

SUMMER HOME MAINTENANCE TIPS

Another summer is here, and if you endured a couple seasons of harsh weather conditions, or if you have some deferred maintenance to take care of, it's time to get started.

Clean out your gutters

There's no telling what kind of crud has collected in there since the last time you cleaned them out.

Do a deep fridge clean-out

Have some unidentified leftovers in a Tupperware way in the back or a long-ago expired jar of pickles in the door? While you're attacking the refrigerator, don't forget to address the coils. To clean refrigerator coils, turn off the power to the fridge, then vacuum the coils using a homemade wand from a cardboard gift wrap tube or a vacuum cleaner brush attachment.

Change the batteries in your smoke detectors

Per Consumer Reports, smoke alarm batteries should be changed out every six months. Put yourself on a twice-a-year-schedule in summer and winter, and mark the dates in your phone so you don't forget.

Change out your filters

This is one of those areas where homebuyers don't tend to heed product manufacturers' guidelines. The general recommendation is every 30-60 days. Been a little longer than that for you? That means dust, dirt, and allergens could be invading your home.

Deep clean your carpets

You should be doing this at least once a year to protect your carpets and limit allergens. Summer is the perfect time in most climates because the rainy season has passed, which means there's less likelihood of kids and pets tracking in mud.

Have your air conditioning unit serviced

If you're the type who only makes a call about your air conditioning when it's not working, consider this: Units that are serviced regularly tend to last longer and have a lower incidence of breaking down, which always seems to happen on the day when the heat index breaks a record.

Check your deck

Look over your deck for signs of rotting and hammer in any nails that are poking up. Then, determine if your deck needs sealing. Sprinkle water on the deck's boards. If the water beads up, you're in good shape; but if it soaks right in, it's time to reseal.

Shower heads

If you haven't cleaned your shower head in a year - or, ever - it's well past time.

Examine your clothes dryer vent

This is a critically important maintenance issue and should be done regularly. Not only will a clean vent make your dryer run more efficiently and dry your clothes faster, but it will also help keep your home and family safe.

Check your roof

A strong storm season may have left you with loose tiles or shingles. Now is the time to have your roof checked to make sure you won't end up with leaks when the rain comes again.

Do a leak check

Check your hoses and exterior faucets for leaks - even a tiny drip can add up to a big waste of water.

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