

HOME SAFETY Checklist



Whether you own a new or older home, taking care of your biggest investment is important - not only for the life of your home, but also for you and your family's safety. Here are some of the most important items you want to complete to make sure that your home is running at peak performance so that its occupants are comfortable and safe.

Sump Pump Care & Backup

Examine your sump pump to make sure it's functioning properly and repair or replace if needed. It's important to inspect the check valve as well since a failed check valve can cause the valve to rupture and ultimately, a flooded basement. The float switch is the most common sump pump failure and should be changed as needed or every 3-5 years to be on the safe side. Make sure you have a backup system in place in the event of a power outage. Hydraulic backup systems and backup generators are typical options for this purpose.

Safety Devices Check

Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in the house, and replace batteries as needed. Check the expiration date on your fire extinguisher (you should have one stashed somewhere easily accessible in your house!) and replace it if needed.

Washer & Dryer Maintenance

Be sure to clean out the dryer vents. This can be a job you do yourself although you may want to hire a pro to do washer and dryer maintenance for you. Washing machine hoses need to be replaced from time to time. Check for any cracks in the hose to be sure a leak won't happen and cause costly damage to your home. Clean dryer vents and hoses will help your machines work more efficiently and reduce the risk of a fire or water damage.

Maintain & Test Your Generator

Power outages are inevitable and extreme weather events seem to be happening more frequently with climate change. If you have a backup generator for your home, be sure that it has been maintained and tested as recommended by the manufacturer.

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Trim Dead Tree Limbs

Dead limbs are more likely to fall during winter storms, making them a potential safety hazard. Have an arborist inspect and trim large trees and don't forget the branches that are extending into your neighbors' yards.

Have your HVAC System Checked & Serviced on a Regular Basis

For most homeowners a change in season means switching from cooling to heating or vice versa. To ensure that all your systems are working properly it is a good idea to have them serviced annually. Changing out filters, checking air ducts and making sure your system is running smoothly will not only save energy, but will also improve the indoor air quality of your home.

Maintain Your Wood Stove/Fireplace & Chimney

If you have a wood stove or fireplace, for safety you should have it serviced before using it for the first fire of the season. Schedule an appointment to have your chimney inspected and, if necessary, cleaned. Fire safety experts recommend that you have your chimney inspected annually and cleaned periodically.

Order Firewood

Whether you use a wood stove for actual warmth or just for coziness, fall is a good time to order a delivery of firewood. If you can help it, don't store large quantities of wood directly against the house, which can encourage pests, but do keep it protected from rain and snow beneath a shelter.

Stock Up & Prepare For Winter

Especially here in Michigan, preparing supplies before a big storm comes should hopefully equate to less stress later.

- Check snow shovels and ice scrapers; replace as needed
- Restock emergency kits for car and home
- Purchase pet- and plant-safe ice melt for driveways and sidewalks
- If you use a snowblower, have it serviced and make sure you have fuel or, if electric - a rechargeable battery that is charged and in good condition.