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3500 Lorain Avenue ♦ Suite 200 ♦ Cleveland, OH 44113
Phone: 1-888-961-NARI (6274) ♦ (216) 631-7764 ♦ Fax: (216) 961-6974
Website: www.NARICleveland.com ♦ Email: info@NARICleveland.com

Spring Home Maintenance Tips

Spring has sprung. While you're banishing the cobwebs during your annual spring cleaning, take some time to give your home a thorough inspection. A few simple maintenance maneuvers will ensure that your home will remain in good shape and that all systems will keep humming efficiently.

Clean your gutters. After a long winter, dirt and debris will gather in the gutters. Clean them out and ensure that they are still in good repair. Direct the downspouts away from your foundation. If the ground closest to the house along the foundation puddles water from the downspout, add extenders to direct the water further away from the house so that the water doesn't cause damage.

Inspect your roof. If you can't remember the last time you had a roof inspection, it's probably time to call in a professional to take care of any repairs. Check for loose shingles or damage, and have them fixed before leaks happen. If you had issues with roof dams or heavy snow accumulation on the roof during winter, you might see damage to the lowest few feet of your roof. Ice and water can seep under the flashing, wreaking havoc on insulation and the roof deck below.

Check your foundation, basement and crawlspace. Before those spring rains hit, check the foundation around your house for cracks or imperfections. Seal them or call in a contractor if necessary to keep water from seeping into your house. The same goes for walls and floors of your basement and crawlspace. Check for any signs of moisture and seal as necessary. Also, keep a close eye on the sump pump. Ensure that it's working properly and get a battery backup just in case.

Maintain your A/C. Call a qualified HVAC contractor to give your air-conditioning system a once over. Doing so each year will help ensure that the system is running at peak performance and help to lower your energy bills. Be sure that the inspector looks at the system's condensate drain hose where sediment can build up. Use a wet-vac to suction out any blockage.

Fix the deck. If you have a wood deck, now's the time to inspect the surface for warping, loose boards and popped nails that could cause damage to treading feet. If you have stains or discolorations, you should reseal the deck so that it is protected against heavy spring and summer rains.

Clean the water heater. The average lifespan of a water heater is eight to 12 years. If yours is more than five years old, you should check around the base for any leakage or rust. If you find some, replace the heater. For areas with hard water, you may be required to drain the water heater to eliminate sediment that builds up in the tank.