



Since 1990

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These suggestions are a reminder to the home owner to ensure that the maintenance is done on a regular basis.

Some maintenance requires special skills, tools and equipment.

If you are not familiar with the work involved, we recommend that it be done professionally.

*Serving Buyers & Sellers Since 1990*

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**White Glove Building Inspections, Inc.**



# Maintenance Manual

## Safety Equipment

What to Do	When	What to Do	When
<b>Fire Extinguisher</b>		<b>Smoke Alarms</b>	
Check indicator on pressure gauge to be sure that extinguisher is charged. Be sure lock pin is firmly in place and intact. Check discharge nozzle to be sure it's not clogged. Keep extinguisher clean and check for dents, scratches and corrosion. Do not test by partially discharging extinguisher. Loss of pressure will occur.	At least once a month ( <i>more often if exposed to weather</i> ).	Firmly press test button (should sound an alarm).	Once a week.
Discard contents and have a professional refill unit.	At least once every six years.	Test with smoke source (lit cigarette or cotton cord) held 3 inches away from unit. To reduce alarm time during test, blow into unit to clear away smoke.	Once a month.
<b>Carbon Monoxide Detectors</b>		To clean, remove cover by pulling steadily downward. Remove power cell. Vacuum any accumulated dust from sensing chamber openings. Wash cover with soap and water. Let dry. Replace. Depress test switch.	Once a year or more.
Make sure that your carbon monoxide detector is located within 15 feet of every room used for sleeping purposes. You may need more than one.	Replace batteries twice a year. Perform self-test by pressing test button, and/or follow manufacturers instructions.	Replace batteries (often 9-volt). Use only batteries specified by manufacturer. Use of a different battery may prevent alarm from working.	Two times a year, when you change your clock or when built-in indicator sounds "low-current warning".
The law allows three different types of alarms: battery-powered, plug-in style (with battery back-up or wired into the AC power line with secondary batter back-up.			

## Heating System

What To Do	When
<b>Forced Hot Air Filter(s)</b>	
Check for dust and dirt to keep air flowing freely and to prevent airborne dirt from circulating throughout house. - If metal, remove and hose off or scrub.	Once a month during heating season.
- If disposable, replace.	Every two months during heating season.
To clean an electronic air filter, remove outer screen and inner collector plates. Wash screen in mild detergent. Water, hose off, or rinse thoroughly. Clean plates with a solution of automatic-dishwater soap and water.	Every two or three months.
<b>Blower (Motor and fan)</b>	
Lubricate with one or two drops 20-weight oil. (Do not over-oil). Vacuum air slots and fan blades.	Once a year.
Inspect fan belt for frayed or worn spots and check tension (should "give" about 1/4 inch). Keep a spare belt on hand.	Twice a year.
<b>Heat-Exchange Area and Exhaust</b>	
<b>OIL FURNACE</b> —Check inside of firebox for soot, debris, and corrosion. (Access through furnace exhaust or inspection door above burner.) Scrub with wire brush, and vacuum out soot (clean carefully, soot acts as insulation and decreases heat transfer to house).	Once a year, at beginning of heating season.
<b>OIL FURNACE</b> —Remove breeching (pipe connecting furnace to chimney). Scrub with a wire brush and vacuum.	Once a year at beginning of heating season. ( <i>Twice during heating season if you have a dual-fuel furnace</i> ).
Check barometric damper ("swinging door" in breeching.) Clean pivots with wire brush, and oil with one drop of 20-weight oil. Clean flue damper (in flue pipe) and oil damper bearings. Remove stack controller (in upper part of furnace or in exhaust breeching). Clean with a soft brush.	Once a year, at beginning of heating season.
<b>GAS FURNACE</b> —Check flame color (should be blue, with little or no yellow).	Once a year at beginning of heating season.
<b>GAS FURNACE</b> —Call service person for professional service. Check burners and heat-exchange areas for soot, debris, and corrosion. Clean as per oil-fired heating system. Check air intakes to be sure they are unobstructed.	Yearly.
<b>Humidifier</b>	
Drain. Clean water pan. Work float arm back and forth to dislodge obstructions. To clean water inlet of mineral buildup, ream with a piece of wire or bent clothes hanger. Lubricate motor with a drop or two of 20-weight oil. Be sure there's water in the reserve tank ( <i>sometimes on machine, sometimes located in attic</i> ).	Once a year, at beginning of heating season.
Inspect plates or pads, and clean with a strong laundry detergent. Rinse. Scrape mineral deposits with a wire brush or steel wool. See Humidifier, under <i>Appliances Continued</i> .	At beginning of season, then once a month in hard-water areas and three times a year in soft-water areas.

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## Heating System

What to Do	When	What to Do	When	
<b>Boiler</b>				
Clean soot from interior with wire brush.	Once a year.	<b>Electric</b>		
		Vacuum baseboard elements.	Once a month.	
<b>Thermostats</b>				
Remove cover and dust components carefully with a soft brush. To clean oil from metal contacts, slide a piece of white paper several times between two closed switch contacts.	Once a year.	<b>Expansion Tank (above boiler)</b>		
		To drain older models ( <i>unnecessary on newer ones</i> ) close input valve at top; open drain at bottom. Drain. Close valve and reopen inlet.	Once a year, before heating season.	
<b>Fireplace Wood Burning</b>				
Check damper to be sure it operates and closes fully.	Before first use each fall or once a year.	<b>Heat Pump</b>		
Remove ashes from cleanout pit at bottom of chimney ( <i>if it has one</i> ). Check iron grates for stability.		Maintain as you would a central air conditioning system. ( <i>See Cooling System.</i> )		
Clean inside and vacuum.	As needed during heating season.	<b>Woodstove</b>		
		To clean:	Before you light the first fire of the season (or three days after last fire to allow embers to cool thoroughly.)	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shovel out ashes and vacuum interior.</li> <li>Scrape interior (<i>especially nooks and crannies</i>) with wire brush.</li> <li>Check for cracks and repair with stove cement if necessary.</li> <li>Wash and rinse exterior dry. Repaint with high-temperature stove paint if necessary.</li> <li>If stove has a blower, vacuum the blower, clean or replace filters, and oil the motor.</li> </ul>		
		Clean stovepipe between stove and chimney. Check stovepipe for corrosion and holes. Replace if necessary.	At beginning of season and every two or three weeks (if stove is used heavily). Thereafter frequency will depend on how much creosote builds up, etc.	
<b>Chimney</b>				
Inspect for soot buildup.	Once a year.	<b>Forced Hot Water Circulating</b>		
Inspect for creosote build-up.	Every week at first, every month or so thereafter, depending upon how much creosote is found.	Lubricate with 20-weight oil at oil ports.	Spring and Fall.	
Clean with chimney brushes or scrapers and vacuum cleaner. (Chemical cleaners do not replace mechanical cleaning.)	At least monthly during heating season, but before build-up reaches 1/4 inch thickness.	Bleed air from radiators. (Open valves while water is circulating. Close when water begins to trickle out.)	Once a month during heating season, or until experience tells you which radiators collect air and which ones stay full of water.	
Inspect outside of chimney for loose bricks or stones and deteriorating joints. Repair if necessary. Check for worn flue liner or joints, and for bird nests or other obstructions.	Beginning of heating season.			
<b>Oil Burner</b>				
Clean oil-filter housing and replace cartridge. ( <i>Close stop valve between filter and oil tank, dismantle filter, clean bowl, replace cartridge and gasket if necessary. Reinstall filter.</i> )	Once a year.	Remove cover from convectors, and vacuum air inlets; vacuum fins.	Once a month or more.	
Clean or replace nozzle. Remove crusty deposits from tips of nozzle and be sure ignition electrodes on either side are at least 1/4 inch from oil spray.				
Have professional tune up and check efficiency, ignition system, and oil air mix of burner.				
Keep supply tank filled with oil to prevent water condensation inside tank, which could corrode tank and promote leaks.	End of heating season.			

## Miscellaneous

What to Do	When	What to Do	When
<b>Swimming Pool</b>			
Drain. Scrub and vacuum. Run filter system continuously for five days. Clean drains.	At beginning of season.	<b>Sump Pump</b>	
Check pool lights and area wiring for frayed spots or other needed repairs.		Check screen for debris or dirt and clean if necessary.	Before flood season and then periodically.
Take sample of pool water to supply store to test for pH tolerance.	When pool is filled.	Clean impeller.	As needed.
Test pH, chemical and chlorine levels with test kit (available at supply store) unless pool is equipped with automatic chemical dispenser.	Daily when pool is in use, every other day when not in use.	To check switch operation, submerge pump into bucket of water or pour two buckets of water into pit (float should rise as water accumulates).	Before flood season and then every three months.
Dose with 1 pound calcium hypochloride per 10,000 gallons water. (Check with your professional pool consultant prior.)	Once a week (less often if pool is not frequently used).	<b>Gutters &amp; Downspouts</b>	
Back-wash or hose down filters. Vacuum or sweep sides and bottom with pool cleaning equipment.	Once a week (less often if pool is not frequently used).	Remove accumulated debris (use wire snake for elbows.) Check alignment to be sure rainwater is collected properly and drained away from house.	Spring and Fall
Cover with insulated cover.	When not in use.	Tighten any loose mountings. Spot-paint worn areas. Repair or caulk holes. Replace any sections that have holes or excessive rust.	
Replace vinyl liner, if vinyl-lined.	Every 10 years.		
Heaters (Gas, Electric, Propane)	Twice per year.	<b>Storm windows</b>	
		Check latches and pivots for loose connections or signs of water. Have worn or loose parts replaced if necessary.	Spring and Fall
		Check to make sure "weep holes" at bottom of metal windows are unobstructed.	
<b>Roofs &amp; Gutters</b>			
To prevent roof leaks, condensation, seepage and decay problems.	Periodically	Spring	Fall
Check for damaged loose or missing shingles, blisters (especially after strong windstorms)		➤	➤
Check for leaking misaligned or damaged gutters, downspouts (leaders), hangers (straps), gutter		➤	➤
Clean gutters, leaders, strainers, window wells, drains. Be sure downspouts direct water away	➤		
Cut back tree limbs growing on or over roof.			➤
Check antenna support for sturdiness and possible source leakage.			➤
Check flashings around roof stacks, vents, skylights, chimneys, as sources of leakage.		➤	➤
<b>Attic Insulation</b>			
<b>WARNING</b>			
Some cellulose type insulants are treated with flame retardants that may become corrosive in a moist atmosphere. The combination of cellulose insulation and webbed trusses (the chords are often held together with metal plates that can corrode) and rising moisture vapor from living spaces is potentially destructive in the long run. Some wool type insulation may contain <b>ASBESTOS</b> , it takes a laboratory analysis to be sure. Overlaying the mineral wool insulation is an accepted way of enclosing this material.			

**Did You Know?** Dust in ducts, on radiators, convectors, and baseboard heating units acts as insulation and wastes heat? **Vacuum regularly.**



## Cooling System

What to Do	When
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Air Conditioning	
<p><b>CENTRAL UNIT:</b> Clean or replace filter (<i>usually located in furnace or behind return air grill</i>). Remove debris around compressor (located in outdoor cabinet) and trim any nearby shrubbery.</p> <p>In humid areas, the condensate may be quite cold such that the drain pipe removing it will "sweat" when air around it condenses on it. These pipes should be insulated in humid areas where sweating is a problem. Condensate drains that empty near the ground outside the house will frequently become blocked and spill water inside the house. Flush evaporator drain line.</p>	Before cooking season and periodically throughout season.
<p><b>ROOM UNIT:</b> Clean filter (located behind air-intake grille on front).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wash in mild detergent and water, rinse and dry thoroughly (if permanent)</li> <li>If disposable, replace.</li> </ul>	Once a month during periods of heavy use.
<p><b>ROOM UNIT:</b> Remove unit from wall and clean entire compartment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vacuum dust and lint from condenser and evaporator.</li> <li>Wipe dirt and grime from compressor, tubing, motor and blades with soap and water.</li> <li>Clean leaves and debris from outside.</li> <li>Straighten any bent metal fins.</li> <li>Scrape off any rust, reprime and paint.</li> <li>Vacuum outer cabinet.</li> </ul>	Once a year.
<p><b>ROOM UNIT:</b> Cover with insulated dust and moisture-proof cover, inside and out, or remove unit from wall and seal opening.</p>	Before winter months.

Whole-House Fan	
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<p>Dislodge leaves and debris from louver and louver pivots. Clean fan blades. Lubricate motor and pulley bearings with drop of oil on each pivot and oil port. Check drive belt and replace if sides are glazed, smooth and slippery. Check tension (should deflect 1/2 when pressed in middle). Replace belt if necessary.</p>	Beginning of cooling season.
<p>Seal of with airtight cover and insulate.</p>	Beginning of heating season.

## Electric System

What to Do	When
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Circuit-Breaker Box	
<p>Check that breakers are marked to correspond to rooms or appliances they service. (To check, turn on all appliances and lights, then switch off breakers one at a time.)</p>	When you first move in ( <i>or now, if you've never done it</i> ).
<p>Trip circuit breakers.</p>	Every 6 months.
<p>Trip Ground Fault Interrupters (G.F.I.).</p>	Monthly.

  

Fusebox	
<p>Check to be sure fuses are correctly marked for rooms or appliances they serve. (To check, turn on all appliances and lights, disconnect one at a time.)</p>	When you first move in ( <i>or now if you've never done it</i> ).
<p>Keep a supply of spare fuses on hand. Label all fuses. Overfusing can be a potential fire hazard. Make sure fuse sizes are proper.</p>	Always.

*If you experience a slight tingling shock from handling or touching any appliance, disconnect the appliance & have it repaired.*

*If lights flicker or dim, or if appliances go on and off unnecessarily, **call a licensed electrician.***

*If there are smokers in the home, change your heating / cooling air filters **monthly.***

## Plumbing System

What to Do	When	What to Do	When
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Pipes	
<p><b>YEAR-ROUND RESIDENCE</b> Drain pipes to replace air cushion. (<i>Close main shut-off valve for pump, open lowest and highest faucets.</i>)</p>	Once a year.
<p>Close shut-off valves to outside faucets and water lines, drain.</p>	Before winter, in cold climates.
<p><b>VACATION HOME:</b> Wrap pipes with heat tape and leave thermostat set at 40° F.</p>	If house is used only on weekends in winter.
<p>Drain plumbing system. (<i>Close main valve, shut off at pump, drain all lines and water storage tank, and pour non-toxic antifreeze down all sinks, traps, and toilets.</i>)</p>	If house is vacant for a month or longer in winter.
<p>Disconnect power source to pump.</p>	If house is vacant during the summer.

  

Water Holding Tank (Pressure tank, hydropneumatic tank)	
<p>Have a professional drain out water and add air in proper ratio.</p>	Once a year.
<p>Insulate tank if it sweats in warm weather.</p>	Once and done.

  

Wells	
<p>To analyze water for bacterial contamination, take water sample in sterilized bottle to a professional lab.</p>	Once a year.
<p>Professional labs can also test for radon in water.</p>	As needed.
<p>Lubricate displacement-type (piston) pump with 20-weight oil. Check belt for signs of wear and replace if necessary.</p> <p>Clean jet orifice on jet (impeller) pump. Lubricate.</p>	Once a year.

  

Water Softener (Ionization type)	
<p>Refill with salts (available from dealer).</p>	Every three to six months depending on water hardness, size of unit, etc.

Water Heater	
<p>Drain off a pail of water to draw off sediment from bottom of tank. (<i>Open draincock at bottom of tank.</i>)</p>	Once a month.
<p><b>ELECTRIC HEATER.</b> Drain tank completely to flush out scale, rust and sediment. (Attach garden hose from opened draincock to yard or cellar drain.) Remove heating elements, soak them in vinegar solution (<i>1 cup vinegar to 1 gallon water</i>) and scrape off mineral deposits. <b>Be sure to shut off power to the heater, the fuse box or circuit breaker before you begin.</b></p>	Once a year.
<p>Manually open safety valve (<i>temperature-pressure relief valve</i>) at top of tank on hot-water line to test operation, wear gloves and use a bucket to catch the water that will come out. Be sure the valve returns to its original position.</p>	Twice a year.
<p><b>GAS HEATER:</b> Shut off, then check exhaust vent and air shutter openings for dirt and obstructions. Inspect burner unit for dust and dirt. Clean burner of lint and dirt, and vacuum air passages to burner.</p>	Twice a year.

Septic System	
<p>Check sludge level in tank. (<i>Dig away ground over cover and pull up lid.</i>) Probe</p>	Once a year.
<p>Have a professional pump out tank to clean it. Use of chemical aids does not replace need to pump system regularly.</p>	Every two years.

Water Filter (point-of-service, activated carbon unit)	
<p>Replace carbon cartridge.</p>	Every 20 gallons, or once every three weeks, unless manufacturer says otherwise.

**CAUTION**  
 Before inspecting, cleaning or repairing any heating system or appliance, be sure to *disconnect it from the power source.*  
**IN ALL CASES, FOLLOW MANUFACTURER'S MAINTENANCE SPECIFICATIONS. THESE ITEMS DO NOT SUPERSEDE THEIR MAINTENANCE SPECIFICATIONS.**



## Appliances

What to Do	When	What to Do	When
<b>Refrigerator</b>			
Clean condenser coils. They are located on back or underneath with crevice or brush attachment on vacuum cleaner.	Once a month.		
To empty and clean drain pan, slide from holder and wash in detergent and warm water. Let dry and replace. <i>(Do not wash in dishwasher-may warp.)</i>	Every six months in cold weather and once a month in hot weather.		
Clear the drain hole (on bottom deck of refrigerator) with screw driver or piece of wire. Force water through with baster.	Every six months.		
Defrost freezer section (in manual or partially automatic defrost models).	When ice is thicker than ¼ inch.		
Defrost freezer section (in manual or partially automatic defrost models).	When ice is thicker than ¼ inch.		
Turn off heater switch (also called power saver, power economizer, or energy saver).	When weather is cool and dry.		
Turn on heater switch.	When weather is hot and humid.		
Replace door gasket. (To test seal, close the door on a crisp, new dollar bill in several locations. If the dollar bill can be pulled out easily, the seal probably needs to be replaced.)	Every six years, or when it wears out.		
Check temperature inside refrigerator with household thermometer. <i>(Refrigerator section should be 37° F freezer section should be 0° F.)</i>	Once a year.		
<b>Freezer</b>			
Defrost (manual-defrost models) Remove drain cover and clean defrost drain with a	When ice is ¼ inch thick.		
Wash inside with solution of baking soda and water, using a soft cloth or sponge.	<b>MANUAL:</b> after defrosting <b>AUTOMATIC:</b> every six months.		
Wash door gasket with mild soap and warm water. Rinse and dry.	Every six months.		
Vacuum coils (if exposed). Check temperature with household thermometer (should be 0-2 degrees F.)	Once a year.		
<b>Garbage Disposal</b>			
Run with cold water only <i>(to congeal and digest grease)</i>	With each use.		
Flush drain by filling sink with 3 inches of water and then running disposal.	Once a week.		
Lubricate oil ports with a drop or two of 20-weight oil.	Every six months.		
Check nuts that secure disposal; to sink and tighten, if necessary.	Once a month.		
<b>Range</b>			
Remove grease filter on underside of hood. Scrub with scrub brush and sudsy water and rinse (or run through dishwasher.) Dry thoroughly before repositioning.	Once a month.		
On gas ranges, clean dust and debris from area around pilot light and air vents.	Once a week.		
On electric ranges, clean reflector pans under burner elements.	Once a week.		
<b>Dishwasher</b>			
Clean spray arm of any clinging food particles. Check filter screen (over drain at bottom, underneath spray arm) for trapped seeds, bones or food. <i>(You may have to remove spray arm to get to screen.)</i> A clogged filter prevents efficient washing and proper filling and draining of dishwasher.	Once a week.		
Set water heater (supply) at 120° F. (Raise temperature if dishes don't come clean.) Some codes require 140° F water temperature to kill bacteria.	Before first use or if you suspect water is too hot or too cold.		
<b>Dehumidifier (room unit)</b>			
Remove cover and clean coils. Check drain hole and unclog if necessary. Lubricate motor shaft and oil parts with a few drops of 20-weight oil.	Twice a year (beginning and end of each season, or every six months if in continuous use).		

## Appliances

What to Do	When	What to Do	When
<b>Washing Machine</b>			
Remove and wash water filters in inlet hoses on back of machine. <i>(Close water faucets, pull machine away from wall, and disconnect the hoses. Have a tub ready to catch the runoff. Remove the fine-mesh screen filters located just inside the machine and on the other end of the hoses. Remove and wash the screens thoroughly and replace.)</i>	Every two months.		
Clean out the lint filter. <i>(This is often located beneath the top panel, which you'll have to pry up from the front or unscrew from the back, depending on your model. After the first time, it's easy).</i>			
To prevent a flood if the valves should fail, turn off the hot and cold water faucets to the washing machine.	When machine is not in use.		
<b>Dryer</b>			
Remove grill over burner on gas dryers and wipe away an accumulation of lint and dust.	Once a year.		
Remove exhaust hose and vent pipe and clean off lint buildup. Check vent operation.			
Move dryer and vacuum surrounding walls and floor to remove lint <i>(which is highly flammable).</i>	Twice a year.		
<p><b>Know the location of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Your local emergency number.</b></li> <li>• <b>The main water shut off valve.</b></li> <li>• <b>The main electrical disconnect or breaker.</b></li> <li>• <b>The main emergency shut off switch for the heating system.</b></li> <li>• <b>Main gas line shut off valve.</b></li> </ul>			
<b>Trash Compactor</b>			
Lift door and bin assembly off track. Wash bin with warm water and dry thoroughly to prevent odors and rust. (If bin does rust, sand and repaint it.)	Once a month.		
Lubricate bin latch with white grease (not oil). Lubricate all wheels on door and inside unit.	Periodically.		
• Use oil on wheels with ball bearings. • Use silicone lubricant on shafts of nylon wheels.			
To clean ram and rubber cover pad, pull clip in center of unit above ram. Support ram with one hand as it drops off of clip. Wash with soap and water.			
Apply white grease generously to ram driving screws at base and along threaded parts. Then put door back in, close it securely, plug in the compactor and run the ram for a cycle or two to spread the grease over the screw threads.	Once a month.		
<b>Humidifier (Room Unit) Continued</b>			
Lubricate motor (if not sealed off) with a drop or two of 20-weight oil.	Beginning of each heating season.		
To clean, allow unit to run until the reservoir is almost empty. Remove sleeve from rotating drum and wash in a solution of warm water and dishwasher liquid. Let soak for 30 minutes. If minerals have build up, add 1 cup of vinegar to each gallon of soak solution. Rinse well in clean water and shake off excess water.			
Reassemble sleeve and drum, stretching sleeve gently to obtain two closely spaced ribs of drum, snap in plastic retainer to hold filter in place.	Once a month.		
To clean roller-belt unit, lift out frame and belt as a unit and wash in hot, soapy water, or soak in a solution of 1 cup of vinegar to each gallon of sudsy water.			
Wash reservoir with mild detergent solution and plastic scouring pad and rinse. <i>(Or use disposable liners.)</i>			
To clean water pan, pull out and scrub in hot water and detergent. Remove mineral deposits with vinegar solution.			
If water is hard, add water softener <i>(available at hardware stores)</i> to reservoir water to prevent mineral buildup and to prolong life of moving parts.	When water is replaced or according to package directions.		

