



Chapter 8 – Service Requirements by the Calendar

Service Requirements by the Calendar

Home operation and maintenance is easy if we understand our home systems and stay organized. A home operates just like a car—with the right maintenance, you can avoid major problems and efficiently run your home for many years. The key is preventing problems or catching small problems before they become home disasters.

If you don't change the filter on the furnace on a routine basis, you can freeze up the coil, and you will come home to a very warm house. If you don't

turn off the exterior hose connection in the winter, you can come home to a flood.

This chapter provides that little bit of organization that helps us all remember to perform important preventive maintenance tasks. It offers lists of maintenance tasks to be performed on a routine basis. Refer to specific chapters in the book for detailed information on the specific tasks. Follow manufacturers' instructions for all service.

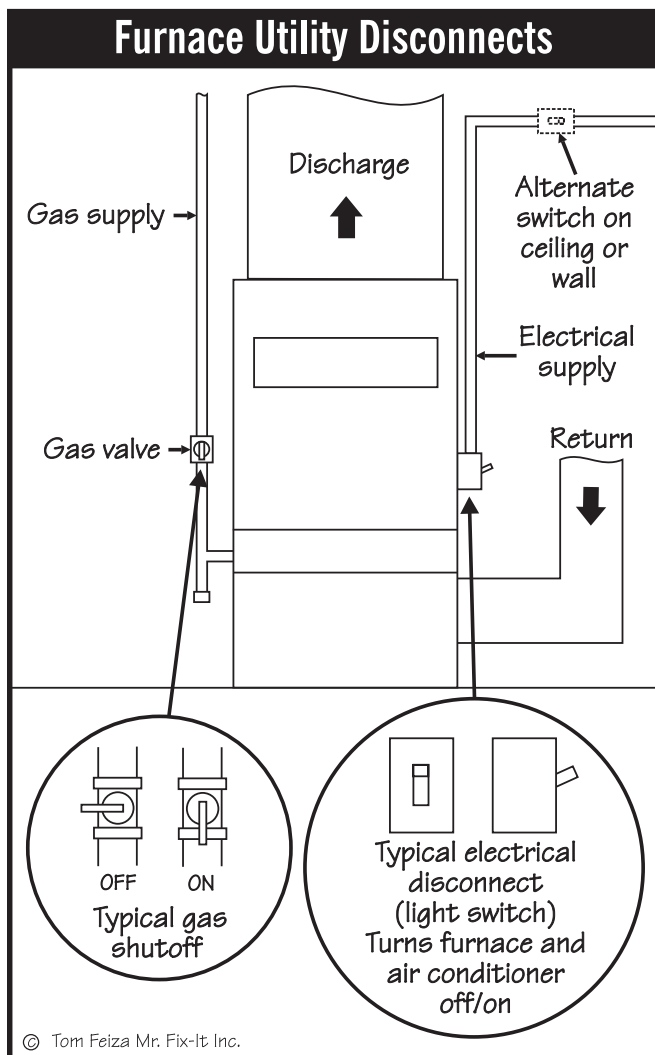
Remember, not every maintenance item will be applicable to your home or its systems. You need to do the homework here—study and understand the systems in your home.

Exercise caution before attempting inspection, maintenance or repairs. Turn off the power and disconnect other utility services. Follow any owner's manual supplied by the equipment manufacturer. If you don't understand a problem or system, consult a professional.

Daily and Weekly

Be aware of any changes or strange sounds in your home. If the automatic garage door opener is groaning, the door and track may need lubrication, or perhaps a roller is broken. If you smell sewer gas in the basement, it may be due to a dried-out floor drain trap. If the central air conditioner is squeaking, this may indicate a bad bearing on the fan motor. If a gutter is overflowing, expect water in the basement or crawl space. Just watch for changes, and address issues as they arise.

Be watchful during drastic weather changes. Weather can have a huge effect on our homes. A big snowstorm may make it necessary to clear your furnace's intake and discharge vent pipes. During periods of heavy rain, it is wise to check gutters and downspouts and make sure that the sump pump is working properly. If the furnace runs constantly or more often than you expect, check for a problem.



H008

Monthly

When these systems are in use, perform the following checks monthly.

System	Check	Condition
<input type="checkbox"/> Fire and smoke alarms	Test alarm.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fire extinguishers	Check pressure; service as needed.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Carbon monoxide alarm	Test alarm, and check reading.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Warm air heating system	Check and change or wash filter (unless it is a special type).	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Furnace, high efficiency	Check condensate drain to make sure it is clear and draining.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Gas heat, water heater	Check flue pipe (smoke pipe) to chimney for rust or other damage.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Air conditioning	Check and change or wash filter (unless it is a special type); check condensate drain to make sure it is clear and draining.	_____ _____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Heat pump	Check and change or wash filter (unless it is a special type).	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Steam heating system	Check water level. Service as needed.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Shower and tub drains	Clear out hair and other debris.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> GFCI	Test GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter) outlets and breakers.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Plumbing	Check for any leaks at fixtures, traps and piping.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Water softener	Check salt supply.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Clothes dryer	Clean lint from filter (after every use) and check duct for lint.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Garage door operator	Test auto-reverse safety feature.	_____

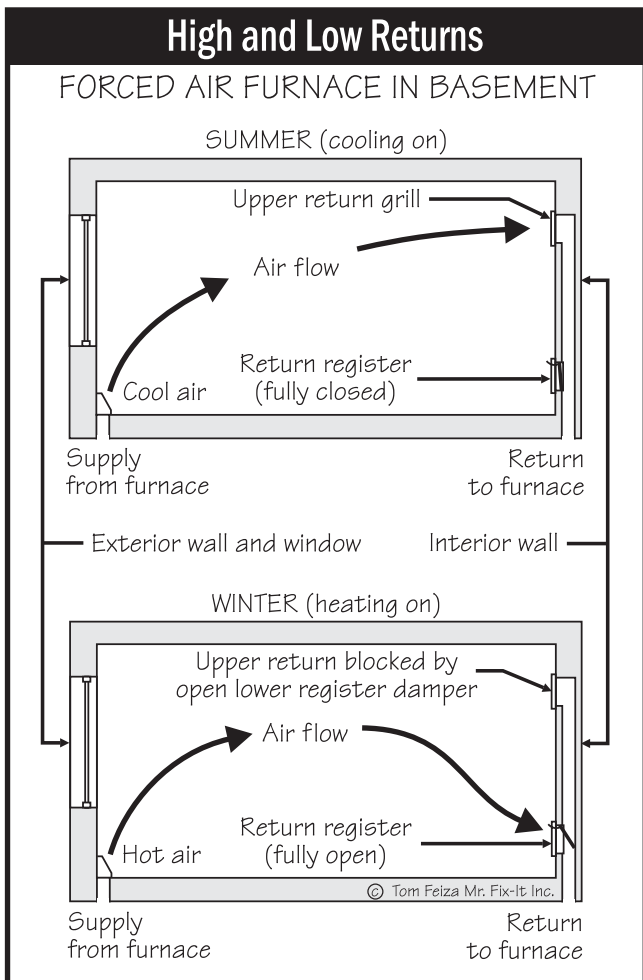
Chapter 8 – Service Requirements by the Calendar

Spring

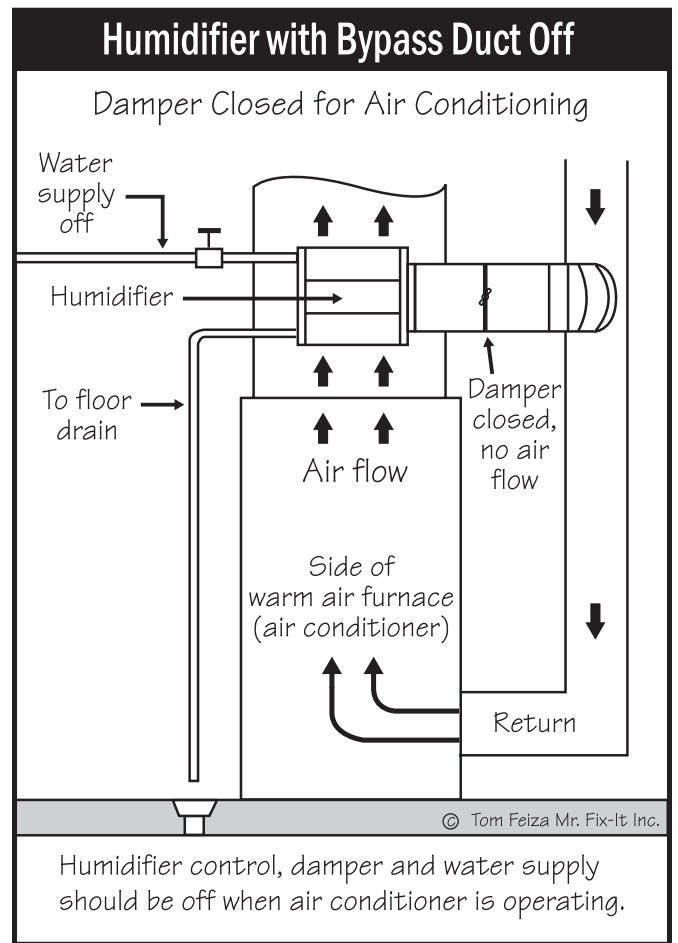
System	Check	Condition
<input type="checkbox"/> Air conditioning	Schedule professional service. Check that the unit is level and clean and has proper clearance. Adjust main duct dampers if needed.	_____ _____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Humidifier	Turn off unit and water supply. Switch humidifier's duct damper from winter to summer setting as needed.	_____ _____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Duct dampers	Adjust dampers for a switch from heating to cooling if necessary.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> High and low returns	Open high returns and close low returns for cooling season.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Whole house fan	Check belt; lubricate and clean.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Gutters, downspouts	Clean gutters, and make sure downspouts are attached and extended.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Roof	Inspect for damage. Trim trees if needed.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Roof vents	Inspect for damage or bird nests.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Chimney	Inspect for damage to cap, flashing and masonry.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sump pump	Test sump pump to make sure it removes water from the crotch.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Exterior, general	Check condition of paint, caulk and putty.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Exterior, grounds	Check that grading of soil and hard surfaces slopes away from the basement.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Attic	Check for signs of leaks, mildew, condensation.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Basement	Check for signs of leaks, cracks, movement, rot, mildew.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Crawl space	Check for adequate ventilation to remove excess moisture.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Dehumidifier	Clean; start operation in basement as needed.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Plumbing	Open outside hose connection shutoff.	_____

Spring (continued)

System	Check	Condition
<input type="checkbox"/> Clothes dryer	Clean lint from duct and from unit per manufacturer's instructions.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Refrigerator	Clean coil, clean drain pan, and check drain.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Range hood	Clean filter, wash fan blades.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Bathroom exhaust fans	Clean grill and fan.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Bathroom tile	Check grout, caulk and tile for damage.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Water heater	Draw sediment from tank as needed.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sprinklers, irrigation	Service and start system.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Decks	Clean and seal as needed.	_____



H019

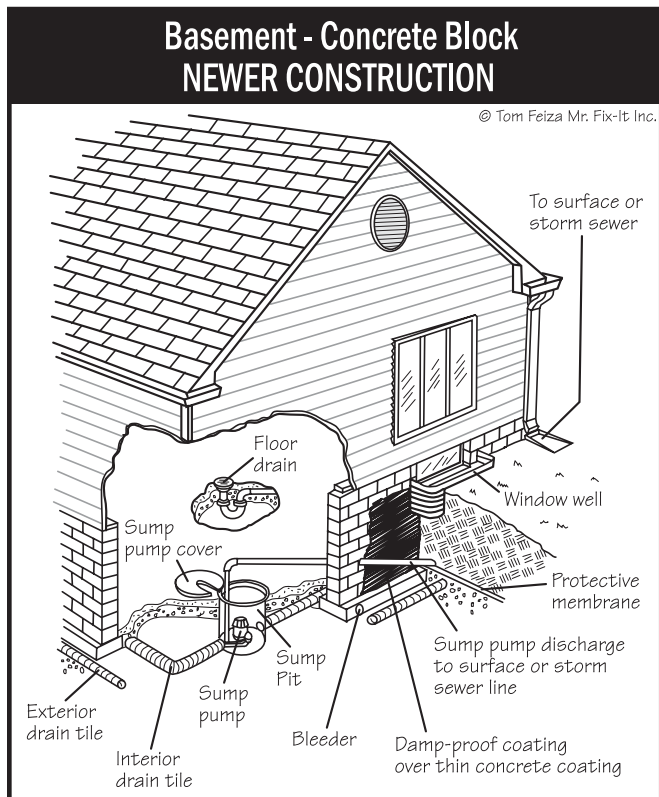


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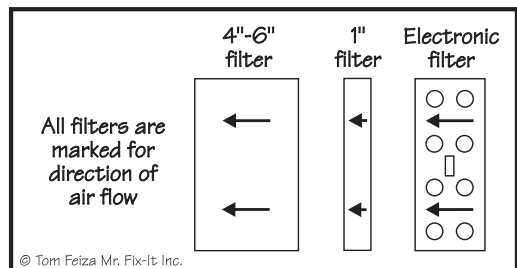
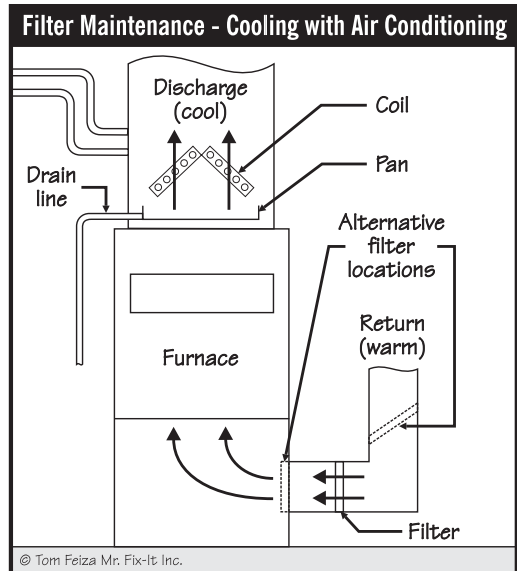
Chapter 8 – Service Requirements by the Calendar

Summer

System	Check	Condition
<input type="checkbox"/> Air conditioner	Keep bushes and plant material clear of unit. Maintain air conditioner's filter on furnace. Keep drain lines clear.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Gutters, downspouts	Clean gutters, and make sure downspouts are attached and extended.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sump pump	Test sump pump to make sure it removes water from the crock.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Exterior	Complete any major paint, putty, wood repair and caulking projects.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fireplace	Schedule professional cleaning and service as needed.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood stoves	Schedule professional cleaning and service.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Chimney and roof	Schedule professional service as needed.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Exterior metal	Check metal railings. Paint as needed.	_____



B005



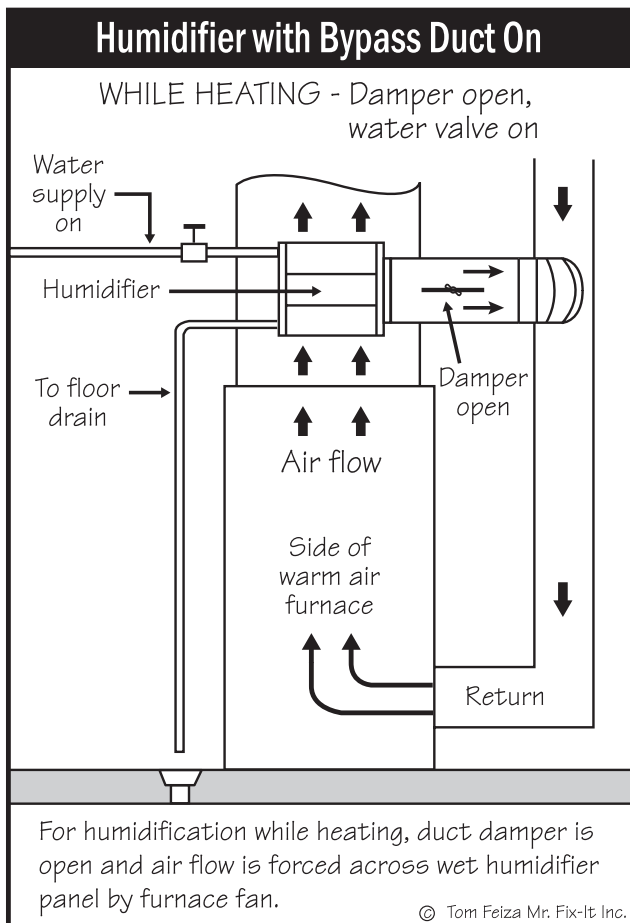
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Fall

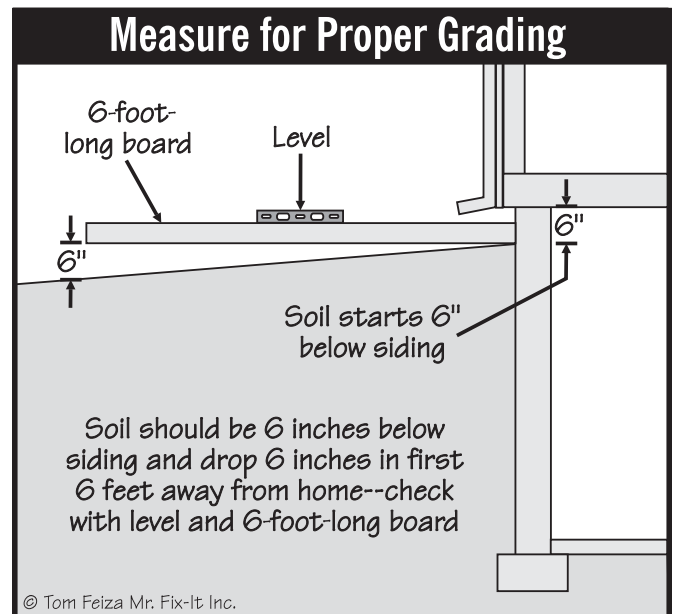
System	Check	Condition
<input type="checkbox"/> Air conditioning	Cover top of unit if desired at end of cooling season.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Heating	Schedule professional service; lubricate fan, motor, and pumps.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Oil heat	Arrange for maintenance and oil delivery.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Water heater	Service gas and oil water heaters. Draw sediment from tank as needed. Check for carbon monoxide.	_____ _____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Humidifier	Service, clean, and change water panel as needed. Switch duct damper as needed from summer to winter setting.	_____ _____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Duct dampers	Adjust dampers for the switch from cooling to heating if necessary.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> High and low returns	Open low returns and close high returns for heating season.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Gutters, downspouts	Clean gutters, and make sure downspouts are attached and extended.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Roof	Inspect for damage; trim trees as needed.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Roof vents	Inspect for damage or bird nests.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Chimney	Inspect for damage to cap, flashing and masonry.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sump pump	Test sump pump to make sure it removes water from the crotch.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Exterior, general	Check condition of paint, caulk and putty.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Weatherstripping	Check and repair weatherstripping on windows and doors.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Exterior, grounds	Check that grading of soil and hard surfaces slopes away from basement.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Basement	Check for any signs of leaks, cracks, movement, rot, mildew.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Crawl space	Check for adequate ventilation to remove excess moisture.	_____ _____

Fall (continued)

System	Check	Condition
<input type="checkbox"/> Plumbing	Close outside hose connection shutoff.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Clothes dryer	Clean lint from duct and unit per manufacturer's instructions.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Bathroom tile	Check grout, caulk and tile for damage.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Garage door	Tighten all hardware, and lubricate moving parts.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fireplace	Check flue, damper, firebox.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sprinklers, irrigation	Drain and service system.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Room air conditioner	Remove unit, or install cover.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Swimming pool	Service and close.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Hoses	Remove from hose bibs; drain to prevent freezing.	_____



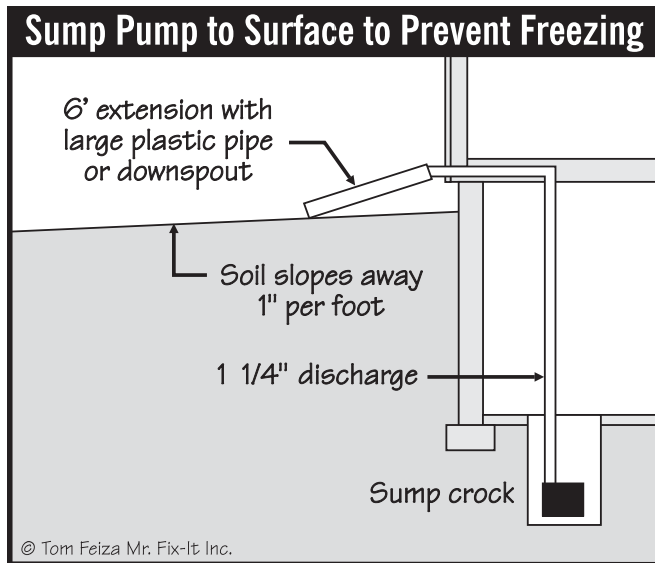
H032



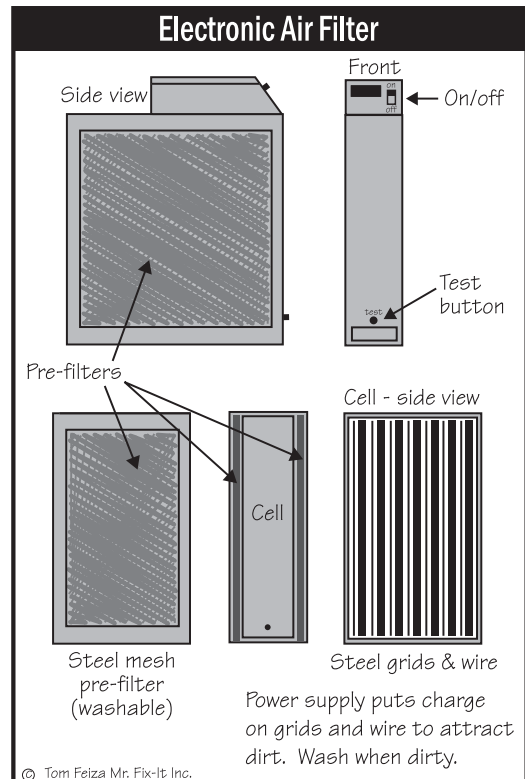
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Winter

System	Check	Condition/Date
<input type="checkbox"/> Fire and smoke alarms	Change batteries, vacuum to remove dust, and test.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Carbon monoxide alarms	Change batteries, and test.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Roof and gutters	Monitor for ice dams, and record problems for future corrective work.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sump pump	Test sump pump to make sure it removes water from the crock.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Furnace	Lubricate fan, motor, and pumps as required at mid-season.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Washing machine	Check supply hoses for damage. Clean screens in hose connections.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Doors and hardware	Lubricate hinges and moving parts.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Boiler	Lubricate pump twice per year.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Steam boiler	Check water level.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Gutters	Keep downspouts extended.	_____



B006



H029

Periodic Maintenance and Service as Needed

System	Check	Condition/Date
<input type="checkbox"/> Septic system	Schedule professional pumping and inspection at least every 2 years.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Water softener	Clean brine tank and screens or filters as needed.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Well system	Test water for bacteria and other contaminants. Check pressure tank operation.	_____ _____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fire and smoke alarms	Replace alarms every 10 years.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fireplace	Schedule cleaning and inspection as needed, depending on use.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Water filters	Replace as needed.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Water treatment units	Replace and service as needed.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Electric baseboard	Vacuum and clean based on usage.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Gas appliances	Check flexible gas connectors for stove, dryer, etc., yearly.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Range hood	Clean filter and fan.	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Shutoffs	Periodically review all utility disconnects with your family.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Termites and other pests	Schedule professional inspections and service as needed.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Electrical	Eliminate extension cords. Check for damaged cords, plugs or outlets.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Water heater	Test temperature and pressure relief valve. Replace leaking valves.	_____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Plumbing	Test main water shutoff. If it is hard to operate, call a plumber.	_____ _____