

PRIORITY MAINTENANCE FOR HOME BUYERS

There are so many home maintenance and repair items that are of importance, it can be confusing trying to establish which are the most critical. To simplify things, we have completed a short list. This list is by no means all inclusive, nor do they replace any of the information in a home inspection report. They should, however, help you get started on the right foot. Remember, any items marked as priority or which have safety issue implications on your home inspection report need immediate attention.

ONE-TIME TASKS

1. Install smoke detectors as necessary (usually one on each level of the home).
Install carbon monoxide detectors (as per manufacturer's recommendations).
2. Make any electrical improvements recommended in the home inspection report.
3. Remove any wood/soil contacts to prevent rot and insect damage.
4. Change the locks on all doors. Use a dead bolt for increased security and to minimize insurance costs.
5. Remove or correct trip hazards such as broken or uneven walks, patios and driveways, loose or torn carpet or flooring should also be repaired promptly.
6. Correct unsafe stairways and landings.
7. Have all chimneys inspected and serviced before operating for the first time.
8. Locate and mark the shut-offs for the heating, electrical and plumbing systems.
9. Label the circuits in electrical panels.
10. If there is a septic system, have the tank inspected, and pumped if necessary. If the house is on a private water supply (well), set up a regular testing procedure for checking water quality.

REGULAR MAINTENANCE ITEMS

1. Clean the gutters in the spring time and fall.
2. Check for damaged roofing and flashing materials twice a year.
3. Cut back trees and shrubs from the house walls, roofs, venting and air conditioning units as needed.
4. Clean the tracks on horizontal sliding windows and doors annually, and ensure the drain holes are clean and clear.
5. Test Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters, Carbon Monoxide and Smoke Detectors using the test button monthly.
6. Service furnace and/or boiler annually.
7. Check the furnace filters, humidifiers and electronic air cleaners monthly. Replace filters as per the manufacturer recommendations.
8. Check the bathtub and shower caulking monthly and improve promptly as needed.
9. Shut off outdoor water faucets in the fall and drain (bleed) them from the outside as well to prevent freezing and pipes bursting.
10. Check reversing (auto stop) function of garage door openers monthly.
11. Check attics for evidence of leaks and condensation and make sure vents are not obstructed, at least twice a year.