

"A comfortable house is a great source of happiness."

- Sydney Smith



Home Maintenance Guide

HOME MAINTENANCE GUIDE

By conducting regular maintenance checks, you can prevent small inexpensive repairs from becoming more expensive repairs. Whether you choose to conduct the maintenance checks yourself or have them done by a certified home inspector, this guide can improve the value, safety and comfort of your home.

The McKee Homes Home Maintenance Guide is organized to make periodic check go as smoothly as possible. After each maintenance check is performed, you can write down the date it was performed. If you uncover items that require service, you may choose to repair the items yourself or hire someone to do them for you.

MONTHLY MAINTENANCE *(or as often as needed)*

FURNACE FILTER

Your furnace and/or air conditioner filter should be checked frequently (usually monthly or quarterly) and replaced or cleaned as needed. A dirty filter can lower the efficiency of the heating/cooling system, increase heating costs and could cause fires.

CLOTHES DRYER

Clean the clothes dryer exhaust duct, damper and space under the dryer. Poor maintenance allows lint to build up in the exhaust duct reducing dryer efficiency and posing a serious fire threat.

ANNUAL MAINTENANCE *(or as often as needed)*

PLUMBING SYSTEM / GAS LINE

The plumbing in your home is an essential and often overlooked system that provides clean water and the proper collection and transport of waste water.

NOTE: Tagging shutoff valves can make it easier to find them in case of an emergency or standard repair. You should be familiar with the location of all shutoff valves in your home.

THINGS TO DO:

- ✓ Check water hoses on clothes washer, refrigerator, icemaker and dishwasher for cracks and bubbles.
- ✓ Check shutoff valves to ensure that they are functional.
- ✓ Check septic tank (if present) and have serviced as needed.
- ✓ Check water heater for leakage (at the base), rusting and proper venting.
- ✓ Familiarize family members with the main gas valve, water valve and other appliance valves.

HOME MAINTENANCE GUIDE

ELECTRICAL

One of the main goals of an inspection is to uncover safety issues. This includes the electrical system. Please take note of items that only a qualified electrician should service, and call one if an item isn't working properly.

To test the GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter) outlet, press the "Test" button. If working properly, the power should be cut to any device plugged into the outlet receptacle and wired on the same circuit. Press the "Reset" button to restore the power.

THINGS TO DO:

- ✓ Check light bulbs to make sure they are the correct wattage.
- ✓ Make note of exposed wiring and have it reviewed by a professional.
- ✓ Replace brittle, worn or damaged extension cords.
- ✓ Familiarize family members with the main electrical shut off switch in case of emergency or repairs.
- ✓ Check electrical outlets for loose-fitting plugs.
- ✓ Look for burn marks at the main electrical panel (Caution: only a qualified professional should remove the panel cover).
- ✓ Remove combustible materials such as paper boxes or flammable liquids from area near main electrical panel.
- ✓ Test Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) outlets and AFCI (Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter) breakers.
Note: When testing AFCI breakers be sure to follow the manufacturer's guidelines.

WINDOWS / DOORS

Windows and doors are important for aesthetics, safety and energy efficiency. Understanding the condition of the windows and doors can help determine future maintenance projects. You can reduce your home's heating and cooling costs through proper air sealing techniques.

THINGS TO DO:

- ✓ Check weather stripping and caulk on windows and doors.
- ✓ Check window glazing for loose/missing putty or glazing compound.
- ✓ Check for broken or cracked glass, and damaged screens on windows.
- ✓ Check multi-pane windows for foggy appearance (broken seal).
- ✓ Check trim and frames for rotting wood or peeling paint.

SPRING / SUMMER MAINTENANCE

ROOF / FLASHING / ATTIC

Extreme caution should be exercised when working on or around the roof. Consider hiring a professional to inspect your roof and the area around it. Check the attic for signs of leaks, such as water stains.

One of the main causes of leaking roofs is failure of the flashing around a chimney or skylight. Flashing is also needed around plumbing vents, where lower roofs intersect with walls, in valleys, around dormers and at the roof edge.

THINGS TO DO:

- ✓ Inspect roof for potential leaks.
- ✓ Check for damaged, raised or missing flashing and shingles.
- ✓ Check vents, louvers and chimney caps for bird nests and debris.
- ✓ Check underside of roof in attic and under eaves for water stains.
- ✓ Check attic for proper ventilations and insulation.
- ✓ Check for overhanging tree limbs, trim when required.

FOUNDATIONS AND BASEMENT

A solid foundation forms a continuous skirt around the building that supports the structures above it. The main causes of failure in foundations and basements include poor construction, frost-related damage, settling or shifting of the ground and water infiltration caused by improper grading and guttering.

THINGS TO DO:

- ✓ Inspect for signs of termite infestation (if prevalent in your area).
- ✓ Check basement or crawl space for dampness and/or leakage.
- ✓ Check to make sure sump pump (if present) is operating correctly.

AIR CONDITIONER

An outside air conditioning unit is more vulnerable than an inside unit because it has to operate in all kinds of weather. An outside unit should be level and completely clear of leaves and other debris.

THINGS TO DO:

- ✓ Clear leaves and other debris away from an outdoor air conditioning unit.
- ✓ Disconnect your air conditioner and wash off the fins on the outside.

SPRING / SUMMER MAINTENANCE

EXTERIOR SIDING

No matter which type of siding your home has, they all deteriorate - some types deteriorate faster than others and require maintenance.

Exterior plywood and hardboard composite siding require ongoing maintenance or they can quickly deteriorate. This includes caulking and painting seams and edges.

THINGS TO DO:

- ✓ Check for cracks that are wider than 1/16 inch on Brick Veneer.
- ✓ Check for soft mortar joints or missing mortar.
- ✓ Remove vines growing on the house, siding, brick or mortar.
- ✓ Check for cracks or damaged siding on vinyl and aluminum siding.
- ✓ Check for peeling paint and damaged wood on wood siding.

DOWNSPOUTS / GUTTERS / DRAINAGE (if applicable)

Clogged gutters and downspouts are a main cause of paint failure and decay of fascia and soffit. Make sure your gutters and downspouts are attached correctly and working properly.

Drainage can prevent most foundation damage and basement water problems. Check that the ground and any paved surface next to the house slopes away from it.

THINGS TO DO:

- ✓ Clear debris from gutters, downspouts and check downspout extenders.
- ✓ Inspect gutters for signs of sagging, damage or rust.
- ✓ Check grading to assure water drains away from foundation.

DECKS, PATIOS AND GROUNDS (if applicable)

Wooden decks can deteriorate quickly and require regular maintenance. Improperly maintained decks can cause falls, which could lead to a trip to the hospital emergency room.

THINGS TO DO:

- ✓ Check wooden decks for deterioration and repair or seal when required.
- ✓ Repair all cracked, broken or uneven driveways, patios and walks.

FALL MAINTENANCE

OUTSIDE

No matter where your home is located, cooler weather is approaching. Fall is the time to prepare the outside of your home for the winter months to come.

Cleaning gutters is important to keep water flowing away from the siding and foundation. In order to clean your gutters, you may need to use a ladder. Before using a ladder inspect it for damage, cracks or broken joints. Observe all proper safety measures when operating a ladder or contact a professional for help.

THINGS TO DO:

- ✓ Remove garden hoses from outdoor faucets/bibs. Drain and store hoses for the winter and shut off water to faucets/bibs.
- ✓ Drain in-ground sprinkler system and turn off water to the system.
- ✓ Clear debris from window wells, gutters, downspouts and storm drains.
- ✓ Check caulking anywhere two different materials meet. Specifically check wood siding joining the foundation wall, and window or door trim meeting the siding.
- ✓ Check for broken or cracked glass and damaged screens or storm windows.
- ✓ Insulate pipes in the home's crawl space and attic.
- ✓ Have a certified chimney sweep inspect and clean the flue and check your fireplace damper.
- ✓ Remove bird nests from chimney flues and outdoor electrical fixtures.
- ✓ Run all gas-powered lawn equipment until the fuel is gone.
- ✓ Clean/repair and store away outdoor furniture.
- ✓ Trim tree branches that hang over the roof or gutters.
- ✓ Mulch around bulbs, shrubs and trees to prevent drastic soil temperature change from destroying plants root systems.
- ✓ Check reversing/safety mechanism on garage door operators.

NOTE: If hiring a contractor within the first year of homeownership, please refer to your McKee Homes Homeowner Manual for a list of acceptable contractors.

INSIDE

The inside of your homes is the main focus during the winter months because more time is spent inside your home. Focus your efforts on one room at a time before moving on to the next project.

Smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors should be installed on every level and near all bedrooms in a home. Carbon monoxide is colorless, tasteless and odorless, so a detector is essential in prevention of carbon monoxide poisoning in a home environment.

THINGS TO DO:

- ✓ Make sure caulking around bathroom fixtures is adequate.
- ✓ Check for cracked or missing grout between wall or floor tiles.
- ✓ Check basement for leaks and seepage during thaws.
- ✓ If leaving the hours for an extended period open cabinet doors under sinks to avoid frozen pipes.
- ✓ Check flooring for wear and damage.
- ✓ Test smoke alarms and replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- ✓ Check your home for water leaks - water stains on ceilings, walls, etc.

OUTSIDE

The outside of your home should not be ignored during the winter months. Potential problems with the roof may be easy to spot in cold winter climates.

Ice dams or icicles can be a sign of attic ventilation or insulation problems. Over time ice damming can cause damage to the roof, which will result in water leaks to the inside.

THINGS TO DO:

- ✓ Note the location of roof damage and/or icicles indicating potential ice dams.
- ✓ Store firewood at least 30 feet away from your home.

NOTE: In warmer climates your may want to get a head start on spring inspections - *See page 3.*