

GETTING STARTED

As we all know from experience, getting started is sometimes the most difficult part of any task. Fortunately, most of the items on the maintenance checklist are neither time consuming nor difficult. In addition to the information provided in this newsletter, there are excellent reference books at your local library or home improvement store on the subject of homecare and maintenance.

STEP 1: Assemble the required, proper tools and supplies. Being prepared before you begin will save time later!

STEP2: Get organized and plan your approach to accomplishing the tasks at hand.

CAULKING MAINTENANCE

Most building materials are subject to varying degrees of shrinkage and settlement, as well as normal expansion and contraction, caused by changes in climate and humidity.

Frequent inspection and maintenance of the caulking on the exterior of your home and in the tubs, sinks and showers inside your home will protect the finishes surrounding these typically wet areas. The following is a suggested checklist of some of the areas of your home that require caulking and subsequent maintenance:

CAULKING MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

INTERIOR:

<input type="checkbox"/> bathtubs	<input type="checkbox"/> vanities tile
<input type="checkbox"/> showers	<input type="checkbox"/> trim
<input type="checkbox"/> sinks	<input type="checkbox"/> drywall
<input type="checkbox"/> countertops	

EXTERIOR:

<input type="checkbox"/> windows	<input type="checkbox"/> siding/brick
<input type="checkbox"/> doors & sidelights	<input type="checkbox"/> flashings/copper roofs
<input type="checkbox"/> wood trim	<input type="checkbox"/> porches/columns
<input type="checkbox"/> wood bay & box windows	<input type="checkbox"/> vents
<input type="checkbox"/> garage doors/	

Time and weather will dry and shrink caulking so that it no longer provides a good seal. Normal expansion, contraction and settlement will cause caulking to separate. As part of your routine maintenance, check the caulking in the above areas periodically and make timely repairs as needed.

Caulking compounds and dispenser guns are available at local hardware stores. Read the manufacturer's instructions carefully to be certain that you select an appropriate caulk for the intended purpose. As a homeowner, you should choose caulking wisely and apply it properly and consistently. Wise use of caulk will protect your home from damaging elements and maintain its beauty for years to come.

AVOID ELECTRICAL HAZARDS

If a GFI receptacle is not functioning press the Reset button on the wall plate to restore proper operation. If that does not work check and reset the circuit breaker in the panel box first, then press the GFI Reset button. If the outlet still fails it may indicate a short in the appliance. If other appliances will not operate in the outlet an electrician should be contacted and the GFI replaced.

FIRE SAFETY

Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are perhaps the most important components of your electrical system. While they are wired directly into your home's electrical system, most models include a battery back-up. A chirping sound indicates that the battery is weak and needs to be replaced. Safeguard your family and guests by replacing all your smoke and carbon monoxide detector batteries ANNUALLY.

Test your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors regularly by pushing the test button on each unit. The alarm should sound. If it does not, call for service immediately.

A FAMILY FIRE PLAN:

Every family should develop and periodically review their fire plan. How do you all get out safely in the event of a fire? Where do you meet outside the home? You may want to contact your local fire department for general fire safety information for assistance.

FALL/WINTER MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

REGULARLY	Clean/maintain floor coverings per manufacturers' recommendations.		INTERIOR
REGULARLY	Maintain appliances, mechanical, plumbing, and electrical equipment per manufacturers' instructions.		INTERIOR
MONTHLY	Change or clean all furnace/air conditioning filters.		INTERIOR
MONTHLY	Clean and test smoke detectors and CO detectors. Test smoke detectors by pushing round button on face of detector (should be labeled "test"). Change batteries as necessary.		INTERIOR
MONTHLY	Test and reset GFCI breakers/outlets		EXT/INT
FALL	Check exterior caulking, and recaulk as required.		EXTERIOR
FALL	Check exterior paint and stain surfaces and refinish as needed.		EXTERIOR
FALL	Adjust exterior doors/weatherstripping as needed to close/seal properly		EXTERIOR
FALL	Check gutters for debris and clean as required. Confirm that downspouts and splash blocks drain away from the home.		EXTERIOR
FALL	Fill in settlement of backfill soil where needed to maintain proper drainage.		EXTERIOR
FALL	Winterize sprinkler system		EXTERIOR
FALL	Winterize exterior hose bibs and disconnect hoses		EXTERIOR
FALL	Apply driveway sealant (Fall/Spring - Season Optional)		EXTERIOR
FALL	Seal wooden decks (Fall/Spring - Season Optional)		EXTERIOR
FALL	Clean up lawn, and administer seasonal applications per lawn care plan.		EXTERIOR
FALL	Wash windows and screens, clean weep holes, and lubricate tracks.		EXT/INT
FALL	Verify sump pump operation. Keep drainage channels/discharge free of obstructions.		INTERIOR
FALL	Start and operate heating system and provide service as required.		INTERIOR
FALL	Service and startup humidifier per manufacturer's instructions.		INTERIOR
FALL	Check condensation drain/pump for humidifier - clean/maintain as required.		INTERIOR
FALL	Adjust HVAC registers. Confirm that supplies and returns are clear of furniture, etc.		INTERIOR
FALL	Adjust doors/hardware to accommodate settlement/climatic conditions.		INTERIOR
FALL	Check overhead garage doors. Tighten bolts as needed, and lubricate springs/tracks.		INTERIOR
WINTER	Check interior caulking, and recaulk as required.		INTERIOR
WINTER	Inspect grout around floor and wall tile and touch-up as necessary.		INTERIOR
WINTER	Inspect for shrinkage maintenance such as minor drywall cracks, nail pops, and separations of wood trim. Repair as needed		INTERIOR
WINTER	Remove snow/ice from sidewalks and driveway surfaces.		EXTERIOR
WINTER	Avoid using rock salt/or damaging de-icing agents		EXTERIOR
PERIODIC	Spackle and paint as required due to normal living activity		INTERIOR
PERIODIC	Recaulk and repaint minor separations in wood trim (due to natural shrinkage/settlement) as required.		INTERIOR
PERIODIC	Recaulk and repaint faded/deteriorated exterior trim/doors/shutters (due to natural effects of sun weather, etc.) as required.		EXTERIOR
PERIODIC	Drain water heater(s) per manufacturers' instructions. Your local water quality determines frequency needed.		INTERIOR
PERIODIC	Have the water tested if your home has a private well.		EXTERIOR
PERIODIC	Service fireplace/flue by professional.		INT/EXT

SPRING/SUMMER MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

✓	SEASON	TASK	INTERIOR EXTERIOR
	REGULARLY	Clean/maintain floor coverings per manufacturers' recommendations.	INTERIOR
	REGULARLY	Maintain appliances, mechanical, plumbing, and electrical equipment per manufacturers' instructions.	INTERIOR
	MONTHLY	Change or clean all furnace/air conditioning filters.	INTERIOR
	MONTHLY	Clean and test smoke detectors and/or CO detectors. Test smoke detectors by pushing round button on face of detector (should be labeled "test"). Change batteries as necessary	INTERIOR
	MONTHLY	Test and reset GFCI breakers/outlets	INTERIOR
	SPRING	WHERE APPLICABLE -Check all sump pumps to ensure that they are operational where applicable and remove any existing debris.	INTERIOR
	SPRING	Open shut-off valves for exterior hose bibs.	INTERIOR
	SPRING	Inspect for shrinkage such as minor drywall cracks, nail pops, and separations of wood trim. Repair as needed.	INTERIOR
	SPRING	Readjust doors/hardware to accommodate settlement/climatic conditions.	INTERIOR
	SPRING	Check overhead garage doors, tighten bolts as needed, and lubricate springs/tracks	INTERIOR
	SPRING	Check and operate air-conditioning system.	INTERIOR
	SPRING	If applicable turn humidifier(s) off and shut off water supply.	INTERIOR
	SPRING	Check condensation drain/pump for air conditioning system. Clean/maintain as required.	INTERIOR
	SPRING	Make sure that all air registers and returns are clear of furniture and/or draperies. You may find it necessary to vacuum all air returns to remove dirt and dust.	INTERIOR
	SPRING	Ensure air-conditioning compressor is level and clear of obstructions and debris.	INTERIOR
	SPRING	Check exterior caulking and recaulk as required.	EXTERIOR
	SPRING	Check exterior paint and stain surfaces (especially stained doors). Refinish as needed.	EXTERIOR
	SPRING	Check gutters for debris. Confirm that down spouts & splash blocks drain away from the home.	EXTERIOR
	SPRING	Inspect the ground surrounding your home for any soil erosion and positive drainage. If any erosion exists it is your responsibility to restore the yard to the original grade.	EXTERIOR
	SPRING	Wash windows and screens, clean weep holes, and lubricate tracks	EXTERIOR
	SPRING	All areaways and window wells should be clear of dirt and leaves. It may also be necessary to flush water through your drain to ensure water is flowing freely.	
	SPRING	Seal wooden decks/stairs annually (Spring/Fall- season optional)	EXTERIOR
	SPRING	Start-up and adjust sprinkler system. Test system for leaks or broken pipes.	EXTERIOR
	SPRING	Clean up lawn, and administer seasonal applications per lawn care plan.	EXTERIOR
	SPRING	Adjust exterior doors/weather stripping as needed to close/seal properly	EXTERIOR
	SUMMER	Check interior caulking, and recaulk as required.	INTERIOR
	SUMMER	Inspect grout around floor and wall tile and touch-up as necessary.	INTERIOR
	SUMMER	Check sprinkler head adjustments regularly.	EXTERIOR
	PERIODIC	Spackle and paint as required due to normal living activity	INTERIOR
	PERIODIC	Recaulk and repaint minor separations in wood trim (due to natural shrinkage/settlement) as required.	INTERIOR
	PERIODIC	Recaulk and repaint faded/deteriorated exterior trim/doors/shutters (due to natural effects of sun weather, etc.) as required.	EXTERIOR
	PERIODIC	Have the water tested if your home has a private well.	EXTERIOR
	PERIODIC	If applicable inspect and clean out all weep holes in brick face	EXTERIOR