

FALL HOME & GARDEN | SEASONAL MAINTENANCE

Prepare Your Home for Winter

It's easy to remember to update your exterior paint job, refinish your deck or prepare your garden for the winter season. That's because we see those parts of our homes and yards on a daily basis. Not so for our hidden basements and crawlspaces.

Making some winter preparation updates to these under-appreciated portions of your home before cold weather hits can be one of the smartest moves you make this fall.

WHY PREP?

It's easy to overlook your basement and crawlspace, but doing so can put some of the most vital parts of your home's infrastructure at risk. Even if your basement is unfinished, it deserves your attention this fall to make sure everything is up to speed for the cold air that will soon be trying to infiltrate your home through any cracks in the foundation or drafty airways in your crawlspace.

VULNERABLE SYSTEMS

Basements and crawlspaces contain parts of the plumbing, electrical, heating and drainage systems. These systems are the life force of your home, and lack of proper maintenance could make for a miserable winter season.

All of them are vulnerable to winter's wrath, so giving them some preventive attention could pay off in the long run. Cold and moisture can cause havoc in your heating systems.

Moisture can wreck the integrity of electrical wires and cords.

Your plumbing pipes should be wrapped to prevent freezing, and any outside pipes should be drained of water and shut off for the winter. Hopefully, the walls of your basement are insulated. Caulk and seal your basement windows and doors for added pipe protection.

DIY TIPS & EXPERT HELP

Once a season, it's a good idea to survey your crawlspace for any leaks or compromised sections. Look at the small window airways to make sure they are closed and ready to take on the blustery winds of winter. Fix any leaking pipes to avoid them freezing in the cold.

Of course, it's always a good idea to get your local experts involved in preparing your home for the winter. Sign up for your local heating and air company's inspection program to get your systems checked at reduced costs. Your local professional can inspect, clean and replace any problem elements in your heating system, leaving you feeling warm and toasty as winter approaches.

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