



A Homeowner's Guide to Maintenance

Save thousands of dollars with simple tips to regularly maintain your home

Your home is your haven. It is often your largest investment and needs care and maintenance to operate at it's best. As a remodeler, I would prefer to help my clients take care of what they have until they choose to remodel vs. a deferred maintenance emergency. I encourage you to take a tour through your home with this list and tackle what you can. Document and plan to take care of items you need assistance with, and most importantly, raise your awareness. *"What gets managed gets maintained."* ~ April Bettinger, Owner of Nip Tuck Remodeling

Spring:

1. Prepare your annual project list and start prioritizing
2. Keep the gutters and downspouts clean and clear of debris – once or twice per year
3. Clean your windows inside and out
4. Pressure wash concrete driveways and pathways for safety and curb appeal
5. Clean dryer vent – standing lint can create a fire hazard – be sure vent is not painted shut on outside
6. Tour the attic – are there signs of birds or pests, proper insulation, signs of moisture from failed flashing on roof vents or chimney
7. Keep an eye on the filter of your water dispenser(s) and change as needed
8. Have your outdoor A/C unit serviced – and change furnace filters – homes with pets may require more often
9. Trim shrubs away from the house
10. Vent all exhaust fans to the exterior and check that they are unobstructed on the outside
11. Clean and seal tile – minimize mold / mildew in the bathroom and protect against water
12. Assess tile showers and tub surrounds for missing grout and repair

Summer:

13. Keep windows caulked on the exterior – cracked or missing caulk needs replacing
14. Caulk siding joints – any place water can intrude invites repair issues
15. Repairs to wood fences and decks – solid posts, wobbly railings, rotten boards replaced
16. Be sure vents and bird blocks are not compromised to allow birds and critters in the home
17. Pull the grill off the bottom of your refrigerator and vacuum it once per year
18. Pull dirt or landscape materials away from house and slope so water drains away from house
19. Keep siding and trim painted – bare wood is an invitation for water intrusion – particularly watch South facing walls as they take the brunt of the weather
20. Remove and replace caulking around sinks, showers and tubs (mold, mildewed or cracking)
21. Service the central vacuum – most likely just empty the canister – check quarterly
22. Have area rugs and draperies cleaned – these have a lasting affect on indoor quality
23. Remove hair from bathroom drains – simple tool available at local hardware stores

See other side

Fall:

24. Pull the filter off the range hood and run it through the dishwasher a few times per year
25. Service the Furnace - and change furnace filters 2-4 times per year. Homes with pets may require more often
26. Change the batteries in the smoke detector – Fall and Spring, change with the time change
27. Drain all exterior hose bibs and insulate for winter
28. Take a tour of the crawl space – looking for standing water, falling insulation, disconnected ducting and evidence of rodents
29. Wrap or insulate exposed water pipes in unheated areas such as garages and crawl spaces
30. Replace weather stripping on exterior doors
31. Install programmable thermostats for heat savings – available with humidistat
32. Replace interior and exterior light bulbs, add motion lights for safety and energy savings
33. Clean the chimney
34. Pour water down drains that have very little use to fill p-trap and avoid sewer gas smells
35. Clear debris off roofs and keep free of moss - high pressure water is not recommended

Winter:

36. Drain the hot tub and install a new filter – often times 2-4 times per year depending on use
37. Vacuum dust and lint from bathroom fans and check for proper operation
38. Adjust interior doors and cabinetry for smooth operation
39. Clean and seal stone surfaces such as marble, travertine and granite
40. Run bath fans for at least 30 minutes after showering – install timers for renters, teens and those in a hurry

General:

41. Start a three ring maintenance binder for your home (one of the single most important tasks)
42. Tour rental homes at least 2x per year – most renters won't even realize there is an issue until it is an emergency which costs you more money and headaches.
43. Identify and make convenient (meaning clear access) the main shut off's for electrical, gas and water
44. Keep a current supply of touch up paint (labeled), batteries, filters and light bulbs on hand
45. Check under kitchen & laundry sink and bathroom vanities monthly for leaks by touch
46. If you have an Insta hot, install a sensor or water shut off to monitor it
47. Maintain a relative humidity in your home of 40% - 50% - optimal is 42%
48. When leaving for a trip, shut off the main water valve and have someone check in on your home while you are gone
49. For better indoor air quality, install a commercial grade walk off mat at entry doors and remove your shoes at the door
50. Always use the ventilation fan while cooking
51. Hire a professional service provider. The value is priceless for your family's well being and safety.
52. Verify service providers have adequate insurance and are licensed or registered to do the work you have asked. There is no enforceable warranty from an unregistered contractor and your homeowners insurance is on the line if they or a helper are injured while performing work.

Resources:

1. **Washington Dept. of Labor & Industries** (confirm lic./registration) www.lni.wa.gov/tradeslicensing/
2. HVAC contractor: **Bel-Red Energy** www.belred.com/
3. Hot tub maintenance: **Spa Doctor** <http://www.spadoctor.com/>
4. Pressure Washing / Window Washing: **Vision Quest** <http://www.visionquestinc.net/>
5. Carpentry, Repairs and Maintenance questions: **Nip Tuck Remodeling** www.niptuckremodel.com
425-681-7668 or april@ntremodel.com

See other side