

Fall Home Maintenance Checklist

SEASONAL GUIDE

7 Critical Pre-Winter Vulnerabilities to Address Before the Deep Freeze

Homeowner Name: _____ Date Completed: _____ Inspector Contact: _____

1. ROOF & GUTTERS

- ☐ **Clear Leaves & Debris:** Clean gutters to prevent ice dams.
- ☐ **Inspect Roof Flashing:** Check around chimneys & vents for gaps.
- ☐ **Extend Downspouts:** Ensure discharge is 3–5 ft from foundation.

2. HEATING & HVAC (COOL TO HEAT)

- ☐ **Replace Filters Before Switch:** Swap filters before switching from cooling to heating.
- ☐ **Test the Heat Cycle:** Verify warm airflow and check thermostat operation.
- ☐ **Schedule Furnace/Fireplace Tune-Up:** Check heat exchanger & clear chimney flues.

3. AIR SEALING & INSULATION

- ☐ **Seal Drafty Windows/Doors:** Apply exterior caulk & weatherstripping.
- ☐ **Check Attic Insulation:** Ensure even depth and unblocked soffit vents.
- ☐ **Inspect Penetrations:** Seal gaps around exterior pipes & cables.

4. EXTERIOR & FOUNDATION

- ☐ **Seal Foundation Cracks:** Fill concrete gaps with masonry sealant.
- ☐ **Check Soil Grading:** Confirm ground slopes away from walls.
- ☐ **Touch Up Paint/Trim:** Seal bare wood to prevent freeze rot.

5. OUTDOOR PLUMBING

- ☐ **Disconnect Hoses:** Drain and store garden hoses before freezing.
- ☐ **Shut Off Outdoor Valves:** Drain exterior spigots/hose bibs.
- ☐ **Insulate Exposed Pipes:** Wrap foam sleeves on pipes in cold areas.

6. BASEMENT & CRAWLSPACE

- ☐ **Check Vapor Barrier:** Repair tears or gaps in soil sheeting.
- ☐ **Test Sump Pump:** Pour a bucket of water to check float & discharge line.
- ☐ **Verify Vents & Drains:** Ensure crawlspace vents are properly set.

7. FIRE SAFETY & INDOOR SAFETY CHECKS

- ☐ **Test Smoke Detectors:** Replace batteries in all units.
- ☐ **Test CO Detectors:** Critical when booting up furnace/fireplace.
- ☐ **Check Fire Extinguishers:** Verify pressure gauge is in green.
- ☐ **Inspect Dryer Vent:** Clear lint accumulation from exhaust duct.

INSPECTOR NOTE: Addressing these 7 areas during early autumn prevents up to 90% of emergency winter service calls. For complex HVAC or roof repairs, always consult a licensed contractor.