

**QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO**  
**HOME MAINTENANCE**

October, 1998

**A Practical Manual For the  
Springfield Homeowner**

Originally Prepared & with Permission to Adapt by:  
Department of Planning and Community Development  
410 E. Washington Street  
Iowa City, Iowa 52240

Karin Franklin, Director of Planning and Community Development  
Maurice Head, Pam Barnes, Steve Schornhorst, Liz Osborne, Jodi-beth McCain,

Presented by:  
City of Springfield, Oregon  
Development Services Department  
Housing Programs Division  
(491) 726-2358

Adaptation for Springfield, Oregon  
Jodi Petersen, Howard Wade  
Housing Programs Division Staff

## *Acknowledgement*

We want to express our appreciation to the following people for their helpful input to the Springfield adaptation of this book:

Dave Puent, Community Services and Building Safety Division Manager  
Springfield Development Services Department

Dick Evenson, Deputy Fire Marshal  
Springfield Fire and Life Safety Department

Loretta Wilson, Community Services Officer  
Springfield Police Department

Paul Warilla, Energy & Conservation Services Manager  
Springfield Utility Board

David Harris, Weatherization Specialist  
Springfield Utility Board

Margaret Lewis, Home Economics Director  
Lane County Extension Service

## *Caveat*

The material contained in this reference book is not intended to be a definitive analysis of the subjects discussed. The reader is cautioned that effective repair and maintenance, as well as the avoidance of personal injury and property damage, is dependent on a thorough understanding of the particular defect or problem being addressed and will often depend on the particular circumstances presented. Neither the City of Springfield Development Services Department or The Iowa City Department of Planning and Community Development intends that reliance be placed on these materials without a thorough analysis of the particular item of maintenance being addressed and the potential safety issues, as well as consultation of other resources and professionals if necessary.

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome to the Quick Reference Guide to Home Maintenance .....	1
--	---

### I. Outside the Home

---

Roofs.....	3
Gutters.....	4
Fireplace Chimneys.....	5
Exterior Walls .....	7
Windows and Doors .....	9
Porches, Decks, and Patios.....	10
Walks, Steps, and Drives .....	11
Garages .....	12

### II. Inside the Home

Interior Walls and Ceilings.....	14
Interior Windows .....	14
Fireplaces .....	16
Basements and Foundations .....	17

### III. Systems

Heating.....	20
Cooling.....	22
Plumbing.....	23
Electrical.....	24

### IV. Safety Check

Smoke Detectors .....	27
Fire Extinguishers.....	27
Radon.....	28
Carbon Monoxide Detectors.....	28
Lead-Based Paint .....	28
Material Safety Data Sheets .....	29
General Hazards in the Home .....	29

### V. Energy Saving Suggestions

Weatherizing Your Home .....	31
Systems .....	32
Appliances.....	34

**VI. Household Home-remedies**

Air Fresheners .....38  
Cleaners .....39  
Pest Control.....44

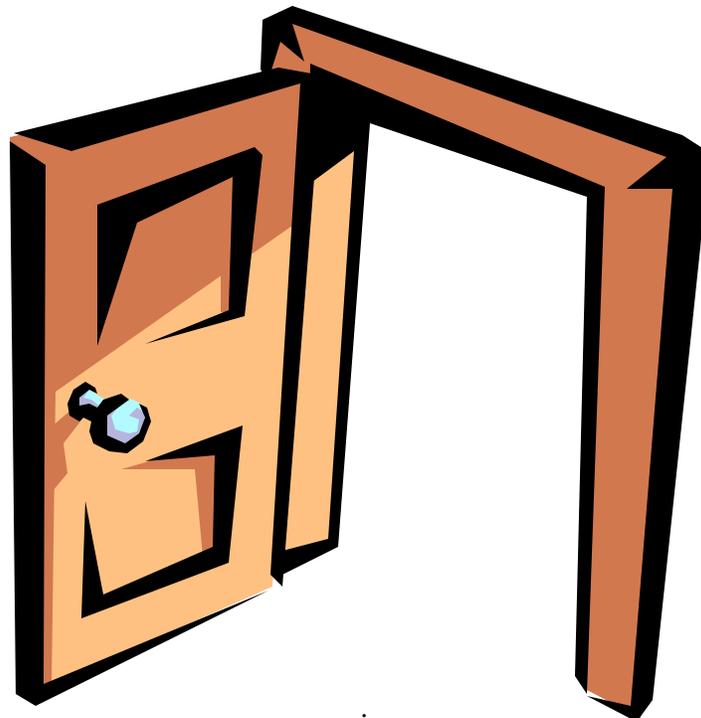
**VII. All Seasons Maintenance Checklist**

Roofs and Gutters .....47  
Exterior Walls .....47  
Doors and Windows .....47  
Porches, Patios and Decks.....48  
Walks, Drives and Steps .....48  
Interior.....48  
Foundation and Masonry.....48  
Heating and Cooling.....49  
Plumbing.....49  
Electrical.....49  
Energy Conservation.....49  
Know the Location of .....50

**Glossary** .....51

**References** .....53

**Appendix - Home Security**.....56



## *Welcome to the Quick Reference Guide to Home Maintenance!*

This guide has been adapted for local use and provided to you by the City of Springfield with the permission of Iowa City's Department of Planning and Community Development which prepared the original. Realizing that your home is probably one of the biggest investments that you will ever make, this guide was developed to help you take care of your investment. Of course no house lasts forever, but proper maintenance will substantially increase the life span of your home and help to prevent costly repairs that could have been avoided. Also, by keeping your home well maintained, you will be doing your part to preserve the overall quality of life in your neighborhood, as well as the Springfield community.

This guide is designed to serve as an at-home reference tool. Different components of your home are briefly described and check lists for almost every topic are included. The checklists are designed to help guide you through maintenance checks and through decisions about whether or not a certain repair requires professional attention.

This guide is intended for City of Springfield homeowners. Only suggestions for the most common housing types in Springfield are given, such as ranch, bungalow, split-level, Victorian cottage and other common homes. Because this guide has information about various housing types and systems, some information will not apply to your particular home. For example, this guide expands upon *many* types of roofing available to Springfield homes, such as asphalt, wood shingles, slate/clay tile, and roll roofing, and you will need to select that which is relevant to your home.

Some of the maintenance and repairs to your home may easily be done with the help of a maintenance book or manual from your local library. The Springfield Public Library has an entire section dedicated to home maintenance and repair books where you can find titles such as the *Complete Book of Home Repairs and Maintenance*; *Roofing and Siding*; *How a House Works*; *Renovating Woman, A Woman's Guide to Home Repair*; *The New York Times Season by Season Guide to Home Maintenance*; and much more, including many of the books used as references for this guide. Check the computerized card catalogue or go to the stacks on the second floor and look in the 643 section. The Springfield Public Library also offers a video entitled *Maintaining Your Old House* and a number of other videos on do-it-yourself repairs.

This guide is divided into various sections:

- ⇒ To find information about check lists and specific maintenance questions, please consult the **Table of Contents** which will refer you to the appropriate **Chapter**.
- ⇒ Definitions of technical terms used in this guide are included in the **Glossary** at the end of the guide. Illustrations of basic components of homes are included in the glossary, as well as throughout the guide.
- ⇒ Books and other sources consulted in connection with the preparation of this guide are listed in the **References** section, found on the last page.



**NOTE:** As you read through the guide, you will frequently find “NOTE” Each “NOTE” is meant to help you avoid endangering yourself, other people, or causing permanent damage to your home. Frequently the “NOTE” will advise that you consult a professional. Remember that for unfamiliar or difficult jobs it is best to consult a professional

---

## CHAPTER 1

# Outside the Home



*This Chapter gives a general overview on maintenance activities for the exterior, which provides protection for your home's framework and interior features. Maintaining the roof, wall, foundation and other components in good repair is critical.*

## ROOFS

This guide begins by discussing the roof because a weather-tight roof is basic to the preservation of your home, no matter how old or new it is. The roof sheds rain, shades the sun and serves as a general buffer from the weather.

During different architectural periods in the history of the United States, a variety of roofing materials were used, such as clay tiles, slate, copper, tin and asbestos. Common roofing materials for the Springfield area are listed below. Each variety of roof has different features and expected life spans. Being aware of the general facts concerning your roof will help you to budget for future replacement or repairs.

**Table 1: Common Roofing Materials**

Material	Maintenance	Life Span
Asphalt Shingles	Little at first, but over the years some shingles begin to curl, crack and lose their surface coatings. Not difficult to repair or replace.	15 to 30 years under temperate weather conditions. Better-quality asphalt shingles carry 25-year guarantees. Life span is also affected by the color of the shingles. Light colored roofs tend to last longer than dark colored ones.
Wood Shingles and Shakes	Unsealed types sometimes tend to rot, warp, split and soon weather to a soft gray. Not difficult to repair or replace.	20 years or more for shingles; up to 35 years for shakes if maintained well.
Slate, Clay Tiles	An occasional cracked or chipped tile may need repair.	The life span of your house, provided you make repairs before the underlying layer of sheathing is damaged.
Roll Roofing	Lightweight, single-layer installations fail frequently, but repairs are very easy.	From 5 to 15 years. With short-term warranties, ask if the company will come back for patching.
Tin Roofing	May need periodic painting, especially if it comes in contact with any other metal.	Tin roofs are very durable and last for many decades.

The life span given for each type of roof in Table 1 is dependent upon regular maintenance and checks. Each roof, regardless of the materials used, has features which must be continually maintained and checked. If you have questions, call a qualified professional.

## **Checklist for the Roof:**

*RIDGE SHINGLES.* These shingles, located on the crest of the roof, often fail first. Look for cracks and wind damage. A leak here could show up almost anywhere in the house.

*FLASHING.* Flashing is metal strips which provide the transition between two different kinds of surfaces and binds them together, offering additional protection against leakage. It is located in valleys or around protrusions on the roof such as vents or chimneys. Check all flashing. It should be tight, rust-free, and sealed with roofing cement, which can also be used to repair minor leaks around flashing.

*VALLEYS.* Valleys, where two slopes meet to help direct runoff into gutters, are another place where deterioration soon causes problems. If there is flashing in the valleys, make sure that it is tight fitting and without holes or rust.

*ROOF AND SOFFIT VENTS.* Be sure that your attic is properly ventilated. Consult a manual or a professional to determine the proper vent system for your home.

*SHINGLES.* Check for loose, curled-up, or missing shingles which will admit moisture that could weaken the underlying sheathing and harm walls and ceilings below. If branches hit your roof during storms or high winds, they need to be trimmed back in order to avoid damaging the shingles.

*GRANULES IN THE GUTTER.* A large accumulation of granules in the gutter means that your roof is losing its coating. Your roof may need to be replaced soon. Consult with a professional.

*LEAKS.* Check for water stains on framing, sheathing, and insulation in the attic and on the roof. Leaks usually originate higher up than the area where they first appear.

*NOTE: Do not go up on your roof when it is raining, it will be slippery. Be careful around wiring and the electrical service; contact the electrical company for advice if you need to work close to the electrical service. Also, use extra care when placing and climbing ladders.*

## **GUTTERS**

Gutters are usually made of metal and run below and along the edge of your roof. Gutters and downspouts help divert water away from your home, thus preventing premature rotting or damage to the roof, walls and foundation caused by water. Make sure that gutters are attached securely to the roof and walls. If they are not properly attached, damage to your siding, interior walls or foundation can result. Gutters and downspouts must be cleaned frequently, particularly in the fall if you have large trees close to your home. Clogged gutters can result in damp walls or foundation, or cause ice dams during the winter.

### **Checklist for Gutters:**

*DEBRIS.* Mud and rotting leaves not only clog up gutters and downspouts, they also hold moisture that causes rust, rot, and corrosion. Hose your gutters clean. Begin at the high end of each gutter or in the middle of gutters if they have spouts at both ends. Sometimes you can blast out a spout blockage with hose pressure. If not, break up the jam with a broom handle or a plumber's snake.

*RUST/CORROSION.* Inspect the inside of your gutters after cleaning them. If any part is beginning to rust, scrape and wire-brush them, then apply a thin coat of roofing cement. Small holes can be fixed by pressing a thin sheet of metal into roofing cement. Plastic roofing cement is available at your local hardware or building supply store.

*SLOPE.* All gutters must slope slightly toward their downspouts. Run water through the gutter in order to determine if the gutters are properly sloped for effective water drainage. Many problems are caused by standing water due to flat or sagging gutters.

*RUN-OFF EXTENSIONS.* Make sure downspout extensions are directing water away from the foundation. Runoff extensions should extend at least four feet away from your house. Also make sure that water is not eroding sections of your yard.

*NOTE:* *If your roof or gutters fails to pass any component of this check-up, check with your local library "houses - maintenance and repair" section for repair information and/or call a professional.*

### **FIREPLACE CHIMNEYS**

Chimneys not only channel smoke out of your fireplace, they also serve to contain toxic gases, heat and flames. Heat and water tend to cause chimneys to deteriorate. For example, water driven into mortar joints by the wind and acid created by some woods when burned both lead to the erosion of mortar.

Inspections of the outside of your chimney should be done annually, checking every surface you can see, including any in-the-attic portions, looking for cracks and deteriorated mortar. Chimneys also need to be cleaned at least once a year. Depending on how often you use it and the kind of wood you burn, they may need to be cleaned more frequently. Cleaning helps prevent poisonous fumes from entering the house or a fire in the chimney wall itself. It's best to hire a chimney sweep company to clean your chimney.

### **Checklist for Chimneys:**

*JOINTS AND FLUE.* Wind driven rain often erodes mortar joints. These will need to be tuck-pointed by a professional. If not repaired, moisture can seep through, causing damage to walls and ceilings. Mortar should be packed around the flue.

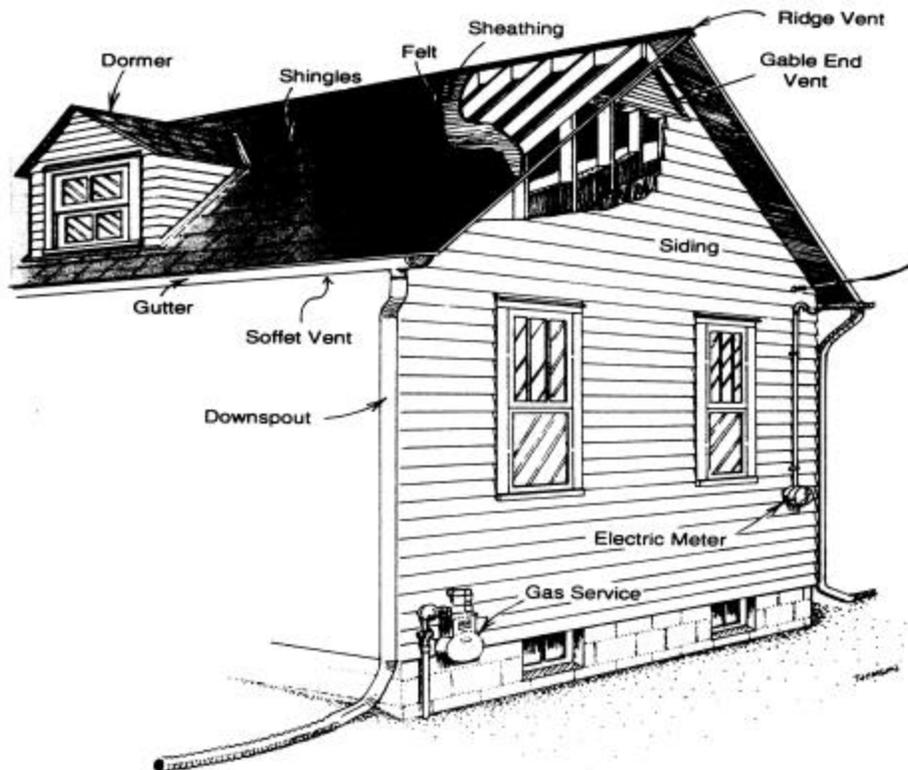
**HOT SPOTS.** Every once in a while test for chimney hot spots by feeling reachable areas with your hand. If an area on the chimney is unusually hot, this may need your immediate attention. Hot spots may mean a broken flue, a fire hazard that a mason should attend to before you use the fireplace again.

**FLASHING.** Check that your chimney has proper flashing around it. A seal should be made between the chimney and the roof. If this is not the case, consult a manual to repair the flashing or call a professional.

**RAIN CAP.** The rain cap consists of a roof with screening around it's edge. It is connected to the top of the chimney. The rain cap should be tightly secured to keep rain, small animals and other debris out of your chimney.

**LINER.** A chimney liner serves to prevent seepage of smoke into the house through little cracks in the chimney. The liner is generally made out of metal or ceramic. In older homes, the chimney may not have a liner or it may be damaged. Consult with a mason or a home maintenance manual for further information on repairs.

**METAL CHIMNEYS.** Some chimneys are made out of stainless steel rather than brick and mortar. They require a two inch clearance on all sides. Check for cracks and make sure that the pipes are secured tightly together. These chimneys generally need to be cleaned twice a year.



House Exterior

## EXTERIOR WALLS

Common materials used for exterior walls in the Springfield area are listed below in Table 2. Regardless of its composition, exterior walls deserve a careful, semiannual inspection. Scan the surface of your home, using field glasses if necessary to check high places. Remember to look under the eaves, porches and other sheltered places. Look specifically for cracks, splits, peeling paint and any evidence of rot or insect damage. Walls can be maintained easily with regular check-ups and care. Many small repairs done regularly prevent larger repairs in the future. If you initiate any small repairs, we suggest that you visit your local library for a more detailed “how-to” help book. Finally, it’s a good practice to wash down your walls annually with a light detergent solution and rinse well.

**Table 2: Common Materials for Exterior Walls**

Material	Maintenance	Life Span with Proper Maintenance
Manufactured Siding	Aluminum or steel siding may require painting.	Some brands offer life-time warranties.
Stucco	Check annually for cracks. Repair small cracks with a caulk appropriate for stucco. Larger cracks will require patching; consult a manual or a professional.	Indefinite.
Hardboard (Masonite)	Inspect caulk joints annually and check for peeling paint. Repair immediately because moisture causes hardboard to swell and deteriorate rapidly. Paint every 3-5 years.	20-25 years.
Vertical (Plywood)	Check caulk joints annually and repair as necessary. Stain every 3-5 years,	Indefinite.
Wood (Redwood or Cedar).	Check caulk joints and the condition of the paint annually. Touch up paint and re-caulk as necessary. Paint entire surface every 3-5 years.	Indefinite.

### Checklist for Exterior Walls:

**MILDEW:** If you encounter dark, rash-like spots that won’t wash off, suspect mildew. To remove mildew, scrub with a tri-sodium phosphate solution, or use a special mildew remover available at paint stores. If mildew has already damaged the paint, consult a manual or a professional.

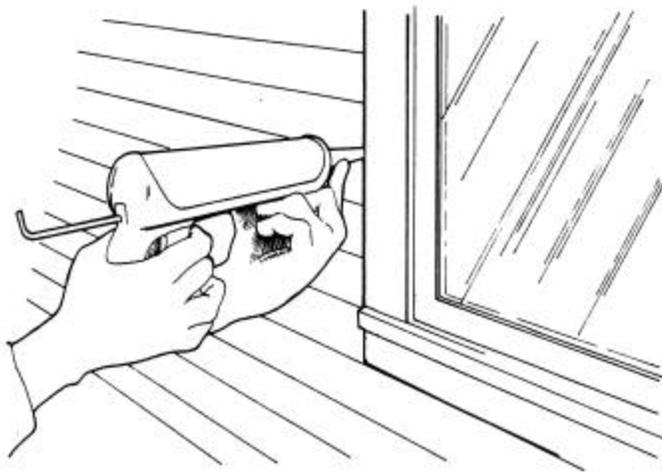
**POPPED NAILS:** Look for popped nails or screws along the outside of the house. Make minor repairs as you go along. Choose screw-type or annular ring nails for better holding power, and drill pilot holes so you don't risk splitting the wood. Be sure to use rust-resistant galvanized or aluminum screws or nails; otherwise they'll eventually stain the paint around them.

**CAULKING:** Check for cracks, which allow air, water, and insects to enter your home. Use caulk wherever there are gaps, such as where siding meets the foundation or where flashing comes in contact with roofing. Caulking compounds differ in formulation and intended use. Before buying, read the product data to learn about surface preparation requirements, which materials the caulk will adhere to, and how long it must cure before you can paint over it.

**TERMITES AND CARPENTER ANTS:** Watch for evidence of devastating insects in early spring and fall. During these times, reproductive members of termite colonies sprout wings, take off on mating flights, discard the wings, and establish nesting places. If you find a pile of wings or mud trails along non-wood surfaces, suspect a colony nearby. If you find piles of sawdust, suspect carpenter ants. These ants live in wood anywhere in your house, especially where there are moisture problems. *Call a professional exterminator.*

**MASONRY WALLS:** Watch for cracks that might indicate settling.

**NOTE:** *Any major damage or deterioration of the exterior of your home should be looked at by a professional as soon as possible. Extended neglect of the exterior of your home will result in long term damage to the structure and interior systems of your home.*



Caulking

## WINDOWS AND DOORS

Windows and doors need special maintenance because they have moveable parts and are exposed to the elements. They also frequently give homes a special character and can be expensive to replace. Therefore, proper maintenance is important. Exterior maintenance for doors and windows is discussed below; for suggestions about interior window maintenance, please refer to the next chapter of this guide.

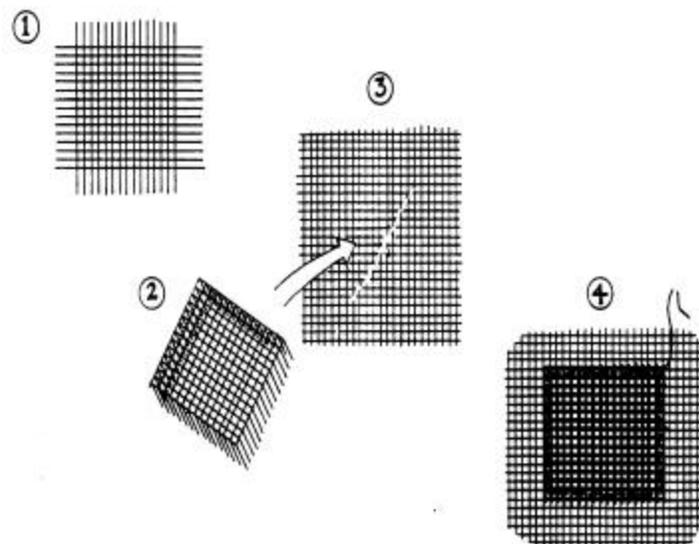
### Checklist for Windows and Doors:

*CRACKED GLASS.* Few people make house calls to repair broken glass. If you cannot find a person to repair the glass you have three choices: 1) remove the sash and take it to a hardware store or glass shop for re-glazing; 2) buy a new pane cut to size and install it yourself; or 3) cut the glass yourself from standard-size sheets. A home maintenance book will guide you in exploring these options. Old glass has waves or imperfections in it, and is much more likely to shatter into shards than new glass. Take extra care when cleaning or caulking it.

*STORM WINDOWS.* Properly maintained and installed storm windows protect your home against heat loss. Check for cracked glass and a tight fit. Never caulk a storm window where it sits on the window sill because water can then collect on the sill causing it to rot.

*SCREENS.* Vacuum dirt from screening; and clean oxidized aluminum with car polish. Clean screens by blasting them with water from a hose, then scrubbing with a stiff brush. Don't forget the frame's edges.

Also, mend any punctured screening with a dab of quick drying household cement. To patch metal screens, cut a section larger than the opening; unravel a few strands, fit over hole and bend strands back.



Screen Repair

*WINDOW SILLS.* Check your window sills for deterioration or rot. The best prevention technique is paint. Sills should be inspected annually and repainted as necessary. Check for soft areas in the wood of the sill and brick mold by pressing a screw driver into the wood; if the screw driver penetrates beyond the wood's surface, this is an indication of rot. If the rotten area is not too extensive, a wood filler may be used to repair it. If the rot is extensive, the sill may need to be replaced. You may need to consult a professional carpenter.

*CAULKING.* Caulk around windows and follow the other advice included in the "Buttoning Up Your Home" section of the Energy Saver Chapter of this guide.

*STORM DOORS.* Binding or sticking doors may be caused by loose hinges or warped wood. Tighten hinges. Try rubbing soap or wax on areas that bind. If this doesn't work, you may need to sand or plane down the door; consult a maintenance manual.

## **PORCHES, DECKS AND PATIOS**

Most porches and decks are wooden structures. The pores in wood absorb moisture, which encourages the growth of insects and fungi that destroy wood. Ultraviolet rays of the sun rob wood of its color and natural oils, causing cracking and splitting which then allows moisture to enter. Therefore, proper maintenance is essential to preserve the life of your porch or deck.

*PORCHES.* Check your porch for settling, damaged decking, roof leaks, and damage to porch steps and railings. A small problem may be easily repaired, but a problem ignored soon becomes a job for a professional. Immediate repair or replacement of damaged wood will mitigate further rotting of your porch.

*DECKS.* Posts, beams, and joists are particularly prone to rot because they're often near ground level and covered by decking. Steps and railings work loose through normal use, and finishes, no matter how tough, give way to weather. Rotting or mildew must be dealt with immediately because they cause the deck's condition to decline rapidly. Stains are the best sealants for a deck, so use them wherever possible. Be sure to ask for one formulated for exterior use. If your deck has been painted before, you'll have to settle for a fresh coat of paint after a thorough scraping. Use screws, not nails, to repair a deck as they prevent splitting of the wood and will not work loose over time.

*PATIOS.* Check your patio each spring. As the ground thaws, it may cause your patio to heave and crack. It will need to be replaced if severe heaving or cracking occurs. For information about caring for concrete, please refer to the paragraph about paving in the following section.



## WALKS, STEPS AND DRIVES

If you ignore a paving problem, it will usually get worse. When caught early enough, problems require only a modest expenditure of time and money. Look for *cracked, chipped, sunken, or heaved* steps or pavement. It pays to keep an eye out for problems and attend to them right away.

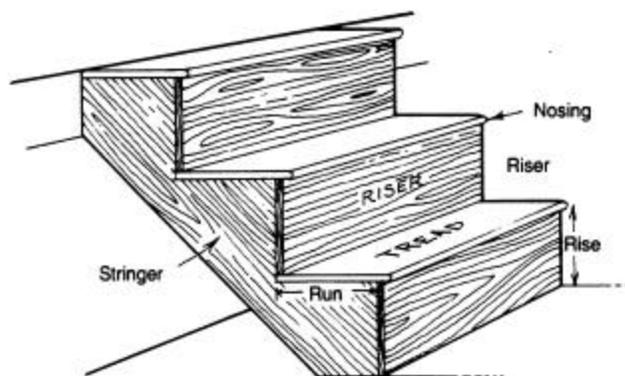
### Checklist for Walks, Steps and Drives:

**PAVING.** If you find a problem in the paving, try to locate the source. Frost, settlement, de-icing compounds, and tree roots all take their toll on even the best-laid paving. *Asphalt* paving needs sealing every two years or whenever the surface becomes checked with hairline cracks or dries out. *Concrete* paving should never be exposed to salt or calcium chloride products that are used to remove ice. It is common for concrete to crack. Minor cracks are to be expected. Larger cracks or heaving may indicate that the concrete needs to be replaced. *Loose-fill drives* consist of gravel, pebbles, crushed rock, cinders, and slag. Although these drives are impervious to freezing and thawing, repeated use and erosion tend to deposit some of the fill onto your lawn or flush it down into the street, requiring that you replenish the material every few years.

**BRICK STEPS.** Moisture causes cracking in brick steps and makes the surface dangerously slick to walk on. Guard against moisture getting into the mortar joints by keeping your steps clear of ice and snow. Also, look for mortar damage in the treads, on the edges and in joints between the steps and the house or walk.

**WOODEN STEPS.** Check to make sure that wooden steps are shedding water, rather than soaking it in. Wooden steps are prone to the same moisture problems as porches and decks.

**NOTE:** *Never put salt or calcium chloride on concrete; it will cause the surface to crumble and flake off. To avoid this, use only a de-icer that is safe for concrete.*



Stairs

## GARAGES

Moisture plays a major role in garage door malfunctioning. It warps doors, rusts hardware, and causes framing to rot away. While looking for problems in your garage, check to make sure that water isn't building up around or dripping onto the door.

Keep door edges, panels, and bottoms sealed with paint. Repair any damaged concrete at the base of the door and replace any damaged hinges, lock sets, or tracks. Any non-functioning part can put additional strain on other components, causing future damage.

### Checklist for Garages:

*OVERHEAD GARAGE DOORS.* Any repairs to overhead garage doors should be done by a professional because serious injury can occur while attempting a repair.

*LOCKSETS.* The lock set is the device usually located in the middle of the door used to lock the garage door. Use graphite, not oil or grease, for lock sets because it is not affected by the cold and doesn't attract dirt. Puff the powder into the mechanism and into the key channel.

*PAINT OR SIDING.* Inspect for failing paint or rust on a metal door. Blackish marks near the base of a wood door is a sign of rot. Rust or bare metal is a sign of trouble for siding. You will need to paint to correct these problems; consult a manual or a professional.

*ROOF, WALLS AND WINDOWS.* Inspect in the same way as you do for the rest of your home.

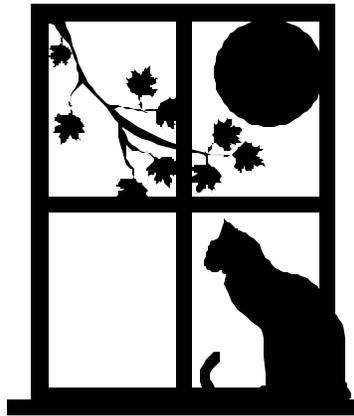
*NOTE: The City of Springfield Building Code requires a one hour fire wall between an attached garage and the living area of a home. If you have an older home that may not have this fire wall and are interested in improving the safety of your home, contact the Community Services/Building Safety Division of the Development Services Department for advice.*



---

**CHAPTER 2**

**Inside the Home**



## INTERIOR WALLS & CEILINGS

Interior walls should be inspected regularly for a variety of problems, such as cracks or evidence of moisture. Cracks indicate settlement or vibrations, and discoloration on the wall or ceiling may indicate a roof leak. If a wall appears to be crumbling, a roof leak should be suspected. If there is a bulge in a wall, assume that there is a humidity problem, a possible leak in the roof, or that your gutters aren't functioning properly. Popped nails may be due to the natural shrinkage and swelling that occurs in a house. Consult a professional.

A manual should be consulted on how to fill dents, mend split tape and set popped nails. If minor cracks or dents are ignored, they may escalate into larger jobs. An excellent way to inspect your walls in detail is to wash them regularly. Washing walls, especially in the kitchen and bathroom, also helps to control bacteria and odors.

*PAINTING.* In general, all repainting requires that the walls be washed before any paint is applied. It may be necessary to scrape loose paint, and any repairs of nail holes or dents should be sanded and primed before painting. Consult a paint store to determine: if there are lead-based paint hazards and the types of precautions you will need to take, the type of paint you will need, the right type of brush to use, the best way to use a roller, and how to clean brushes and rollers when you're done. By requesting information about painting from your paint or building supply store or by consulting a manual, materials and supplies won't be wasted needlessly, and you will follow the steps necessary to achieve long-lasting results.

## INTERIOR WINDOWS

The following table identifies the types of windows that are most common in the Springfield area, as well as their maintenance needs.

**Table 3. Common Types of Windows**

Type	Description	Maintenance
Double-Hung	This window is actually two windows, each of which is called a sash. The upper-outside sash can be lowered and the lower-inside sash can be raised.	Problems may be due to a faulty spring lift or a broken sash cord. Consult a manual in order to properly dismantle the window and repair the faulty part.
Single-Hung	This window has a fixed upper pane and only the lower-inside sash can be opened (raised).	Problems and remedies same as above.
Awning	This window is hinged at the top and cranks open.	Keep the crank mechanism and weather-stripping clean.
Casement	Has hinges on the side like a door, is opened by using a crank.	Keep the crank mechanism and weather-stripping clean.
Louvered	Multiple horizontal panes hinged in tandem, is opened by using a crank. Primarily found on mobile homes.	Keep the crank mechanism and weather-stripping clean.

Slider

Window panes slide horizontally along a track.

Keep tracks clean.

---

Do not force a window open if it binds or refuses to budge because you will cause damage to the sash and/or frame. Inspect the window on both the inside and out. Paint may have sealed the window shut, or a stop molding may have warped. Usually these problems can be fixed by gently prying the window open.

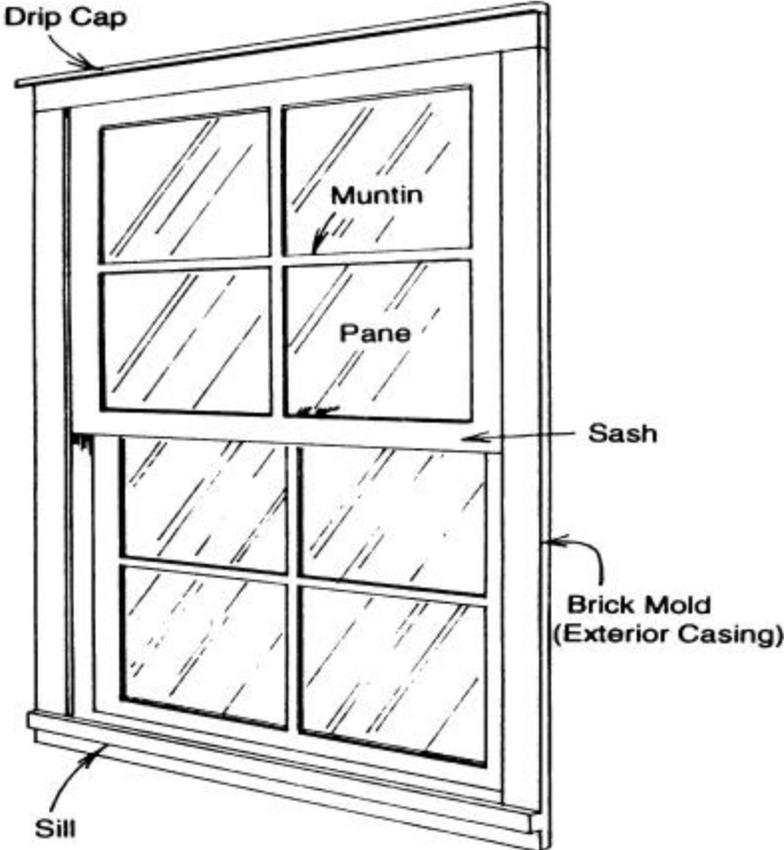
Regular cleaning of windows helps prevent future problems. A special tool for freeing a painted shut window can be purchased at a building supply store.

*INTERIOR MOISTURE PROBLEMS.* Water vapor may condense on windows or uninsulated walls, especially in the kitchen, bedrooms and bathrooms during the winter months. When there is lots of condensation, water runs down the window pane and onto the sill, which can lead to rotting of the sill. Use exhaust fans and storm windows to de-fog your windows. Check exterior walls for mold/mildew growth, especially in closets and other areas with limited air flow. Mop moisture from sills and keep sills well painted or finished to inhibit rot.

Bath fans, range hoods and clothes dryer vents must be exhausted to the outside. Often the exhaust ducts will disconnect and warm, moist air is discharged under the home, in the attic or garage, or back into the living space. This allows the growth of mold and rot. Exhaust ducts carrying warm moist air should be insulated if located in unconditioned space.

*DOUBLE-(or TRIPLE) GLAZED WINDOWS.* Newer windows are usually double- or triple-glazed. These windows have two or three panes of glass with an air-lock in between the panes. If the integrity of the air-lock is lost, moisture will appear between the panes, and the window will need to be either replaced or repaired by a professional.

Double-Hung Window



## FIREPLACES

A poorly maintained fireplace can be a safety hazard, allowing carbon monoxide or flames to enter your home. The fireplace can also be a source of heat loss; therefore, regular maintenance is important.

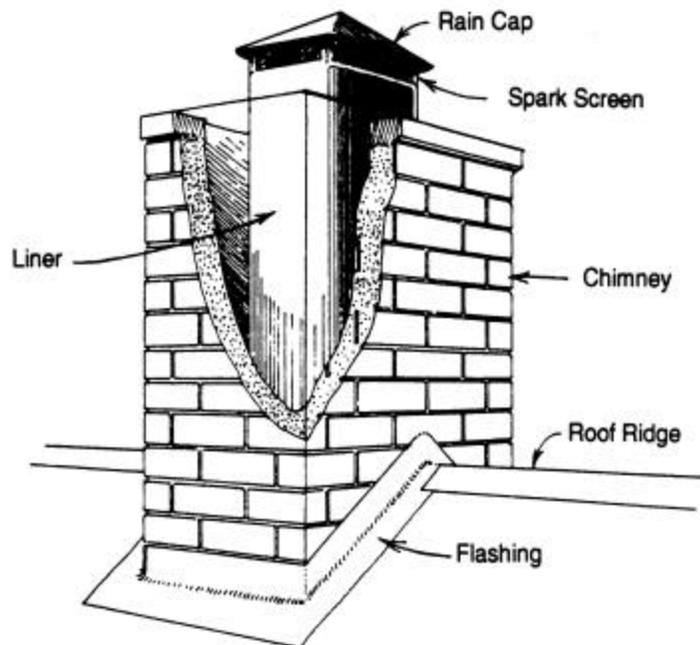
### Checklist for Fireplaces:

*FLUE.* Open the damper and peer up the flue. If you can't see light, check the flue with a mirror and flashlight to determine what the blockage is. The chimney flue should be cleaned periodically by a professional.

*DAMPER.* A damper has to seal tightly, or you will lose heat from your house through it. If yours won't close securely, feel around its edges and remove any small bits of mortar that may have lodged there. Also, ensure that the hinges and handle work smoothly so you can make necessary draft adjustments.

*FIREBOX.* For safety, most fireboxes are lined with high-temperature firebricks. Check to see if any have broken or have loose mortar. If so, consult a manual and repair.

*ASH PIT.* Usually the ash pit needs attention only every other year, depending on how frequently you use your fireplace. If the ashes seem soggy and hard to remove, suspect leakage. With clean-out doors that empty to the outside, seal gaps that might admit cold air. Use the removed ash in your compost pile or mix it into your garden.



Cross-section of Chimney

## BASEMENTS AND FOUNDATIONS

If the floor or walls of your basement are chronically damp or wet, you have a moisture problem. If the floor of your basement has puddles, it is probably time to take action. Excessive moisture creates unusable space and could eventually undermine your home's footings and foundation walls.

*SOURCES OF BELOW-GROUND MOISTURE PROBLEMS.* Many moisture problems in your basement may require the help of a professional to solve. Moisture can be due to a variety of different factors:

Condensation. Condensation causes damp walls, pipes that drip, rusty hardware, and mildew. To identify condensation, tape a mirror in the dampest spot and wait 24 hours. If it's foggy or beaded with water, suspect condensation. Install a dehumidifier, improve ventilation, and/or seal interior walls.

Seepage. General dampness on the floor or on a particular wall, especially near floor level, may be caused by seepage. As before, tape a mirror to the wall. If moisture condenses behind it, seepage is the culprit. Improve surface drainage in order to solve this problem. If you have a relatively minor problem with seepage, an interior sealer may work. If not, waterproof the foundation from the outside.

Leaks. Leaks are identified through localized wetness that seems to be oozing or even trickling from a foundation wall or floor. Check the damp area carefully, paying particular attention to mortar joints between blocks. Consult a professional about making the necessary repairs.

Subterranean water. A thin, barely noticeable film of water on the basement floor could be the first sign of a problem. Test by laying down vinyl or plastic sheets for two or three days; if moisture is penetrating, it will dampen the concrete underneath the vinyl sheet. Seek professional advice if this problem is discovered.

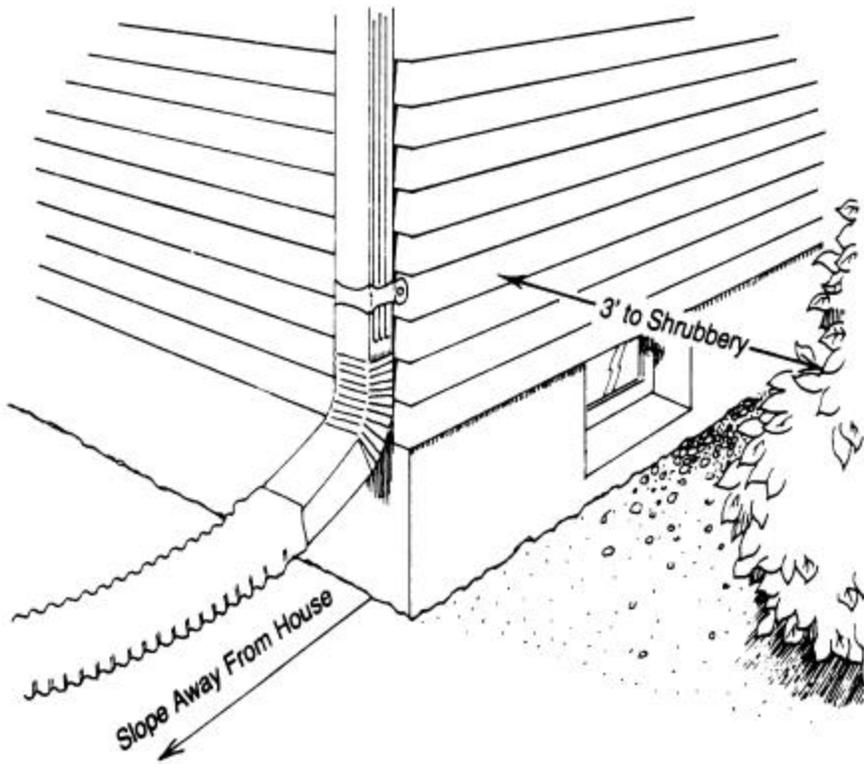
*LANDSCAPING.* Proper landscaping can help your basement resist moisture, especially when landscaping drains water *away* from the base of the house.

*GUTTERS.* Cleaning and properly positioning gutter extensions so that they drain away from the foundation will help keep moisture out of your basement and help extend the life of your foundation.

*WINDOW WELLS.* Water and debris can get trapped in window wells. Adequate drainage of these areas should be pursued. If your window well has a tendency to collect water, install a cover. These can be purchased at your local hardware or building supply store.







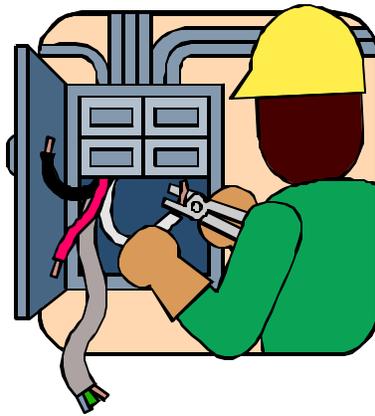
Proper Landscaping

---

---

## Chapter 3

# Systems



## HEATING SYSTEMS

There are many types of heating systems: forced air, piped hot water or steam, wood burning stove, electric baseboard or gravity. All heating systems have the common purpose of establishing and maintaining a comfortable temperature and humidity level. Each system has unique characteristics which should be maintained by a professional at least once a year. However, there is simple maintenance that you can do, as described below, to improve the efficiency of your heating system.

### Checklist for Heating Systems:

*FORCED AIR SYSTEMS.* In forced air systems, the furnace heats air which is blown through air ducts and delivered to rooms through registers.

Filters. Forced air heating tends to stir up dust and dirt. Therefore the furnace has a filter which keeps the furnace and ducts clean and functioning efficiently. Check the filter monthly to ensure high efficiency and replace it if necessary.

Proper Clearance. The furnace pulls air into return air vents which it then heats. It's important not to block the supply registers or the return air vents. Keep furniture, drapes and carpet away from both the registers and air vents, and keep them clean.

*WOOD BURNING STOVE.* Wood burning stoves are made out of either cast iron or steel. Wood is burned inside the stove, radiating heat into the room and house. Wood burning stoves can be a significant fire hazard unless properly installed and maintained.

Clearance. Adequate clearance must be maintained between the stove and chimney to all combustible materials such as walls, ceilings, and floors. All wood burning stoves should carry a label from a certified testing laboratory which verifies the proper clearances.

Fire Box. Check the interior fire box for cracks or warping. Approximately every five years, the wall seams of cast iron fire boxes need to be re-caulked with furnace cement.

Door Seals. Every two years all the rope gaskets around the door seals need to be replaced to ensure that the stove has a tight seal.

Chimney. The chimney pipe which comes out of your wood stove requires an 18 inch clearance. Check the pipe for weakness by testing it with your fingers and check for cracks.

Heat Shield. Combustible walls should have a proper heat shield of a noncombustible material such as metal or brick. Combustible floors should be protected according to the manufacturers' recommendations and the protective covering should extend at least 16" beyond and 8" to each side of the fuel loading door.

*ELECTRIC BASEBOARD.* For general maintenance information about electric systems, refer to the section on electricity in this section.

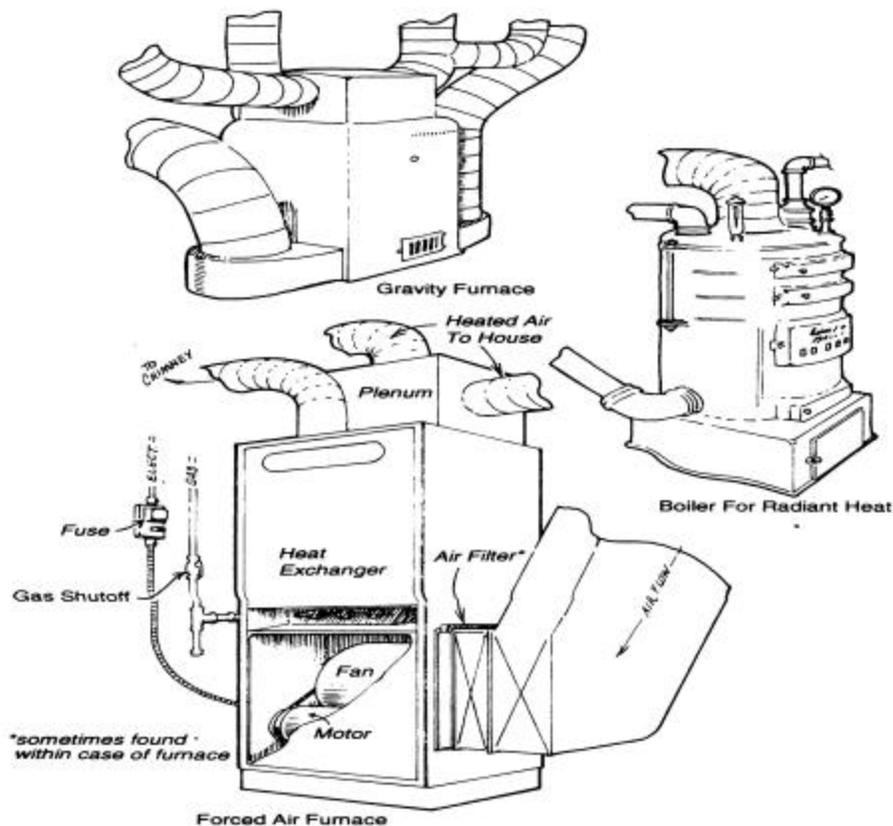
Baseboards. Vacuum to remove dust or dirt. Take care not to bump to avoid denting.

*WALL SYSTEMS.* Recessed into the wall and equipped with a blower. Vacuum to remove dust or dirt.

*GRAVITY SYSTEMS.* Old octopus style furnaces are characteristic of gravity systems. Due to the age of this type of system, it should be inspected annually by a qualified professional. Because it is inefficient, you may want to consider replacing it.

*GAS "SPACE" HEATER.* Vacuum to remove dust or dirt, take care not to extinguish pilot light.

*NOTE:* If your furnace or hot water heater vent into a brick chimney, make sure that the chimney has a proper liner or the chimney may fail.



Different Types of Heating Systems

## COOLING SYSTEMS

The cooling unit of your air conditioner both absorbs heat and reduces humidity. Whether you have a window unit or central air, you should try to locate the condensing unit on the shady side of your house.

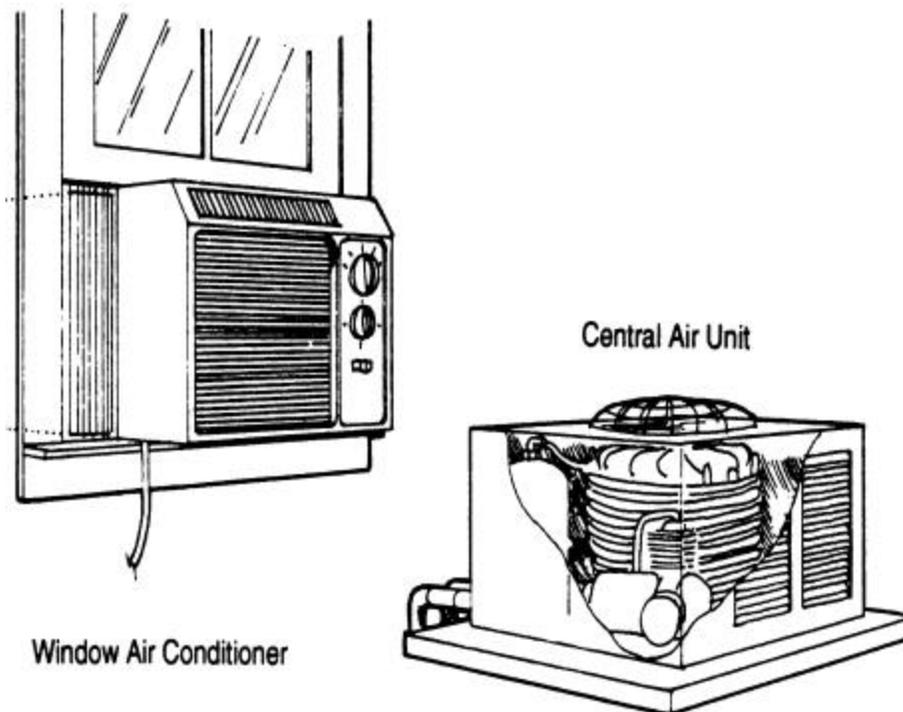
Keep your unit well maintained so that it operates efficiently. An efficient system will keep the air in your home fresh and clean and will help keep electric bills to a minimum. As needed, refer to the owner's manual for your unit.

### Checklist for Cooling Systems:

**CONDENSING UNIT CLEARANCE.** The condensing unit of an air conditioner, which is located outside the house, is where the job of making cool air takes place. Air must flow freely for the condensing unit to function properly. Don't allow branches or other objects to come within three feet of the unit. Turn off the power to the unit, and then vacuum or hose out any leaves or other debris that may accumulate. During winter months, it is important to cover the condensing unit with a canvas or plastic tarp to protect it from the weather.

**CONDENSATION DRAIN.** The condensation drain carries excess moisture away from the unit. Make sure that it's not plugged and that it is directed towards the floor drain.

**FURNACE FILTER.** Your central air system uses the same blower as your furnace. Therefore, it is just as important to clean and replace the filter during the summer as it is during the winter.



Different Types of Cooling Systems

# PLUMBING

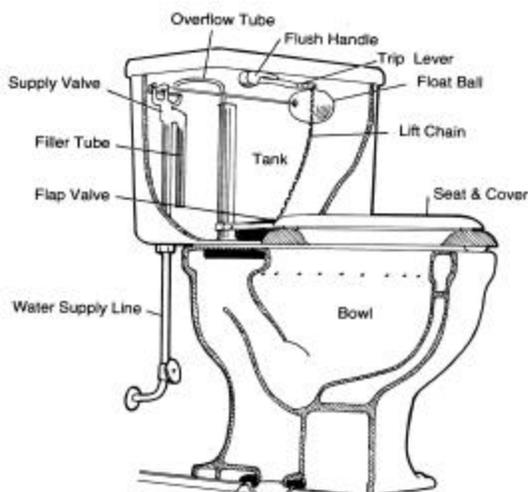
With your plumbing system, it is important to be always watching for leaks, and to fix them right away so that they don't get worse and cause water damage in your home.

When a pipe breaks or when you want to work on your plumbing, you will need to turn off the water supply. Water can be shut off just for a toilet or sink by turning off its own valve, usually located just under the toilet or sink. To shut off all the water in the house, turn off the main water valve. The main shut off valve could be located next to your water meter; it is important that you know where it is located so as to avoid major damage during a plumbing emergency.

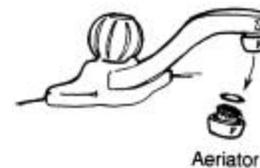
## Checklist for Plumbing:

**CLOGGED DRAINS.** Grease, coffee grounds, hair and other substances can clog drains. It's best to try to keep these substances from entering the drain. For example, use a drain stopper and put grease in an empty tin can. A slow-acting drain is an indication of a partial blockage and should be cleared with a plunger before it becomes totally clogged. If your drain does completely clog, remove the drain stopper and clean out anything that may be blocking the pipe. If this doesn't work, try a plunger, plunging at least ten times, or try using a plumber's snake. You could also try a commercial drain cleaner, following the instructions carefully, or one of the degreasers mentioned in the section about cleaners in the Household Home-remedies Chapter.

**TOILET RUN-ON.** Take the top off the toilet's tank. If the water runs but the tank doesn't fill, check the rubber cone that covers the tank's drain. If it is soft or out of shape, it needs to be replaced. If the tank fills but the water still runs on, check to see if the float ball and its trip lever has risen or if the chain attached to the ball float is snagged. The float ball may have a leak and be filling with water; it will need to be replaced. The trip lever may be corroded or loose. It can be cleaned with steel wool or tightened with a screw driver.



Cross-section of a Toilet



Faucet

*FAUCETS.* Faucets leak for different reasons. If water leaks from around the stem of the faucet below the handle, the faucet may simply need to be tightened. Check for loose parts, then wrap a cloth around the packing nut to protect its finish and then tighten with a wrench. If this doesn't work, the internal parts of the faucet may need repair or replacement. Frequently, in old faucets the washer simply needs to be replaced; in new faucets it's the cartridge that needs replacement. If water is not flowing freely from your faucet, try screwing off the strainer at the tip of the faucet and cleaning it. Consult a repair manual or call a plumber.

*SHOWERS AND TUBS.* A major threat to walls and floors is moisture from your shower or tub. All joints which join the shower or tub to the walls and floor, such as the joint around the drain and those around tiles, need to be checked frequently and kept in good repair by caulking.

*IF IN DOUBT, CALL A PLUMBER.*

## **ELECTRICAL**

Maintaining your home's electrical system in good repair is vital for your safety. Although your home's electrical system can be complicated, you need to recognize its warning signs, such as: fuses or breakers that pop frequently, single marks around outlets, repetitive loss of power to a certain appliance, loose grip on electrical plugs, worn electrical cords. Ignoring warning signs can place you and your home in danger from fire. To be safe, use the following check list and contact a licensed electrician if you discover a problem.

### **Checklist for the Electrical System:**

*ELECTRICAL CORDS.* Electrical extension cords should not be used on a permanent basis because they don't meet housing code requirements and can overheat. Electrical cords can become damaged and unsafe if they run under furniture or carpets, or if they have been attached to walls with staples or nails; these need to be replaced immediately. Damaged electrical cords, especially those that are frayed or cracked, may cause shock or fire. It is preferable to plug electrical appliances and devices directly into an outlet: have additional outlets installed by a licensed electrician or use a grounded outlet adapter (which is also called an outlet or power strip). Three-prong plugs include a grounding feature. *Never* remove the third prong for use in a 2-hole outlet. A temporary solution for 2-hole outlets is to use an adapter, but a better permanent solution is to have an electrician install a properly grounded outlet. Finally, keep cords out of the flow of traffic in your home because they may cause someone to trip.

*OUTLETS AND SWITCHES.* All outlets and switches should have cover plates because exposed wiring presents a shock hazard. Warm or hot outlets, switches, or appliances which cause slight tingling when touched indicate unsafe wiring. Unplug cords and appliances, do not use switches, and contact an electrician as soon as possible.

*CIRCUIT BREAKERS/FUSES.* If too many appliances are plugged into a single outlet, you may blow a fuse or breaker. A blown fuse or breaker tells you that something is wrong. Try plugging some appliances

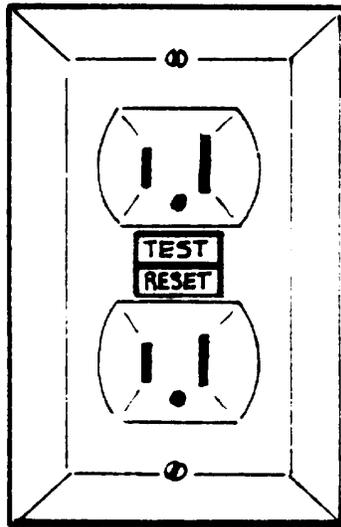
into a different outlet that's not on the same circuit. When you replace a fuse, be certain that correct size fuses are used because replacing with a larger size fuse is a fire danger.

**GROUND FAULT CIRCUIT INTERRUPTER (GFCI).** If an appliance falls into water, the (correctly functioning) GFCI outlet will automatically cut off power and thereby eliminate the danger of electrocution. Unplug appliances when not in use, and install GFCI's in your kitchen and bathroom outlets to protect yourself. An electrician should do the installation of these GFCI outlets. GFCI's need to be tested monthly; plug a lamp into the GFCI outlet then press the "TEST" button.

If the GFCI is working properly, the "RESET" button should pop out and the light should go out. Press the "RESET" button to restore power to the outlet.

If the "RESET" button pops out but the light does not go off, there is a wiring problem and you need to contact an electrician.

If the "RESET" button does not pop out, the GFCI needs to be replaced.



GFCI Outlet

*IF IN DOUBT, CALL AN ELECTRICIAN*

---

**CHAPTER 4**

**Safety Check**



## SMOKE DETECTORS

Springfield Housing Code states that smoke detectors should be installed on each floor level of your home, including the basement. A working smoke detector doubles your chance of surviving a fire, and it is therefore recommended that smoke detectors be installed in all bedrooms. Smoke detectors are powered either by batteries or by electricity. For both types it is important to open the smoke detector's cover once a year to remove dust and cobwebs which reduce sensitivity to smoke.

### Checklist for Smoke Detectors:

**BATTERY POWERED.** Determine if you have the old style smoke detectors which require new batteries at least twice a year. Many battery powered detectors will chirp or give some other audible sign when batteries need replacement. You should replace these smoke detectors with the new type powered by a ten-year battery. Battery powered smoke detectors are fine for existing housing, and can be purchased for less than \$20. Test smoke detectors regularly following the manufacturers instructions.

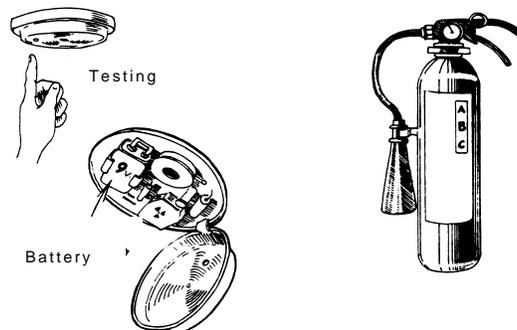
**ELECTRIC POWERED.** For new housing and remodeled housing, smoke detectors must be installed to operate on the household electric current with a battery backup. These smoke detectors may also chirp or give some audible sign when the battery backup needs replacement. The newer and safer electric smoke detectors contain a "hush feature" which allows you to silence the alarm for up to fifteen minutes, then automatically resets.

## FIRE EXTINGUISHER

Fire extinguishers are not required by code for owner-occupied homes, but they are highly recommended, especially close to your stove and furnace. Insurance companies will usually give homeowners a discount on their homeowners policy if the home has a fire extinguisher and smoke detectors. For fire extinguishers, a 5 lb. "2A:10BC" rating dry chemical extinguisher is recommended and can be purchased at a hardware or building supply store for approximately \$30.

### Checklist for Fire Extinguishers:

**MONTHLY INSPECTION.** Your fire extinguisher should be inspected monthly. Check the extinguisher's weight, the pressure gauge (the pointer should be in the operating range), and the tamper seal which holds the ring-pin in place. Check also for damage or corrosion and for obstructions in the discharge hose and/or nozzle.



Smoke Detectors and Fire Extinguisher

*RECHARGING.* Once the extinguisher has been used, even if just a little, it needs to be returned to an authorized service agency for recharging. Check the yellow pages of your phone book for companies that offer this service. They can also be consulted if you have questions about your monthly inspection results.

## **RADON**

Radon, a radioactive gas, can seep into your home from the surrounding soil and then get trapped inside. Radon can also enter your home through well water in small amounts. Your risk of developing cancer from radon exposure depends on the average annual level of radon in your home. Radon is found all over the U.S. and can get into any type of building. Nearly one out of every 15 homes in the U.S. is estimated to have elevated radon levels.

*TEST FOR RADON.* Although radon is invisible and odorless, it is easy and inexpensive to detect. Radon detection kits, complete with instructions, are available at your local hardware store. If your home has a high radon level, it can be fixed, but first it must be detected. If you have questions about radon in your home, you can call the Oregon State Department of Health's Radon Program at (503) 731-4014.

## **CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR**

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless deadly gas which prevents the absorption of oxygen into the body. Carbon monoxide is also produced by common heat-producing household appliances which burn fossil fuels such as natural gas, oil, kerosene, and wood in furnaces, clothes dryers, water heaters, stoves or space heaters. Car fumes also contain carbon monoxide.

*CONTROL OF CARBON MONOXIDE.* To help control the production of carbon monoxide, make sure your fuel-burning appliances are properly installed and maintained. Also, never burn charcoal indoors or in the garage, and never leave your car running in the garage. Proper ventilation in the home is the best safeguard against carbon monoxide poisoning.

*DETECTION.* Carbon monoxide detectors, which look much like smoke detectors, are available. When purchasing a detector, check to make sure that it meets Underwriters Laboratory "UL 2034" requirements.

## **LEAD-BASED PAINT**

Lead poisoning may occur in children if they have been exposed to too much lead. Possible sources of lead poisoning include: eating lead-based paint chips, chewing on surfaces painted with lead-based paint, and playing in areas where the dust from lead-based paint is inhaled.

In the past, lead was used in paint to make it more durable. However, when lead poisoning was shown to cause brain damage and other illnesses, the use of lead-based paint began to be controlled. From 1960-1978 the amounts of lead used in paint were gradually reduced, and in 1978 lead in paint was banned for residential use.

- ⇒ If your house was built prior to 1960, the chances of having lead-based paint somewhere in your house are almost 100%.
- ⇒ If your home was built between 1960 and 1978, there is probably some lead-based paint.
- ⇒ If your home was built after 1978, there should be no lead-based paint.

*DETECTION.* If your house was built prior to 1978, you should have painted surfaces tested before doing any scraping or sanding, especially if there is peeling or chipped paint. Scraping or sanding releases lead into the air and creates lead dust which will settle in carpets, food and clothes and does not dissolve. You may send paint samples to the Oregon State Lead Paint Testing Laboratory to test for the presence of lead; call (503) 229-5882 for further information.

There are a number of helpful publications available about lead-based paint. The City of Springfield Housing Programs Office and the Building Services Division have copies of some of these publications. You may also contact the Oregon Department of Public Health at (503) 731-4500 for further information.

## **MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEETS**

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) provide safety information for all chemically based products, such as paint and caulk. MSDS sheets are available at hardware, paint and building supply stores or wherever these products are sold. Contractors are required to have MSDS sheets available for every product used on that job.

## **GENERAL HAZARDS IN THE HOME**

For general safety around your home:

- ⇒ make sure that all handrails are securely fastened and that your stairs are in good repair
- ⇒ install grab bars and non-slip appliques or non-skid mats in your bathtub or shower areas
- ⇒ keep appliances away from water, especially if they're not plugged into a GFCI outlet
- ⇒ don't overload outlets with extension cords or run electrical wiring under carpeting
- ⇒ use extra caution when climbing ladders or standing on chairs
- ⇒ keep fire sources, such as cigarettes, ash trays, heaters and hot pots, away from beds and paper products
- ⇒ take special precautions with flammable substances such as gasoline and furniture polish; keep these far from the furnace and water heater, and immediately wash any rags containing these substances.

⇒ make sure that lint from the clothes dryer does not accumulate and become a fire hazard, particularly in the dryer exhaust duct and around the washer & dryer motors.

---

## CHAPTER 5

# Energy Saving Suggestions



*This chapter offers suggestions that you can implement in your home which will save energy, save money and help conserve natural resources. Using energy creates emissions of carbon dioxide and other pollutants of the environment; the less energy we use, the more we preserve the environment and the more money we save.*

## WEATHERIZING YOUR HOME

In a climate like Springfield's, a household spends about 35% of their energy dollars on heat. A tight, well-insulated house lowers your heating requirements, saves energy and money. Furthermore, you will be more comfortable in your home without the drafts common to homes that have not been weatherized.

### Checklist for Weatherizing Your Home:

*AIR LEAKS.* Air leakage can amount to as much as 40% of your heating bill. It also allows moisture into your home which may cause condensation in your insulation and eventually cause wood to rot. Air can leak out of and into your home through a wide variety of sources:

- ⇒ Space around pipes
- ⇒ Attic hatchway
- ⇒ Space between chimney and roof
- ⇒ Space between foundation and walls
- ⇒ Fireplace damper
- ⇒ Cracks or holes in foundations, walls, floors and ceilings
- ⇒ Space around recessed lights, electrical outlets and switches
- ⇒ Window, door and baseboard moldings
- ⇒ Dropped ceilings above bathtubs and cabinets

These sources of leaks can be fixed. If the space to be filled is less than a quarter of an inch wide, use caulk. Foam sealant can be used for bigger spaces. For large openings, like attic hatches, use foam insulation.

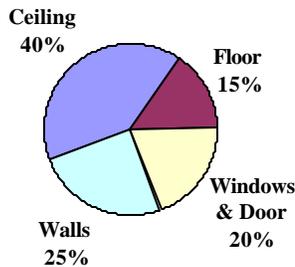
*WINDOWS AND DOORS.* One-third of your home's heat loss occurs through windows and doors. Seal up windows with weather-stripping and/or caulk and fit with storm windows. You can also tape up a plastic film on the inside of your windows. If the window is in poor condition, you may want to consider replacing it with an energy efficient window. For doors, weather-strip around all edges and install door sweeps on the bottom. Weather-stripping should form a seal; replace any weather-stripping that is brittle, torn or cracked.



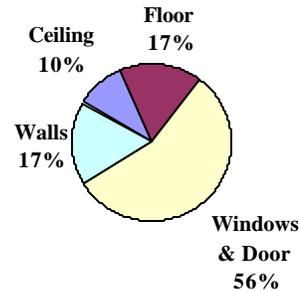
Weatherstripping

*INSULATION.* Insulating an uninsulated home may decrease heating energy use by 30-50%. However, some components are more cost effective than others. It is wise to evaluate the relative cost and benefit of each measure.

**Relative Energy Savings  
from Insulating an Uninsulated Home**



**Relative Cost  
of Insulating an Uninsulated Home**



If you have to insulate a little bit at a time you'll realize the greatest benefit for your money by starting with the attic and floors. Insulating the walls is also very important because they cover the largest area in your home. You might consider hiring a contractor to blow insulation into your walls and ceiling. Make sure that the perimeter walls of your crawl space or the boxesill of your basement are insulated.

*ENERGY AUDITS.* For advice from a professional, the Springfield Utility Board performs energy audits as part of their Weatherization Program. These audits tell you where heat is being lost and what you should do about it. Call 746-0963 for information or to make an appointment.

## **SYSTEMS**

Energy conservation begins with systems that are maintained efficiently. If you need to replace your furnace, air conditioner, or any other appliance, be sure to consult an energy savings guide and compare the energy efficiencies for different units.

### *HEATING*

Heating is usually a household's single greatest energy expense. Performing the maintenance described in the Systems Chapter will help to save energy. Heating systems are also a major source of direct or indirect pollution, so it's best that they're efficient.

Thermostat. At night, set the thermostat 10 degrees lower than you do during the day. When away from home for more than a day or two, set the thermostat to 55. Where possible, turn thermostats down in unused rooms.

Drapes and Blinds. To help heat the house during the day, open drapes or blinds when the sun shines in, and close them at night to keep cold air out.

Pipe and Duct Insulation. Pipes passing through unheated areas can be easily insulated with specially made foam or fiberglass insulation. For ducts, seal all joints and seams with duct tape or mastic (a special paste) first. Then wrap any ducts that pass through unheated areas with insulation.

## *COOLING*

Degree for degree, cooling consumes much more energy than heating because of the nature of the cooling process which both absorbs heat and reduces humidity. There are many inexpensive alternatives to air conditioning.

Air Conditioners. Electricity used by air conditioners consumes 5% of all electricity produced in the U.S. and costs homeowners billions of dollars. Use room units only in the room or rooms that you spend most of your time in, and close the doors to other rooms. Remember to turn off the air conditioner if you will be gone from home for more than a few hours, and remember to clean the filter. For maximum efficiency, keep the condensing unit in the shade. When purchasing a new unit, make sure to check the energy efficiency ratings and to buy the appropriate size for your room or home.

Fans. Fans use much less electricity than air conditioners and are cheaper to run. Fans can be used to pull cool air from other parts of the house or from outside on cool nights. Ceiling fans draw up cool air from the floor and disperse hot air. Attic fans cool the house by pulling cool air through the windows and sending hot air out through attic vents; they cool best at night when the temperature drops.

Control Heat Gain. Lights, windows and appliances are all sources of heat gain. To keep your home cooler during the summer: turn off lights when not needed and use lower wattage bulbs; insulate your walls and ceiling; close curtains against sunlight and consider planting trees or shrubs to provide shade to the east and west of your home; cook during the early morning and late evening, use the oven as little as possible and try drying your clothes outside in the sun. Try keeping the house closed up during the day to keep the heat out. Open windows in the evening when it is cooler outside.

Thermostat. With air conditioning, set your thermostat at 78° F or higher. Using a ceiling fan will allow you to be just as comfortable as when the thermostat was set to a lower temperature.

## *PLUMBING/WATER HEATER*

In Springfield, water heating is generally the second largest energy user in the home accounting for 20% of your electric bill. As with furnaces and air conditioners, when buying a new water heater, check the energy efficiency and buy the size that best fits your needs. Also compare costs for different fuel sources: electricity and natural gas.

Conserve Water. The best way to cut costs is to use less hot water. Try installing low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators. To use less hot water, try washing your clothes in cold water. All leaky faucets should be repaired as soon as possible.

Insulate. To reduce heat loss through the walls of the water tank, install an insulating jacket on your hot water heater. An insulating jacket usually costs between \$10-\$20 and will pay for itself in less than a year. By insulating your hot water pipes, you will save water and energy while waiting for hot water to reach the tap.

Insulating Jacket for Water Heater



Water Temperature. It's best to keep the thermostat on your water heater set as low as possible while still providing your home with enough hot water. Setting the thermostat at 120° is usually hot enough, and will prevent scalding due to hot water from faucets or showers. A bacteria that produces a sulfuric odor may grow at temperatures less than 120°.

## **APPLIANCES**

Over the years, appliances have become much more energy efficient. Check the age and condition of your major appliances. You may find that replacing an aging, inefficient appliance with a top-efficiency model is a good investment. When shopping for any new appliance, consult an energy guide for efficiency ratings and other important considerations.

### *REFRIGERATOR*

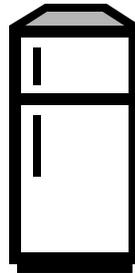
Location. It's best to locate your refrigerator away from heat sources and out of direct sunlight. Try to keep it away from the dishwasher and oven.

Temperature. Use an accurate thermometer to check the temperature. The temperature in the refrigerator compartment should be between 36° F and 38° F, while the temperature in the freezer should be kept between 0° F and 5° F.

### Energy Saving Tips.

- ⇒ To keep your refrigerator running as efficiently as possible, defrost regularly, clean the coils on the back or underneath the unit and make sure that the door seals tightly shut.
- ⇒ Allow hot foods to cool before putting them in the refrigerator,

- ⇒ Cover foods and liquids so that the humidity won't make the refrigerator work harder than normal.
- ⇒ Keep the freezer nearly full with ice or frozen foods. If the refrigerator remains partly empty much of the time, fill it up with clean milk jugs—empty or full of water. This reduces the amount of cold air that escapes when the door is open.
- ⇒ Defrost items in the refrigerator rather than on the counter.

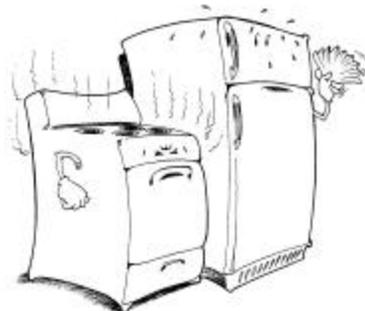


### *STOVES AND OVENS*

Safety. With gas burners, make sure to install a ventilation fan to reduce the risks of carbon monoxide poisoning and gas leaks.

#### Energy Saving Tips for Stoves and Ovens.

- ⇒ In general, microwaves and crockpots use less energy than conventional ovens. However, for large quantities or several dishes, use a conventional oven.
- ⇒ Use the smallest pan necessary - smaller pans require less energy.
- ⇒ Copper bottom pans heat up faster than regular pans.
- ⇒ Keep the stove top under the burners shiny so that heat is reflected rather than absorbed.
- ⇒ With gas burners, make sure that the flame is blue, indicating that the gas is burning efficiently. A yellow flame indicates inefficiency.
- ⇒ You may not need to pre-heat the oven at all unless you're cooking breads or pastries.
- ⇒ Avoid peeking in because the temperature in your oven goes down 25° F every time you open the door.
- ⇒ Self-clean the oven when it is already hot from a previous use.



## *DISHWASHERS*

Location. Keep it away from your refrigerator.

### Energy Saving Tips.

- ⇒ Try the “no heat” dry cycle, drying your dishes by fans rather than by an electric heating element, or simply open the dishwasher door and allow the dishes to air dry.
- ⇒ If necessary, pre-rinse dishes using cold water.
- ⇒ Use only when you have a full load of dishes - a half load and a full load use the same amount of energy.

## *CLOTHES WASHER/DRYER*

Location. Washer and dryer will work more efficiently in a heated space. Also try to locate the washer as close to the water heater as possible to minimize heat loss through the pipes.

### Energy Saving Tips for the Washer.

- ⇒ Always use the cold water rinse cycle; the temperature of the rinse water doesn't affect the cleaning capabilities of your washer.
- ⇒ If clothes aren't greasy, try the warm or cold temperature settings for the wash cycle and the cold rinse cycle. This can save as much as 66 cents per load.
- ⇒ Load your washing machine to capacity whenever possible, but don't overload it.
- ⇒ Select the proper water level for the size of your load.
- ⇒ Make sure the washing machine drain hose is not kinked and inhibiting the draining process, especially during the spin cycle. This causes clothes to be damper than normal and increases the drying time.

### Energy Saving Tips for the Dryer.

- ⇒ Separate different types of clothes by weight and dry them separately to decrease drying time.
- ⇒ Don't over dry clothes - this shortens fabric life and may cause shrinkage. Taking clothes out of the dryer while still slightly damp will reduce the need for ironing, which is another big energy user.
- ⇒ Don't add wet clothes to a load that is already partially dried.
- ⇒ Clean the dryer filter after each load - a clogged filter reduces dryer performance.
- ⇒ When the weather is favorable, try using free solar energy and dry your clothes outside.



## LIGHTING

Lighting accounts for roughly 5-10% of the energy use in an average American home.

### Energy Saving Tips.

- ⇒ Turn the lights off, even if you're leaving the room for only a few minutes. With both florescent and incandescent lighting, turning the lights off even for only a few minutes will save energy.
- ⇒ Use natural lighting whenever possible.
- ⇒ Use compact fluorescents which save three-quarters of the electricity used by incandescents.
- ⇒ With incandescent bulbs, it's generally safest and most efficient to use 60 watt bulbs.

If you have any questions about energy use in your home, contact Springfield Utility Board, 746-0963 or the EREC (Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Clearinghouse, a public service office of the U.S. Department of Energy) at (800) 523-2929.

For further information, check the library. One good resource is *Eco-Renovation: The Ecological Improvement Guide* by Edward Harland.



Many of the suggestions offered in this section are traditional, time honored methods. We offer a variety of suggestions because there is no right answer when it comes to air fresheners, cleaning, or pest control; plus it's easiest for you if you can make use of what you already have sitting around your home.

***NOTE:** Borax has long been recognized for its disinfectant and deodorizing properties; however, it is the most caustic of the cleaners in this chapter. Store it with special care, out of reach of children and away from other chemicals, and use it well diluted. Use latex gloves when working with Borax and dispose of it by pouring it slowly down the toilet.*



## **AIR FRESHENERS**

Ventilation. Open windows or doors in the house for at least a short period each day. This will help to reduce toxic fumes, odors and water vapor that may be building up indoors. Use the stove fan while cooking to reduce the concentration of fumes and odors in the area. Use the bathroom fan during and after a bath or shower.

White Vinegar. Distribute partially filled saucers of white vinegar around the room or boil 1 tablespoon of white vinegar in 1 cup of water to eliminate unpleasant cooking odors.

Cinnamon and Cloves. Boil these spices for fragrant smell. For ease of cleaning, boil in a cheesecloth bag.

Potpourri. Buy or make your own potpourri from your favorite flowers, herbs and spices. Place the potpourri in a small sachet bag.



Vanilla. Place pure vanilla on a cotton ball in a small saucer. Place the saucer in the car or refrigerator to remove odors. It is said to remove (or at least cover) even skunk odors. Keep the cotton ball out of the reach of children; vanilla has a high alcohol content.

Baking Soda. Place a partially filled saucer of baking soda on the refrigerator shelf. Replace every two months and when you do, pour the contents of the used box down the drains to remove odor and keep the drains clean. Baking soda can also be used to deodorize bottles by filling them with diluted baking soda and allowing the bottles to soak overnight, then wash as usual. Boxes of baking soda may also be placed near clothes and in the bathroom to absorb odor. Baking soda can also be used to deodorize carpets; make certain that the carpet is dry, sprinkle baking soda liberally over the entire carpet. Wait 15 minutes or overnight if the odor is particularly bad before vacuuming.

Borax. Empty the garbage frequently and clean the can as needed. To inhibit growth of odor-producing molds and bacteria, sprinkle 1/2 cup of Borax in the bottom of the garbage can.

Borax and Cornmeal. To neutralize carpet odors, sprinkle the carpet with a mixture of 1 cup Borax and 2 cups cornmeal. Let this mixture stand for 1 hour before vacuuming. Caution: do not use Borax in carpets or rugs where small children will be playing.

## **CLEANERS**

In general, white vinegar is the best of all alternative cleaners; however, it does not have disinfecting properties. Use it to clean everything from windows to greasy ovens. If grease is built up it may take detergent or ammonia to break it down.

### *ALL-PURPOSE CLEANERS*

White Vinegar and Salt. Mix together for a good surface cleaner.

Baking Soda. Dissolve 4 tablespoons baking soda in one quart of warm water for a general cleaner, or use baking soda directly on a damp sponge. Baking soda will clean and deodorize all kitchen and bathroom surfaces.

Liquid Soap and Borax. Mix 1 quart warm water, 1 teaspoon liquid soap, 1 teaspoon borax, a squeeze of lemon or a splash of white vinegar. This solution can be used for a multitude of cleaning jobs including countertops, floors, walls, rugs and upholstery.





## *CARPET PRE -TREATMENT*

*If you plan to shampoo your carpet, first try a pre-cleaning treatment. Sweep the carpet, which will make the nap stand up and loosen the imbedded dirt, then vacuum. With this alone, the rug should show noticeable improvement, so much that you may decide to delay the shampooing.*

## *DISINFECTANT*

Keep Things Dry. Mold, mildew, and bacteria cannot live without moisture.

Soap. Regular cleaning with plain soap, or an antibacterial soap, and hot water will remove some bacteria.

Borax. Mix 1/2 cup Borax into 1 gallon hot water and clean with this solution. To inhibit mildew do not rinse off the borax solution.

Isopropyl Alcohol. This is an excellent disinfectant. Sponge and allow to dry (it must dry to do its job). Use in a well ventilated area and wear gloves. Caution: Don't use it in the kitchen around food.

## *DRAIN CLEANERS AND OPENERS*

Prevention. To avoid clogging drains, use a drain strainer to trap food particles and hair; collect grease in cans rather than pouring it down the drain; pour a kettle of boiling water down the drain weekly to melt fat that may be building up in the drain, and put some white vinegar and baking soda down your drain weekly to break up fat and keep your drain smelling fresh.

Plunger. A time-honored drain opener is the plunger. This inexpensive tool will usually break up the clog and allow it to float away. It may take as many as ten plunges to unclog the drain.

***NOTE:*** *Do not use this method after any commercial drain opener has been used or is still present in standing water.*

Baking Soda and White Vinegar. Pour 1/2 cup of baking soda down the drain. Add 1/2 cup of white vinegar and cover the drain if possible. Let sit for 15 minutes, then pour a kettle of boiling water down the drain to flush it. If you have a garbage disposal, pour in baking soda and then rinse with water.

***NOTE:*** *Do not use this method after any commercial drain opener has been used or is still present in standing water.*

Mechanical Snake (and a Garden Hose). A flexible metal snake can be purchased or rented. It is threaded down the clogged drain and manually pushes the clog away. A garden hose turned on full power can then be used to flush the pipe clean.

## *FLOOR CLEANERS AND POLISHES*

For Vinyl Floors:

White Vinegar or Borax. A few drops in the cleaning water will help remove grease particles. Dull, greasy film on no-wax linoleum can be washed away with 1/2 cup white vinegar or 1/4 cup borax mixed into 1/2 gallon to a full gallon of water. Your floor will look sparkling clean.

Wax Remover (Club Soda). Remove wax build up by pouring a small amount of club soda on a section. Scrub this in well. Let soak in a few minutes and wipe clean.

For Linoleum:

Mild Detergent, Baby Oil, Skim Milk. Damp mop using a mild detergent and water for day to day cleaning. **Note**, following suggestions not for vinyl flooring. To preserve the linoleum floor you may wish to add a capful of baby oil to the mop water. Adding a small amount of sour or skim milk to rinse water will shine the floor without polishing.

Wax Remover (Isopropyl Alcohol). To remove old wax, mix a solution of 3 parts water to 1 part rubbing alcohol. Mop and scrub this in well and rinse thoroughly. Be sure the area is well ventilated and wear gloves.

For Wood Floors:

Vegetable Oil and White Vinegar. Mix a 1 to 1 ratio of oil and white vinegar into a solution and apply a thin coat. Rub in well.

For Brick or Stone Floors:

White Vinegar. Mix 1 cup white vinegar into a gallon of water. Scrub the floor with a brush using this solution and then rinse with clean water.

For Ceramic Tile:

White Vinegar. Mix 1/4 cup white vinegar (or more if very dirty) into 1 gallon water. This solution removes most dirt without scrubbing and does not leave a film. Washing ceramic tiles with soap does not work well in hard water areas because it leaves an insoluble film.

Club Soda. Polish your ceramic floor with club soda to make it sparkle.

Sour or Skim Milk. Rather than polishing, mix a small amount of sour or skim milk in the rinse water to make tile shine.

Murphy's Oil Soap. Use according to package directions.

## Special Problems:

Black Heel Marks. Rub the heel mark with a paste of baking soda and water. Do not use too much water or the baking soda will lose its abrasive quality.

Tar. Scrape up excess tar with the side of a dull knife, then rub vigorously with butter or margarine. Rub again with your fingernail, a Popsicle stick, or anything that will not scratch the floor. Finally, wipe up the tar with a dry cloth.

Crayon Marks. Crayon marks on the floor can be removed by rubbing them with a damp cloth containing toothpaste. Toothpaste doesn't work well on wall paper or porous surfaces.

Grease on Wood Floors. If you spill grease on a wood floor, immediately place an ice cube or very cold water on the spot. The grease will harden and can then be scrapped off with a knife, then iron a piece of cloth over the grease spot.

Grease Spots. Immediately pour salt on the grease spot to absorb grease and prevent staining.

Motor Oil. Absorb spills on garage floor or driveway with cat litter, which is made of highly absorptive bentonite clay.

## *LIME AND MINERAL DEPOSIT REMOVER*

White Vinegar and Paper Towels. Hard lime deposits around faucets can be softened for easy removal by covering the deposits with white vinegar-soaked paper towels. Leave the paper towels on for about an hour before cleaning. Leaves chrome clean and shiny.

White Vinegar. To remove deposits which may be clogging your metal shower head, combine 1/2 cup white vinegar and one quart of water in a cooking pot. Then completely submerge the shower head and boil for 15 minutes. If you have a plastic shower head, combine 1 pint white vinegar and 1 pint hot water. Completely submerge the shower head and soak for about one hour.

## *OVEN CLEANERS*

Salt. While the oven is still warm, sprinkle salt on the spill. If the spill is completely dry, wet the spill lightly with water before sprinkling on salt. When the oven cools down, scrape away the spill and wash the area clean.

Baking Soda or Borax and Steel Wool. Sprinkle water then a layer of baking soda or borax. Wear rubber gloves and rub gently with a very fine steel wool pad for tough spots. Wipe off scum with dry paper towels or a sponge. Rinse well and wipe dry. For very baked-on spots, try scrubbing with pumice (available at hardware stores). As a last resort, use a pump oven cleaner that says it contains, "No caustic fumes" and "No Lye."

Arm and Hammer Oven Cleaner. Consumers Union chemists declared this product to be non-toxic. Use according to directions.

**Prevention:** Put a sheet of aluminum foil on the floor of the oven, underneath but not touching the heating element. Although this may slightly affect the browning of the food, the foil can be easily recycled when soiled. Clean up spills as soon as they occur. Retard grease buildup in your oven by dampening your cleaning rag in white vinegar and water before wiping out your oven.

### *TOILET BOWL CLEANER*

Baking Soda and White Vinegar. Sprinkle baking soda into the bowl, then drizzle with white vinegar and scour with a toilet brush. This combination both cleans and deodorizes.

***NOTE:** If you use bleach to clean your toilet bowl, never mix bleach with white vinegar, commercial toilet bowl cleaner, or ammonia. The combination of bleach with any of these substances suggested below produces a toxic gas which can be hazardous. Never mix lye with bleach because this will cause a small explosion.*

### *TUB AND TILE CLEANERS*

Baking Soda. Sprinkle baking soda like scouring powder. Rub with a damp sponge. Rinse thoroughly. To clean grout, put 3 cups baking soda into a bucket and add 1 cup warm water. Mix into a smooth paste and scrub into grout with a sponge or toothbrush. Rinse thoroughly.

White Vinegar and Baking Soda. To remove film buildup on bathtubs, apply full-strength white vinegar to a sponge and wipe. Next, use baking soda like scouring powder. Rub with a damp sponge and rinse thoroughly with clean water.

White vinegar. White vinegar removes most dirt without scrubbing and does not leave a film. Use 1/4 cup (or more) white vinegar to 1 gallon water.

### *WINDOW AND GLASS CLEANERS*

A few tips on window washing:

- ☐ Never wash windows while the sun is shining on them because they dry too quickly and leave streaks;
- ☐ When cleaning windows use up and down strokes on one side and side to side strokes on the other side. This will allow you to tell which side requires extra polishing;
- ☐ To clean windows or mirrors to a sparkling shine, try a natural linen towel, a clean damp chamois, a squeegee, or crumpled newspaper.

White Vinegar. Wash windows or glass with a mixture of equal parts of white vinegar and warm water, and dry with a soft cloth. Leaves windows and glass streak-less. To remove stubborn hard water spots and streaks use undiluted white vinegar.

Borax. Mix 2 tablespoons of borax into 3 cups water. Apply to surface and wipe dry.

Toothpaste. To lessen scratches, stains, or discoloration, rub a little toothpaste into the scratch. Polish with a soft cloth.

## PEST CONTROL

Helpful predators around the home include frogs, spiders, ladybugs, praying mantises, and dragonflies. Keeping these beneficial creatures around can help you reduce problematic pest populations.

### ANTS:



Dish Detergent and Water Wash countertops, cabinets, and floor with equal parts liquid detergent and water to deter ant infestations. Store food in tightly sealed containers. If a line of ants is marching across the kitchen, find the point of entry and seal it. Use a silicone seal. Use petroleum jelly for a short-term fix until you have time to do a better job. Remove what the ants are eating and mop them up with soap and water.

Flour and Borax. Mix 1 cup flour and 2 cups borax in a quart jar. Punch holes in the jar lid. Sprinkle the contents around the house foundation. Keep borax out of the reach of children and pets.

### FLEAS:



Vacuum. Vacuum, remove the vacuum bag, seal it, and dispose of it immediately outside your home. Clean pet bedding at least weekly.

Plants. Spread leaves or shavings of Fennel, Rosemary, Red Cedar Shavings, Sassafras, Eucalyptus, or Pennyroyal under and around the pet's bed.

### FLIES:



**Prevention:** Keep kitchen garbage tightly closed. Dry soap or borax will act as a repellent if sprinkled into a garbage can that is clean and dry.

### MOLES:



Castor Oil and Liquid Detergent. Whip together 1 tablespoon castor oil and 2 tablespoons liquid detergent in a blender until the mixture is like shaving cream. Add 6 tablespoons water and whip again. **NOTE:** keep this mixture out of the reach of children and pets. Take a gradient sprinkling can and fill with warm water. Add 2 tablespoons of the oil mixture and stir. Sprinkle immediately over the areas of greatest mole infestation. For best results, apply after a rain or thorough watering.

### MOSQUITOES:

**Prevention:** Encourage natural predators such as dragon flies or praying mantises. Eliminate pools of stagnant water. Avoid wearing perfume, bright colors, flowery prints, and jewelry



as these items attract mosquitoes. Try using citronella candles.

### *MOTHS:*



The moths you see aren't the ones to worry about. Moths that cause damage to clothes are too small to notice. The larvae of these moths eat fabric.

**Prevention:** Store clothing in a clean condition: moth larvae especially like areas soiled with food stains.

Rosemary, Mint, Thyme, Cloves, Ginseng. Half pound rosemary, 1/2 pound mint, 1/4 pound thyme, 1/4 pound ginseng (optional), and 2 tablespoons cloves. Mix and put in cheesecloth bags and place in closets or drawers (works best if clothes are clean and drawers seal tightly).

Clothes Dryer. Kill moths eggs by putting garment in a warm dryer for 5-10 minutes.

### *ROACHES:*



**Prevention:** Close off all gaps around pipes and electric lines where roaches enter the house by using cements or screening. Caulk small cracks along baseboards, walls, cupboards, and around pipes, sinks, and bathtub fixtures. Seal food tightly. Rinse food off dishes that are left overnight and clean off counter tops. Do not leave pet food out overnight. Take out the trash frequently.

Hedge Apples.(osage orange, *maclura pomifera*) Cut hedge apples in half and place several in the basement, around in cabinets, or under the house to repel roaches.

### *SLUGS AND SNAILS:*



Natural Predators. Garter snakes, grass snakes, ground beetles, box turtles, salamanders, and ducks all feed on snails.

Beer. Set out saucers or jars full of stale beer, placed below ground level near the garden. The fermented liquid draws them and they drown.

Sourdough Starter. Mix two cups warm water and two cups flour and add one packet baking yeast. Let work until clear liquid forms. Use as beer above.

### *WEEDS*

Dandelions. Spray with undiluted vinegar. Repeat if necessary.

For further advice about home remedies, check the Springfield Library. For example, Melodie Moore's *Vim and Vinegar*, and Kathlyn Gay's *Cleaning Nature Naturally*, both of which offer many helpful suggestions. Lane County Extension Service (682-4247) has a free booklet called *A Guide to Alternatives to Pesticides*

---

**CHAPTER 7**

e

**All Seasons Maintenance  
Check List**



		Season
<b>I. ROOFS &amp; GUTTERS:</b> To prevent roof leaks, condensation, and decay problems. <i>Pages 3-4.</i>		
a.	Check for damaged, loose or missing shingles.	Spring & Fall
b.	Check for leaking, rusted, misaligned or damaged gutters, downspouts, hangers, gutter guards and strainers.	Spring & Fall
c.	Clean gutters, leaders, strainers, and drains. Be sure downspouts direct water away from foundation.	Periodically
d.	Cut back tree limbs growing on or over roof.	Fall
e.	Check antenna supports for sturdiness and possible source of leakage.	Annually
f.	Check flashings around roof stacks, vents, skylights, chimneys for sources of leakage.	Spring & Fall
g.	Check vents, louver and chimneys for birds nests, squirrels, insects.	Spring & Fall
h.	Check fascias and soffits for paint flaking, leakage and decay.	Spring
<b>II. EXTERIOR WALLS:</b> To prevent paint failure, decay, and moisture penetration problems. <i>Pages 7-9.</i>		
a.	Check painted surface for paint flaking or paint failure, including cracks, splits or peeling. Also check for mildew.	Spring
b.	Check siding, shingles and trim for damage, looseness, warping, popped nails and decay. Wash each spring.	Periodically
c.	Check exterior masonry walls for cracks, looseness, and broken or missing mortar.	Spring
d.	Check for signs of insects, such as piles of termite wings or piles of sawdust.	Spring & Fall
e.	Cut back and trim shrubbery against sidewalls.	Spring & Fall
<b>III. DOORS &amp; WINDOWS:</b> To prevent air and weather penetration problems. <i>Pages 9, 12, 14-16.</i>		
a.	Check caulking around doors, windows and window sills, corner boards, joints; re-caulk as needed. Also check for decay.	Fall
b.	Check glazing putty around windows.	Fall
c.	Check storm windows for cracked glass and a tight fit.	Fall
d.	Check screens for rust, punctures or holes.	Spring
e.	Check weather-stripping.	Fall
f.	Check for failing paint on garage doors. Check for damaged concrete at the base of the door.	Spring

	<b>Season</b>
<b>IV. PORCHES, PATIOS &amp; DECKS:</b> To prevent moisture problems. <i>Page 10.</i>	
a. Check your patio for heaving effects.	Spring
b. Check porches and decks to make sure that water beads after a rain.	Periodically
c. Check porch and decks for rotting, settling, mildew, and damage to the stairs. Also check the porch roof for leaks.	Annually
<b>V. WALKS, DRIVES &amp; STEPS:</b> To prevent problems due to moisture and use. <i>Page 11.</i>	
a. Check for cracked, chipped, sunken or heaved pavement or steps.	Periodically
b. Check for damage to mortar in brick steps.	Periodically
<b>VI. INTERIOR:</b> General house maintenance. <i>Pages 14-16.</i>	
a. Check bathroom tile joints, tub grouting and caulking. Be sure all tile joints in bathrooms are kept well sealed with tile grout to prevent damage to walls, floors and ceilings below.	Periodically
b. To prevent freezing, keep garage doors closed in winter.	Winter
c. Exposed water lines and drains should be wrapped with insulation.	Fall
d. Close crawl space vents in winter and open in summer. Open crawl space vents in summer and close in winter.	Spring & Fall
e. Check underside of roof for water stains, leaks, dampness and condensation, particularly in attics and around chimneys.	Annually
f. Check interior walls for cracks, bulges, popped nails or evidence of moisture.	Spring & Fall
g. Check to make sure that the damper of your fireplace seals tightly.	Fall
h. Check the firebox of your fireplace for broken or loose mortar. Also check the ash pit for signs of leakage.	Annually
i. To provide adequate ventilation, keep attic louvers and vents open all year round. Check louver screening.	Annually
j. Check for soft spots or sagging in floors and stairs.	Spring & Fall
<b>VII. INTERIOR: FOUNDATION &amp; MASONRY:</b> To prevent seepage and condensation. <i>Pages 5-6, 17.</i>	
a. Check basement for dampness and leakage after wet weather.	Periodically
b. Check foundation walls, retaining walls, garage floors, etc., for cracks, heaving, moisture and crumbling.	Spring
c. Check chimneys for deteriorated chimney caps, hot spots, and loose or missing mortar.	Spring & Fall

	<b>Season</b>
d. Check to make sure that water is not collecting in window wells.	Spring
e. Maintain grading sloped away from foundation walls.	Annually
<b>VIII. HEATING &amp; COOLING:</b> For comfort, efficiency, and safety. <i>Pages 20-22.</i>	
a. Change or clean furnace filters, air conditioner filters, electronic filters as needed.	Periodically
b. Check radiators for trapped air.	Periodically
c. Clean around heating equipment. Keep a three foot clear path around the perimeter of the furnace, and give radiators and heating ducts proper clearance.	Periodically
d. Check the fire box on wood burning stoves for cracks or warping. Check rope gaskets on the door, and for weakness in the chimney pipe.	Fall
e. Clean around cooling equipment, removing leaves, dust, overgrown shrubbery, debris. Make sure that the condensation drain is not plugged. <i>Be sure power is off!!</i>	Periodically
f. Cover or remove AC window unit for the winter.	Fall
<b>IX. PLUMBING:</b> For preventive maintenance. <i>Pages 23-24.</i>	
a. Check faucets and valves for leaks.	Periodically
b. Drain exterior water lines and faucets, sprinklers, and pool equipment in the fall.	Fall
c. Check for leaks at sink and house traps and sewer cleanouts.	Periodically
d. Check toilet for run-on.	Periodically
e. Treat slow-acting drains before they clog.	Periodically
<b>X. ELECTRICAL:</b> For safe electrical performance. <i>Page 24.</i>	
a. Trip circuit breakers every six months and ground fault interrupters (GFCI) monthly.	Periodically
b. Mark and label each circuit.	Always
c. Check condition of lamp cords, extension cords and plugs. Replace at first sign of wear or damage.	Periodically
d. Check exposed wiring and cable for wear or damage.	Annually
e. If fuses blow or breakers trip frequently, have a licensed electrician determine cause.	Periodically
f. If you experience slight tingling shock from handling or touching any appliance, disconnect the appliance and have it repaired. If lights flicker or dim, or if appliances go on and off unnecessarily, call a licensed electrician.	Periodically
<b>XI. ENERGY CONSERVATION:</b> To save money and promote the efficient use of natural resources. <i>Pages 31-37.</i>	
a. Weatherize your home, and consider having an energy audit done.	Fall

	<b>Season</b>
b. During the winter, set the thermostat lower during the night, close drapes and/or blinds to keep cold air out, and open to let the sun in.	Winter
c. During the summer, control heat gain, and use your air conditioner efficiently and as little as possible.	Summer
d. Buy energy efficient appliances and follow energy saving tips.	Always
<b>XII. KNOW THE LOCATION OF:</b> For safety. <i>Pages 20, 23, 24-28.</i>	
a. The main water shut-off valve. This should be opened and closed at least once a year to assure proper functioning.	Annually
b. The main electrical disconnect or breaker.	--
c. The electrical panel box for breakers or fuses. Never overfuse.	--
d. All fire extinguishers in the house.	--
e. The main emergency shut-off switch for the heating system.	--
f. Carbon Monoxide detectors and smoke alarms. Change old style smoke detector batteries every 6 months (alarm will chirp intermittently if the battery has worn out). Better yet, install newer style detectors with 10-year batteries. Test any detectors on a regular basis.	Every 6 Months





# Glossary

**Boxsill.** The exposed space between floor joists on top of the foundation wall along the exterior perimeter of the house.

**Brick Mold.** The exterior framing of the window (see picture on page 15).

**Condensing Unit.** The outdoor segment of an air conditioning unit or system. It includes a compressor and a condensing coil designed to give off heat (see picture on page 22).

**Crawl Space.** In homes that don't have a basement, this is the space between the first floor and the ground which is generally made large enough for a person to crawl in to make repairs or to install utilities.

**Damper.** A valve inside the chimney's flue that can be used to slow or stop the flow of air or smoke.

**Double-hung Window.** A type of window containing two moveable sashes which open vertically (see picture on page 15).

**Fascia Board.** Horizontal trim attached to the outside ends of rafters or to the top of an exterior wall.

**Firebox.** The place for the fire in the fireplace.

**Flashing.** Metal or composition strips used to seal junctions between roofing or other surfaces. Also used in valleys of the roof (see picture on page 16).

**Flue.** A pipe or other channel that carries off smoke and combustion gases to the outside air.

**Granules.** Natural or artificially colored particles of silicious material used on roofing.

**Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI).** An electrical safety device that instantly shuts down a circuit if leakage of current occurs. Most common for bathroom and outdoor circuits (see picture on page 25).

**Heat Loss.** Heat escaping from the home.

**Plumber's Snake.** A metal housing with a handle that holds a flexible metal cable made to travel through pipes to clear an obstruction.

**Radiator Key.** The device used to open the radiator valve.

**Ridge Shingles.** The roofing shingles which run along the ridge of the roof.

**Riser.** The vertical, up and down board under the front edge of the tread in the stairs (see picture on page 11).

**Sash.** The openable part of a window (see picture on page 15).

**Sheathing.** The first covering on a roof or exterior wall, usually fastened directly to rafters or studs (see picture on page 6).

**Soffits.** The covering attached to the underside of the roof's overhang.

**Tread.** The flat, horizontal surface of a step (see picture on page 11).

**Tuck pointing.** To fill in with fresh mortar the cut-out or defective mortar joints in old masonry.

**Valleys.** The intersection of two roof slopes.



## References

- Autry, James A. *Better Homes and Gardens Complete Guide to Home Repair, Maintenance & Improvements*. 1980. Des Moines, I.A. Meredith Corporation.
- Best, Don. *The Do-It-Yourself Guide to Home Emergencies*. 1996. Emmaus, P.A.: Rodale Press Inc.
- Complete Do-It-Yourself Manual*. 1973. Pleasantville, N.Y.: The Reader's Digest Association.
- Construction Dictionary*. 1987. Phoenix, AZ: Greater Phoenix, Arizona Chapter #98 of the National Association of Women in Construction.
- Energy Factsheet*. 1986. Des Moines, IA: Iowa Energy Policy Council.
- Environmental Protection Agency. *Homebuyer's and Seller's Guide to Radon*. 1993. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- Environmental Protection Agency. *Reducing Radon Risks*. 1991. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- Greiner, Thomas H. *Carbon Monoxide Poisoning*. 1995. Ames, IA: Iowa State University.
- Home and Business Recycling Companion*. 1995. Cedar Rapids, IA: Bluestar Solid Waste Agency.
- Homeowner's Guide to Home Care and Maintenance*. Americus, GA: Habitat for Humanity International Affiliate Group.
- Is Your Home Lead Safe?* 1995. Des Moines, IA: Iowa Department of Public Health.
- Johnson, Bruce. *50 Simple Ways to Save Your House*. 1995. N.Y.: Ballantine Books.
- Preservation Briefs. *Roofing for Historic Buildings*. 1979. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- Proulx, Earl. *Yankee Home Hints*. 1993. Yankee Publishing Inc.
- U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. *Safety for Older Consumers*. 1996. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.

## APPENDIX

# Home Security



*This Material was provided by the City of Springfield Police Department in conjunction with the Neighborhood Watch and Lock Out Crime programs.*

***Neighborhood Watch** is the recognition and reporting of criminal activity to the police. To find out more about joining or organizing a Neighborhood Watch in your area, contact the Springfield Police Department Crime Prevention Unit at 726-3731.*

***Lock Out Crime** is a program of volunteers making homes more secure for all residents of Springfield. Free home security inspections are available and installation of hardware, engraving*

*of valued property, and pruning of obstructing shrubs is free. The project also offers free or discounted home security hardware based on ability to pay. For more information about Lock Out Crime call 726-2324.*