

Business *Insight*

EXTERIOR

Do you have small repairs around your house that need attention? Maybe your fence or siding has been damaged by high winds earlier this year. Wayne Owczarzak, owner of Mr. Handyman, a family-owned professional handyman company, recommends looking at several areas on or around your home to keep your property up and prevent costly repairs.

- Fences

Check for fence posts that have come loose, are broke or are leaning, which are signs the posts need repair or replacement. Once a post breaks, it puts additional stress on the next post. More windy days will now make is easier for other posts to break. So don't wait too long to get your fence repaired. Also, look at your cross supports and pickets to see whether they are loose, cracked or split and need to be replaced. To increase the life of your fence, consider getting the whole fence pressure washed to brighten it up and then stain or seal it.

- Gates

Make sure your gate is closing and locking properly. In time, it starts to sag and doesn't line up with the locking mechanism or latch that holds it closed.

- Mailboxes and posts

Check the condition of your mailbox and post as they may have become damaged or weakened with snow plows throwing snow up against them. If it needs attention, you should replace the post and set it in concrete so it is secure.

- Gutters and downspouts – We have had a lot of rain, and you should make sure the downspouts are clear and the rain is going in the gutter, not over it. When cleaning the gutters, make sure the pitch is right so the water is draining properly and all downspouts are securely attached to the home.

If you have downspouts that drain right next to the house, it's a good idea to put on an extension so it moves away from the house and doesn't sit against it, which will prevent water from seeping into the foundation. Downspouts can also be buried if extensions are in the way of where people walk or mow the yard.

- Sump pump discharge

Also look at where the sump pump discharges. Is it depositing the water right next to the house and creating a depression or small pool of water that keeps it close to the foundation? This will cause the sump

pump to discharge the same water over and over, eventually burning out the motor. You need to get this water moving away from the house to keep moisture away from the foundation.

- Soffit and fascia

Check for any loose or rotted pieces and holes that must be repaired quickly because birds, raccoons and squirrels can get in the attic. Once they get in, they don't want to leave, and it's like a zoo in the attic. You need to trap them and get them out before doing a repair.

On many houses the soffit and fascia are wrapped in aluminum, which could come loose at times or the wind could blow one or more pieces off. This can be repaired, and we have the ability to bend new aluminum pieces to fit exactly like the damaged pieces so that it looks like new.



- Siding

Whether wood, aluminum or vinyl, make sure there are no loose, cracked or broken pieces where moisture can get back behind the siding and cause a problem.

Make sure your vinyl siding is fitting correctly and pieces aren't cut short at the corners where moisture can get behind them.

- Windows and trim

Check to make sure the trim and brick mould are in good shape and that there is no soft wood or cracks. If the wood is rotting, water could get behind it and into the walls. Make sure the trim is caulked and tightly sealed.

- Garage door

Make sure the weather stripping on the bottom and around the perimeter is in good shape. Sometimes in the winter, ice builds up at the base of the door and the rubber seal sticks to the concrete and damages the rubber. Get the weather stripping replaced and keep small critters and rain out of your garage.

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