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## Maintenance inspections

Need help identifying your home's problem areas?

Call Carson Inspection Service at 503-312-2105 to learn more and schedule a maintenance inspection.

## Calendar

**Sept 26th, Oct 24th, and Nov 28th, 6:30 pm** — American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI) Meeting at Buster's BBQ in Tigard.

**Sept 25-27th** — Inspection Training Associates, Inspection Expo, Las Vegas, NV.

**Sept 13, 20th, Oct 4, 11, 18th, and Nov 1, 8, 15th, 6-7pm** — Free Home Buyer Orientation Class, Portland Housing Center, 3233 NE Sandy.

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## Seasonal Maintenance — Fall and Winter

It's that time of year when the days get shorter, children head back to school, football games fill every hour of every weekend, and the long warm days give way to long blustery nights. As we pull out our rain coats and waterproof shoes, it's a good time to remember that our houses also need seasonal care to protect them from the cold, wet winter to come. A house that is properly prepared for fall and winter will be more energy efficient and will emerge in the spring in better condition and needing fewer repairs.

- **Central heating** — Regardless of whether it's gas or oil-fired, it's a good idea to have your furnace professionally serviced and cleaned, including lubricating motors and pumps, ensuring proper drafting of combustion gases, and replacing or cleaning air filters. Ducts should be cleaned and dampers adjusted to deliver additional warm air to the lowest points in the house. Be sure to order fuel for oil furnaces.
- **Electric wall heaters** — The fan and elements on electric wall heaters should be cleaned with a blast of compressed air, and make sure you do not have recalled models (see [www.cadetco.com](http://www.cadetco.com) for more info.). Baseboard heaters should be cleaned (dusted) and tested to ensure they heat up.
- **Air conditioning** — It's easy to forget, but this is an important time to care for your AC. The external compressor for central AC should be covered with a tarp to keep debris from getting inside and the electricity to the unit should be shut-off. Remove all window mounted AC units and store them in a dry, level location.
- **Gutters and downspouts** — Clean your gutters and make sure all downspouts are intact and direct water into rain drains. If needed, use splash blocks to direct water to a location at least 2 feet away from the

foundation where the ground slopes away from the house.

- **Chimney and roof** — Visually inspect the chimney and roof for any damage. Trim any trees that come within 1 foot of the roof or chimney. Have the flue professionally inspected and swept for all wood burning fireplaces and woodstoves.
- **Weatherizing** — Check and repair the weather stripping on doors and windows. Clean and install storm windows if present. Avoid freeze damage by draining and/or insulating all hose bibs and sprinkler systems. Remove hoses from hose bibs.
- **Crawl space ventilation** — In most areas of Oregon the winters are mild yet damp. Therefore, all crawl space vents should remain open throughout the winter to reduce moisture in the crawl space. For houses located in the mountains or east or the Cascades, where the weather is colder and drier, closing the vents is advisable to avoid frozen pipe damage.
- **Dryer vent** — Clean the dryer vent to ensure that the warm, moist air is exhausted outside of the home.
- **Sump pump** — If a sump-pump is present in the basement or crawl space, test to make sure it removes water from the sump.
- **Exterior** — Look for cracked or chipped paint, missing caulking, or areas of bare wood that might allow water to penetrate the structure. Caulk and touch-up paint the exterior as needed.
- **Smoke detectors** — test each smoke detector and replace the batteries.

Whether you choose to do the work yourself or hire a contractor, this list is the first step to get ready your home for fall and winter. You'll be able to enjoy winter in a warm and comfortable house that will sparkle come spring.