

# Seasonal Maintenance Checklist



Follow these maintenance practices, and inspect your new home on a regular basis, to avoid problems.

## SPRING | OUTDOOR

- Air Conditioner: Remove the winter cover from the outside air-conditioning unit and clean debris from the coils.
- Eavestroughs (if you have these installed): Clean winter debris from eavestrough. Check that the joints are secure on the eavestrough and downspout and ensure that the water flows away from foundation (at least one metre).
- Electric Plug Outlets: GFCI plugs may trip. A reset button on one of the outside plugs will reset all of the outside plugs.
- Electrical Fixtures: Inspect exterior fixtures to ensure that they are securely anchored.
- Grading: Clear debris away from swales, drainage ditches and culverts, and make sure that melting snow runs off property.
- Grass: Apply lawn seed to bare patches in late April and spread spring fertilizer.
- Overhead Doors: Lubricate the track, rollers, hinges and weather stripping for overhead garage doors. Inspect and tighten loose bolts to ensure correct operation.
- Plantings: Fertilize young trees and begin spring landscape maintenance. Remove protective shrouds from delicate plants and shrubs.
- Shingles and Roofing: Check exterior surfaces of the home (including the roof and flashings) for loose or damaged items that may have been caused by animals or seasonal weather.
- Wall Vents: Ensure that outdoor air vents (exhausts, intakes, dryer, HRV, forced air furnace) are not blocked by debris, vegetation, snow, etc.
- Window Wells (if you have them): Remove any debris from window wells.

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## SPRING | INDOOR

- Air Conditioner: Before the hot days of summer arrive, turn the air conditioner on for a short period of time to ensure that it is ready for use.
- Air Filters: Clean or replace air filters in the HRV, the furnace, and the hood fan on a monthly basis or as needed.
- Alarms: Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to ensure that they are working. Replace batteries in battery-powered units.
- Dehumidifier: A dehumidifier (sized for the particular space) is essential once the summer humidity arrives. Install it in the basement to remove excess moisture. Set it to maintain a relative humidity level below 50% at all times.
- Fireplace: If necessary, turn off the pilot light for a gas fireplace and clean the glazing. Follow the instructions in fireplace manual.
- Hose Bibs: Open the water valves for the outside hose bibs, once the risk of freezing has passed. Remember to close the bleeder nut on each valve first. Inspect the inside pipes for any signs of plumbing problems when first using the outside water.
- Sump Pump: Make sure that the sump pump (if you have one) is ready to operate, when needed. Make sure the discharge pipe is connected and directs water away from foundation.
- Windows: Clean all windows, screens and hardware. Ensure that windows operate smoothly.
- Reinstall screens.

# Seasonal Maintenance Checklist



## SUMMER | OUTDOOR

- Air Conditioner: Ensure that debris, vegetation or nests, etc. do not block the air conditioner.
- Attic Vents: Ensure that roof louvers, vents and soffits are not blocked. Ventilation is a critical factor in roof durability – air must be able to move through the attic. Check for damaged areas, nests, trees or vines that may be blocking openings.
- Caulking: Check for cracked or loose exterior caulking, and repair as needed.
- Driveways: Check for cracks and apply sealer as needed. Avoid using pointed objects that may damage to your driveway.
- Decks and Interlock: Check exterior steps and interlock paths. Readjust, if settled or unstable.
- Grading: Check for ground settling at the foundation. You may need to build up the area with topsoil and sod to ensure that rainwater flows away from your foundation wall in all areas.
- Grass: Apply lawn fertilizer and water on a regular basis to improve the look of your yard.
- Metres: Ensure that gas and hydro metres are not blocked by debris, vegetation, etc.
- Wall Vents: Check outdoor air vents (exhausts, intakes, dryer, HRV, furnace, hot water, hood fan) to ensure that they are not blocked by debris, vegetation, nests, etc.
- Window Wells (if applicable): Remove debris, leaves and garden hoses from the window wells to allow for proper drainage.
- Windows: Clean windows, screens and hardware. Ensure windows operate smoothly.

# Seasonal Maintenance Checklist



## SUMMER | INDOOR

- Air Conditioner: Avoid excessive temperature changes when programming your thermostat. Unlike your furnace, an air conditioner may require several hours to reach the desired temperature. Air conditioners also work to keep relative humidity levels under control.
- Air Filters: Clean or replace air filters in the HRV, furnace and hood fan on a monthly basis or as needed.
- Air Vents: Ensure indoor air vents (forced air furnace supplies and returns) are clean and not blocked by dust, furnishings, drapes, etc. Air supply vents in the basement may be closed if you have an air conditioner.
- Dehumidifier: A dehumidifier (sized to the particular space) is essential. Install it in the basement to remove excess moisture. Set it to maintain a relative humidity level below 50% at all times.
- Doors: Whenever possible, leave bedroom doors open to allow for better air circulation.
- Hardwood Flooring: Summer is a critical time of year to closely monitor your indoor relative humidity with a suitable hygrometer. If the air is too humid, your floor will absorb too much of that moisture. High levels of moisture in the wood may damage your floor, which will lead to cupping, cracking, squeaks and gaps.
- HRV: The purpose of the HRV is to draw outside air into the house. On humid summer days, this is not desirable. The HRV control box is adjacent to the thermostat, where it can be switched off.
- Humidifier: If you have a humidifier, turn it off to clean and close the humidifier damper.
- Thermostat: Switch it to 'cool' mode. Set the fan to 'on' mode to maintain better air circulation throughout the house. If you have an air conditioner, set the temperature to 23°C, or warmer, to save on energy.
- Window Coverings: If you keep the blinds and curtains closed during the daytime it will help to keep the house cooler.
- Windows: Avoid opening the windows on hot humid days. Excessive moisture may damage your hardwood floor and other wood components.

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## FALL | OUTDOOR

- Air Conditioner: Clean the outside air conditioning unit and install the winter cover.
- Concrete Floors: Consider applying a good quality concrete sealer to avoid winter erosion.
- Eaves Troughs: Clean summer debris and leaves from eaves troughs. Check that joints are secure on the eaves trough and downspouts to ensure that water flows away from the foundation (at least one metre). Consider installing heat cables in areas that are prone to ice build up.
- Grass: Apply lawn seed to bare patches in late August. Apply winter fertilizer. Cut grasses in swales and drainage ditches to facilitate run off.
- Hose Bibs: Winterize outside hose connections (hose bibs) prior to the danger of frost. Close the valve in the basement, and then open outside valve. Go back in the basement and open the small bleeder nut on the side of the valve. Leave both the outside valve and the inside bleeder nut in the 'open' position throughout the winter.
- Plantings: Prepare your plants, shrubs, trees and gardens for winter. Cut and remove dead branches. Shelter delicate items with protective shrouds.
- Wall Vents: Ensure that debris, vegetation and nests, etc. are not blocking outdoor air vents (exhausts, intakes, dryer, HRV, furnace, hot water, hood fan).
- Window Wells: Remove debris, leaves and garden hoses from window wells to allow for proper drainage.

# Seasonal Maintenance Checklist



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## FALL | INDOOR

- Air Conditioner: Turn off the air conditioner at the switch or breaker.
- Air Filters: Clean or replace air filters in the HRV, furnace and hood fan on monthly basis, or as needed.
- Alarms: Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to ensure they are working. Replace batteries in battery-powered units.
- Dehumidifier: If necessary, set your dehumidifier to maintain the RH below 50% in the basement.
- Hose Bibs: Properly close the water valves for all outside hose bibs. The valves are located in the basement.
- Windows: Clean windows, screens and hardware. Ensure that the window sashes make contact with the weather stripping and that the latches are locked.

# Seasonal Maintenance Checklist

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## WINTER | OUTDOOR

- Attic Vents: Ensure roof louvers, vents and soffits are not blocked with snow. Ventilation is a critical factor in roof durability – air must be able to move through the attic.
- Shingles and Roofing: Remove excessive accumulations of snow and ice from the roof to avoid ice damming. Snow covered roof vents will not keep the attic properly ventilated.
- Concrete Floors: Avoid concrete erosion due to salt and de-icing products that drip from vehicles and footwear.

# Seasonal Maintenance Checklist



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## WINTER | INDOOR

- Air Filters: Clean or replace air filters in the HRV, furnace and hood fan on a monthly basis, or as needed.
- Humidifier: If you have a humidifier, clean it, open the damper and turn it on. Adjust settings to provide a RH of 30%, or higher.
- Doors: Whenever possible, leave the bedroom doors open to allow for better air circulation.
- Fireplace: If required, turn on the pilot light and clean the glazing, if dirty. Follow the instructions in fireplace manual.
- Furnace: Refer to the furnace manual for required furnace maintenance. Run the furnace fan throughout the year to provide ventilation.
- Hardwood Flooring: Winter is a critical time of year to closely monitor your indoor relative humidity with a suitable hygrometer. If the air is too dry, your floor will release moisture. Low moisture content may cause gapping, cracking and squeaks.
- HRV: HRV's draw outside air into the house. On cold, dry days this is not desirable. The HRV control box is adjacent to the thermostat, where it can be switched off.
- Thermostat: Switch it to 'heat' mode, and set the fan to 'on' mode for better air circulation throughout the house.
- Window Coverings: Keep blinds and curtains open whenever possible as this exposes the glass to warm inside air, which minimizes condensation.