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SPRING HOME MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE CHECKLIST

Inspect the Roof & Chimney:

- Have your roof checked for lifted, curled, warped or damaged shingles, and that there's no "sponginess" underfoot. Make sure shingles are not loose, damaged or missing. Have damaged shingles replaced if they're on less than 20% of the roof. Reroof if damaged shingles cover more than 20% of the roof. Asphalt shingles typically last 20 years.
- Have the flashing inspected around your chimney, vents, roof edges & any skylights, and the rafters inside the attic for any signs of water damage.
- Have the leaves removed from roof valleys & clean the screens on roof vents & louvers.
- Spring is a great time to have your chimney swept; you'll have no problem getting an appointment & you will be ready for Fall. Clean the chimney cap, if necessary. After you've had the chimney cleaned, insert a fireplace "draft stopper" in the flue; for the greatest energy savings.
- Examine the siding under roof eaves, & the ceilings in the rooms below, for water or discoloration, indications that ice dams might have created leaks along the roof edge.

Gutters

- Have gutters cleaned of debris of decomposed leaves, twigs, spring petals & seeds. Make sure that no birds, squirrels, or insects are nesting in the eaves or on the ledges.
- Have gutters checked to assure they are properly aligned, not sagging & securely attached & haven't sprung any leaks. Downspouts should direct water away from the house & should drain properly, to prevent a potential basement flood. Make sure there's no corrosion, joint separation, or loose fasteners, & give the fascia a quick check, as well. Flush out the downspouts and leaders.

Prevent Leaks

- Have all the all the joints on the outside of your house inspected – the places where different kinds of materials meet to prevent water leaks, insect invasion, hot air leaks this summer, and cold air leaks next winter.
- Have your siding checked for any holes, loose joints, and cracked mortar, and your foundation for any cracks. Look for pellet-shaped droppings or shed wings from termites.
- Check the weather stripping on all doors and windows. Use the appropriate materials to seal any openings: caulk, expandable foam, weather stripping, or glazing compound.
- Look around & under appliances & fixtures for leaks or wear. Check shutoff valves at all fixtures and the main water line annually.
- Check for hairline cracks in foundation walls which might be the result of concrete curing or minor settling and aren't automatically a cause for alarm. Mark them with tape and check them again in a few months. If they've worsened, call a structural engineer. If they're stable, have them filled with them with an epoxy-injection system.

Windows

- Inspect your screens for damage and repair any holes.
- If your home has central air conditioning or window units, make sure the weather stripping on your windows is up to snuff to reduce energy waste.

Mold and Mildew

Have any mold and mildew on your siding, deck & trim removed with a with a power washer.

Decks

To verify that your old application is still effective, pour some water onto the dry deck & check to see that it beads up.

Have deck sealed. Most deck-sealer manufacturers recommend resealing annually.

Check for any sharp edges, splintered wood, or rotting wood. Also look for rusting nails or any nails that are coming out or weakening their connections. Walk around your deck and listen for squeaks. Try to feel for soft spots or sagging areas. And be sure to check the railings and stairs to make sure they are secure & not wobbly. The same is true for wood & composite fences, pergolas, trellises & other structures.

Exterior Siding of Your Home

Look for chipped, cracked paint along the exterior of your home. Exposed wood will begin to rot.

Have the exterior surface of your home which may not require paint power washed to brighten up the home.

Appliances

Have the dryer vents and screens thoroughly cleaned; A clogged vent can reduce your dryer's efficiency and create a fire hazard.

Check smoke and CO alarms.

Clean out your refrigerator and freezer. If you have a coil-back refrigerator, vacuum the coils at least twice each year for maximum efficiency.

Check grill burner jets for clogs and obstructions, and be sure that gas hoses & connections are sound and secure. You'll also want to check for propane. Clean/condition your outdoor grill by first rinsing all outside surfaces with water. If grease has loosened on the grill grates and inside of the grill, wipe off using grill cleaner and paper towels. Follow by washing with a mild detergent and water. Rinse well and wipe dry.

Clean Up the Yard

Have your leaves raked & other debris where insects might be lurking – especially around the foundation of your house. Also clear out window wells and storm drains.

Have the overgrown shrubs near your house trimmed. Inspect your trees for winter damage. Have the broken branches removed. Trees should be healthy & placed at a safe distance from the home. Have the shrubbery branches trimmed away from siding to help prevent insect and moisture damage.

Repair Cracked Pavement

If cracks have appeared in your driveway, sidewalks, or steps, have them taken care of before they grow any larger.

If you have dry-set pavers on your driveway or walkway have some extra sand or stone dust in the joints of the pavers to help lock the pavers in place and discourage weeds from lodging between them.

Turn on the Water

Bring out garden hoses and make sure they're in good shape for the summer. If you have a sprinkler system, have the system thoroughly inspected – water supply lines, faucets, & hoses – for any leaks, and make any necessary repairs.

Check Heating & Cooling Systems

Schedule an annual tune-up for your heating & cooling system. Clean or change air filters & remove dust from around grills and ducts. Outdoor air conditioner condensers need attention now, too.

Turn on your air conditioning system, to assure that it works properly.

Have a qualified HVAC contractor come out to give your air-conditioning system a tune-up. To help lower your energy bills, do this every year to ensure the system is running at its manufacturer-rated efficiency.

Air conditioners draw moisture from interior air, called condensate, which must run off outside. If sediment and algae clog the drains, water may back up, making your home more humid or creating water damage.

Remember to inspect/replace your HVAC filter monthly. Dirty filters make your air conditioner work harder, increasing energy costs and possibly damaging your equipment.

The Water Heater

Look around the base of your water heater for evidence of leaks. The average lifespan of a water heater is 8-12 years. If your water heater is over 5 years old, it should be checked monthly for any leakage or rusting at the bottom. If water leakage or rust is found, the water heater should be replaced. If you live in an area with particularly hard water, you may need to drain your water heater because of the sediment buildup in the tank.

The Basement & Attic

For further basement flood protection, inspect the foundation around your house before the spring rains. Look for low areas in the yard near the foundation that might pool water during a heavy rain.

Check the basement walls, floor, and trim for water stains or any signs of seepage through the foundation. Keep a close eye on your sump pump, making sure it is still in good working order, & has a battery backup in place if necessary.

Check your sump pump for proper operation and change the battery in the backup. A yearly cleaning is recommended before the rainy season hits. If you spot an oily film on the surface of the water in your sump pump, verify the condition of the oil seal. The appearance of oil may indicate a faulty oil seal which could cause the motor to burn out in the pump.

Happy Spring!