressure relief) valve on your hot water heater. Inspect for the evidence of vermin, termites and insects, treat as needed. Test your garage doors and clean and lubricate all moving parts.
- ◆ Clean or replace exhaust fan filters.
- ◆ Service, clean or inspect all major appliances in your home per manufacturers recommendations.

### **Annually**

- ◆ Replace all smoke detector batteries and carbon monoxide detector batteries.
- ◆ Have all heating, cooling and water systems serviced and cleaned. Inspect chimneys and clean them.
- ◆ Examine all electrical panels and operate breakers to ensure they are not sticking.
- ◆ DO NOT TAKE THE COVER OFF THE PANEL!!
- ◆ If you have well water, have your well tested and have your pump and service tank inspected for leaks or evidence of wear.
- ◆ All homes are suspect of wood destroying insects (termites, carpenter bees, carpenter ants, etc.), have your home inspected annually by a professional and treated if necessary.

Your home is your *single largest investment* of your lifetime. Take these measures to protect your investment. For more home maintenance tips and energy saving advice contact your home inspector.