

Here is a very short list of recommended home maintenance items that all homeowners should consider and develop a schedule to perform:

1. **Drain & flush your water heater** once a year or per the manufacturer's instructions. If you don't have the instruction booklet then many can be found on-line using Google or similar search functions. Also, you can contact the manufacturer customer service number directly for instructions.
2. **Remove and clean the aerators** every few months on all of the faucets in your home. This simple task will ensure a proper and full flow of water at each faucet. Since the aerators are relatively inexpensive you can also consider simply replacing all of them for a few bucks as well.
3. **Replace or clean the filters** once a month on your heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system or follow the manufacturer's instructions.
4. **Touch up the paint** on all exterior surfaces every Spring paying special attention to hardboard siding and the lintels. Seal any holes, even nail holes, in hardboard siding before touching up with a good, high quality paint. Lintels, if present, are the horizontal, flat metal plates above windows on brick veneer or stone clad homes that support the brick weight above. Keep those painted with a good rust preventative paint like Rustoleum.
5. **Check the weatherstripping** in the Fall around all exterior doors to ensure conditioned air is kept in the home and the cold/hot exterior air is kept out.
6. **Rinse the outside A/C condensing unit** off in the Spring using the normal water pressure and a standard hose nozzle. Don't use a high pressure washer for this task. Be sure to rinse out any weeds or grass clippings that may have accumulated near the bottom of the unit in the cooling fins.
7. **Check the toilet 'flapper valves'** every 6 months to make sure they are not leaking. Carefully observe the water in the bowl a few minutes after the tank has completely filled. There should be no noticeable leakage of water along the sides of the bowl. If there is any, then consider replacing the inexpensive rubber 'flapper valve' that can be purchased at the local home maintenance store for a couple of dollars.
8. **Clean the gutters** at least once a year around the home, if present. Make sure all leaves, twigs and other debris is removed. A full, clogged gutter will result in overflow and damage to the wooden fascia boards that the gutters are attached to. Clean the gutters by hand, with a leaf blower or even a water hose and pistol-type nozzle. Be careful on that ladder though!
9. **Pour a cup of bleach in the A/C condensate drain line** every 4-6 weeks during the cooling season to help prevent any algae growth in the line. This growth will lead to a clogged line and an overflow of water onto the area surrounding the inside a/c unit and then damage to the walls and flooring. Your inside a/c evaporator coil will most likely be in a hall closet or possibly in the attic. The PVC plastic drain line will probably have a vent or other fitting to allow the pouring of the bleach into the line.
10. **Replace smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector batteries** yearly or follow the manufacturer's instructions.

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12. **Request a copy of "Manual for a Happy Home"** by Dr. Keith Swift. This very informative 72 page booklet can be obtained from Capital City Inspections at (512) 577-2579.