

Mr. Handyman offers tips for a smooth winter

As fresh fallen snow creates a winter wonderland, it's also a reminder that it's time for the annual ritual for homeowners – home maintenance.

Wayne Owczarzak, owner of Mr. Handyman, a family-owned-and-operated professional handyman company, offers these home maintenance tips for homeowners to avoid weather-related problems during the cold winter months.

- Replace furnace filter and have a few spares to keep your furnace working efficiently. Filters collect debris, and the dirtier they get, the harder it makes your system work.

- Drain the water heater once a year to remove sediment from the bottom of the water heater where it collects. This will prevent the heater from rusting out and will extend the life of the equipment.

- Install a humidifier to put moisture back in the air for a more comfortable living environment, to prevent dryness, which can cause irritation to many parts of the body, and to lessen static electricity.

- Clean the dryer vent because lint and debris can build up in the vent and block air flow, which could result in a lint fire. If your clothes are taking twice as long to dry, there may be a clog somewhere in the vent.

- Grease garage door hinges, bearings and springs to keep the door operating smoothly and safely (use silicone spray or white lithium grease) and check the weather stripping at the bottom of the door.

- Check the attic insulation and make sure the space is well-vented. If the vents are clogged and air is not circulating, ice dams can form and water will run down the roof, freeze over the soffit and could back up into the house.

- Clean faucet aerators and shower heads to keep the faucets functioning properly because mineral deposits and sediment can slow the water flow or even clog the faucet.

- Check windows and doors for air leaks and seal any leaks to prevent drafty cold spots in the home and to prevent expensive heat loss and high utility bills.

- Check that smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working properly and open the case to remove dust from the sensor. Change the batteries once a year so there's no concern about the effectiveness of the equipment.

- Clean the condenser coils on the back or bottom of the refrigerator to keep it running efficiently and increase its life.



Homeowners can perform some of these chores themselves or call in the professionals to take care of all their winter maintenance and home repairs. Winter is also a good time for interior home improvement projects because contractors tend to have fewer jobs and may be willing to offer deals or a winter special.

Mr. Handyman's skilled technicians have an average of 10 years of professional experience in the handyman services industry specializing in home repair, maintenance and remodeling. They are fully insured, bonded and background-checked. And the company guarantees its work.

Mr. Handyman of Wheaton-Hinsdale serves local homeowners and businesses in central and northern DuPage County.

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