



Springtime Chores For A Homeowner

By Walt Hibner, Executive Director
Home Builders Association of Dayton

Now that Easter has almost arrived and many consider springtime as being here, there are probably a few outside chores that you've been longing and needing to take care of on the house.

Many of these chores are nothing more than simple maintenance and they will result in added years to the life of your home. Doing the fix-up chores now will help you to live more comfortably and they could save you money on expensive repair bills later.

First, inspect for water leaks. Key areas to check include overhangs, awnings and exposed siding where snow and water might collect, causing materials to decay. Repair and replace any areas showing water damage.

Second, inspect all windows and doors for drafts and sills and doorsteps for air leaks. Caulk seams and reglaze windows if needed. Clean all windows, inside and out, and wash the screens from the storm windows. Replace any worn weather-stripping around doors. You might consider some of these winter chores, but this will help keep the air-conditioning in the house and your electric bills down.

Ready to go to the top--the roof that is. Inspect your roof from the ground. If you have any concerns with your visual inspection, hire a professional to climb up and check the condition of flashing around chimneys and vents. Now is the time to address any water-begging cracks. While up there, it may be time to clean out all gutters and downspouts, and sweep the shingles free of sticks and leaves.

From the ground level again, look at the paint on the house and the trim. Does it need to be repainted? A big job, but one that will make a big difference in the look of your home.

Be sure to inspect any stair railings, steps and the sidewalks for safety. And safety and security concerns go right to the front door. Lubricate door hinges and lock tumblers and replace any locks that are worn. Don't forget to check the doorbell too. Since security goes all around the house, be sure to check the fence and any gates as well.

Next, out to the garage. The track for the garage door may need a little lubrication. And the last little things, check the mailbox post for stability and make sure the house numbers on it are clear. Replace any house numbers that have broken or fallen from the front door area too.

Finally, review your safety plan for evacuation in case of fire, tornado, or other natural disaster. By having a plan of action that you and your family worked out when you were clear-headed, you may gain the few seconds during an emergency that can make the difference. Above all, taking the time to perform these maintenance checks will give you the peace of mind to enjoy a safe, cool and healthy summer season.

