

Suggested Home Maintenance Schedule

At settlement, ownership of your house passes from Saint Joseph's Carpenter Society to your hands. That transition from renting to owning should be an exciting and proud moment for you. It is important to understand that at that moment you will be taking on the role and responsibility of a homeowner. As a homeowner, you will no longer be able to call a landlord to unclog drains, fix cracks and take care of other maintenance issues. You will be your own landlord. You will be your own maintenance person. You will take on the responsibility of caring for and maintaining your own house. When problems with your property arise, you will need to fix them yourself or pay someone to fix them for you.

Home maintenance is an essential part of home ownership. The responsibilities of home ownership can seem overwhelming and expensive. It is much cheaper to prevent problems than it is to fix them. The following information should help make your experience in your new home a little easier on you and on your wallet. Inspecting your home on a regular basis and following good maintenance practices are the best way to protect your investment in your home. Whether you take care of a few tasks at a time or several at one, it is important to get into the habit of doing them. Establish a routine for yourself, a regular schedule of maintenance can put a stop to the most common and costly problems before they occur.

By following the information noted here, you will learn about protecting your investment and how to help keep your home a safe and healthy place to live. If you do not feel comfortable performing some of the home maintenance tasks listed below you should contact a professional for assistance. You should do your best to follow this schedule and adapt it when necessary to meet your home's particular needs.

Winter (Dec-Feb)

- Clean out gutters
- Tighten loose screws on door locks and knobs
- Drain water from the hot water heater into a bucket for 5 minutes
- Clean the bottom of your refrigerator to increase its efficiency
- Clear ice and snow with shovels, but do not use salt because it damages concrete and blacktop.
- Change filter in heating/cooling system
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- Check caulk and grout in and around sinks, showers and toilets and repair where necessary
- Check foundation walls in basement for cracks that could let in air or water. Repair as needed.
- Clean faucet aerators and showerheads
- Clean lint out of dryer vent tube

Spring (Mar-May)

- Drain water from the hot water heater into a bucket for 5 minutes
- Cut grass weekly
- Change filter in heating/cooling system. Have a qualified serviceman check the whole system annually.
- Replace the batteries in your thermostat
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- Check windows to make sure they function and lock properly
- Check window screens for holes
- Check wood beams in basement for termite or moisture damage. Exterminate or repair as needed.
- Check the cords on all electrical appliances and accessories to make sure the wire isn't exposed or faulty
- Check to make sure water is draining properly in all sinks, showers and toilets. Clean out hair and build-up from pipes or call a plumber.
- Sump pumps should be tested to make sure they are functioning properly
- Check siding and flashing for damage or holes. Repair as needed
- Clean lint out of dryer vent tube

Summer (Jun-Aug)

- Clean out gutters
- Coat Blacktop Driveway with a latex sealer (every two years)
- Drain water from the hot water heater into a bucket for 5 minutes
- Cut grass weekly
- Clean the bottom of your refrigerator to increase its efficiency
- Change filter in heating/cooling system
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- Silver coat your flat roof every other year
- Check sidewalk and driveway for cracks and repair any damage.
- Check foundation walls in basement for cracks that could let in air or water. Repair as needed.
- Hose and scrub dirt off of siding and other parts of your house exterior
- Trim back bushes or plants near your house so that they are at least one foot away from your walls.
- Clean faucet aerators and showerheads
- Clean lint out of dryer vent tube

Fall (Sep-Nov)

- Drain water from the hot water heater into a bucket for 5 minutes
- Shut off water to outside hose spigots and drain any remaining water from those pipes to prevent freezing.
- Cut grass weekly.

- Clear ice and snow with shovels not salt, which damages concrete and blacktop.
- Replace batteries in the fire protection system on Daylight Savings Time Day.
- Change filter in heating/cooling system
- Change exterior light bulbs annually or as needed.
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- Check door and window weather-stripping
- Trim back trees growing above or against your house
- Check wood beams in basement for termite or moisture damage. Exterminate or repair as needed.
- Drain fuel from gas powered yard equipment after final use of the season and store for the winter. You may need to perform other maintenance on the equipment as recommended by the manufacturer.
- Check caulking on windows. Repair as needed. Recaulk at least every 3 years.
- Check to make sure water is draining properly in all sinks, showers and toilets. Clean out hair and build-up from pipes or call a plumber.
- Clean lint out of dryer vent tube

Other Maintenance Tips

Besides the routine maintenance mentioned above, the following tips should help you maintain your home on a daily basis.

- Do not put trash or items other than toilet paper in the toilet, as they might cause it to clog and overflow.
- Repair any cracks on interior walls or ceilings before they become major problems.
- Don't ignore water stains on ceilings or walls. Find the source of the leak and repair it.
- Buy surge protectors for expensive appliances and electronics
- Don't blow out the pilot flame on your hot water heater. If it accidentally blows out, you can relight it with a match.
- Keep utensils, coins and other metal objects out of your kitchen drain. They could clog your drain or damage your garbage disposal.