



# TALON Home Inspections

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## Spring Checklist

Home maintenance prepares your home to emerge fresh and strong. It needs a tune-up after the long winter months have taken their toll. To help you cover all the bases, Talon Home Inspections has come up with a handy Spring Maintenance Checklist for our clients. Consult it every year and your home will keep you safe, and reward you by saving you unexpected costs.

Most spring maintenance consists of things the average person can do without professional assistance. If there are tasks you don't feel comfortable doing, find a professional in the field who offers assistance and guarantees their work.

Performing a spring home maintenance inspection and making any needed repairs not only makes your life a little easier, it also serves another purpose. If, at some point, you intend to sell your home, having records to show the maintenance you performed will give potential buyers a little peace of mind.

- **Exterior of Home**

1. Check windows and doors for caulking and seals. Touch up or replace where needed with products designed for the job. This will save you significant heating and cooling dollars.
2. Clean windows and window tracks, and make sure weep holes are not blocked (including sliding door tracks – lubricate openers and track rollers with silicone spray).
3. Check perimeter of your house to make sure tree branches (minimum 2 feet away), bushes, and shrubbery aren't getting too close and definitely make sure they're not crowding your air conditioner unit.
4. Inspect and repair siding and sealing paint.
5. Check exterior walls-
  - **Brickwork**- does the brick face have any chipping or popping (known as "Brick Spalling"). This leaves the bricks interior susceptible to moisture and crumbling. Look for this and any deteriorated mortar.  
Is there white powder on the bricks? This is efflorescence, a collection of soluble salts, left behind as the water evaporates. The Brick Industry Association recommends dry brushing in warm, dry weather to remove it and then seal the brick or masonry to prevent further problems.
  - **Siding and Trim**- replace missing or damaged siding. You can tape over small areas to protect the wall interior temporarily, but fix it properly as soon as you can to avoid bigger problems. Check surfaces and trim for rotting, cracking or peeling paint. Repaint as necessary.

6. Check that grading of soil and hard surfaces slopes away from the foundation and basement of your home. Regrade it if necessary.
7. Examine the home foundation, especially if it is concrete. Look for cracks and discolorations that point to a water leak or moisture source. Seal and treat as necessary. Small fissures are generally normal, but large or gaping cracks signal potential foundation failure. Consult a professional if you notice any signs of structural damage to either concrete or wood foundations.
8. Check for leaks to exterior faucets.
9. Check your laundry dryer vent. Make sure the hood or cover is in good shape and clean lint from it as necessary. Lint clogs can start fires.
10. Clear out basement window wells. Excess material encourages animal and insect activity and could be a safety concern.

- **Central Air Conditioning**

11. Uncover unit, confirm the outside unit is sitting level and is clear of any debris.
12. Check and replace filters (usually every 3 months, some cases monthly).
13. Check condensate drain lines to make sure they are clear and draining properly.
14. Adjust duct dampers switch from heating to cooling, if necessary.
15. Ensure that supply and return registers inside your home are not blocked.

*Note: When was the last time you had your air conditioner serviced? Maybe you need to Schedule a service call to have your air conditioner checked before the first hot day of Spring or Summer, and have your ducts professionally cleaned. It'll make your indoor air quality healthier and your air conditioner more efficient.*

- **Roof**

16. Check the roof visually from the ground for damage. Look at the shingles. Are any curled, buckled, missing, or cracked? Hire a professional to repair as necessary.
17. Clear limbs, leaves and other debris from the surface.
18. Check roof vents for damage or bird nests.
19. Clean out the gutters and remove any debris.
20. Check the gutters and downspouts are secured.
21. Ensure downspouts and splash blocks are draining away from the foundation (or into a rain barrel). Downspouts should extend at least 4 feet from the home.

- **Chimney/Fireplace**

22. Check for damage to the cap, flashing and masonry.
23. Clean out the fireplace and confirm the damper is closed.
24. Schedule a chimney clean so it's ready for next winter.

- **Basement/Crawlspace**

25. Check for signs of leaks, cracks, movement, rot, or mildew.
26. Check for adequate ventilation to remove excess moisture.
27. Check the basement for water damage and look for any foundation cracks.
28. Ensure vapour barrier in crawlspace is intact. If there is a small hole or tear in the barrier then it's deemed useless.
29. Check and test sump pump to make sure it removes water from the crock. Take off the lid and pour water into crock to see if pump kicks on. Never reach into the water pit to prevent injury.

- **Attic**

30. Check for leaks, condensation, wet insulation and animal infestation.
31. Ensure the attic fan is working properly before the heat of summer arrives.
32. Check for proper ventilation, keeping a good airflow will save you money in cooling costs.

- **Interior of Home**

33. Check the washing machine and dishwasher fill hoses to make sure there are no cracks developing.
34. Vacuum the refrigerator coils. Close the doors on a dollar bill and try to pull it out to test the seal. If you can easily remove the dollar, the door seal is bad and needs to be replaced.
35. Clean the kitchen exhaust fan with hot water and soap or change the filter. Grease build up inside the kitchen is a safety hazard, and any dirty appliance or filter lowers energy efficiency and performance.
36. Test any GFCI outlets: plug in a lamp, hit the test button and then the reset button to see if it turns the light off and then on again (GFCI stands for Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter. These types of outlets are designed to protect you from severe or fatal electric shocks. They're often found in the kitchen and bathroom, or any place near a water source.).
37. Check smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, home alarms and other safety devices. Change batteries once a year.
38. Check Bathroom exhaust fans. Clean grill and fan to remove dust, hair and cobwebs.
39. Reverse the blade direction on ceiling fans. (the blades should turn counter clockwise, creating a downdraft) This will help you feel much cooler.

**Remember to always put safety first. Many home maintenance tasks are better left to the professionals so be sure to hire a contractor or technician if you are not able to handle the task on your own.**