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Your September Home Maintenance Checklist

by homewarranty.com

Hello, fall! Summer was everything you hoped it would be. However, those long, lazy days are growing shorter as fall arrives. To help you ensure your home is ready for the colder temps ahead, we've put together Your September Home Maintenance Checklist.

Clean out your gutters

Once most of the leaves have fallen for the season, scoop them out of your gutters and into a bucket. Cleaning your gutters prevents them from flooding or collapsing. Use a garden hose to wash the smaller debris toward the drain outlet.

Check your outdoor lighting

If you have outdoor lighting, now is the time to test it. Replace bulbs if necessary. Winter days are darker and shorter, and this is when we rely more on dependable outdoor lights. Check your front porch, back porch, garage lights and any landscape lighting you might have.

Trim trees and shrubs

Late fall is an ideal time to prune plants and trees around your home's exterior. Keep branches about three feet from your house to prevent moisture from dripping onto your roof or siding.

Aerate your soil

Grass grows slower in cool temperatures. Aerating helps your lawn by loosening the soil so it absorbs water and nutrients.

Protect your pipes

Foam or rubber pipe insulation is a great and safe way to prevent your pipes from freezing and is very easy to apply.

Seal air leaks in your windows

Replace caulking on the inside and outside of your windows and replace if necessary to keep air leaks to a minimum this winter.

Insulate your attic

Insulating your attic will help it retain the warmth generated by your heating system throughout the winter. As an added bonus, insulation will also help your energy bills stay low during colder months.

Maintain the heating system

Test your heater to make sure it's in good condition and replace the filters — dirty or clogged filters can prevent airflow.

Clean the chimney

The best time to clean your chimney is right before the temperature starts to drop.

Test smoke alarms and fire extinguishers

Make sure smoke alarms are installed on every level of your house and outside each bedroom. Test them monthly and replace the batteries once a year. Check the expiration date on your fire extinguisher and replace if needed.

Test for radon

If you haven't checked your home for radon, fall is a good time to do so — as the weather gets cooler and windows stay shut more often, radon is more likely to become trapped in your home.

Radon at high enough levels is harmful, so if you find that your home has radon hire a contractor qualified to fix radon issues.

Relax and enjoy

Now that you've completed your September Home Maintenance Checklist, kick back, relax, and enjoy the crisp days that only fall can bring.

September Calendar

September 5 - Labor Day

September 11 - Patriot Day

September 11 - Grandparent's Day

September 22 - Fall begins

September is National Rice Month

Homeowner Tip



Let Your Refrigerator Breathe

Your refrigerator has just come off a long, hot summer. Now's a great time to show it a little TLC. Keep your refrigerator's front grill free of dust to allow unobstructed airflow to the condenser for the best cooling and efficiency. Your refrigerator's condenser coils are usually located at the back of the refrigerator. Unplug your refrigerator and move it away from the wall. Using a brush or vacuum cleaner, clean off the condenser coils.

6 Great Ideas to Create Instant Autumn Curb Appeal

Whether or not your home happens to be on the market this fall, it's always nice to have it look its seasonal best. Here are six great ideas to create instant curb appeal with a perfect touch of fall.

Spruce up your lawn - Keep your lawn healthy by raking your leaves once a week.

Plant flowers - Splash color around your yard by planting vibrant flowers like Goldenrods, Asters, Heathers, or Sedums.

Add an Autumn wreath - Autumn wreaths are an instant, eye-catching addition to any front porch, with their vibrant colors and dramatic accents.

Paint the front door - Burnt orange, aubergine, and sage green are great choices this fall.

Clean the gutters - A home with clean gutters shows potential buyers that you care about your home's appearance and upkeep.

Decorate with pumpkins - Give your home the ultimate fall vibe by decorating the porch with decorative pumpkins. Carve elegant patterns and place candles inside to instantly brighten up your walkway.

Use any of these tips to let you and your home show its true colors for the changing season.



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September is National Rice Month- Celebrate with an Autumn Rice

INGREDIENTS

2 cups chicken broth (or vegetable stock)
2 tbsp unsalted butter
11 oz pre-diced butternut squash OR 1.5 cups of freshly diced squash
1 shallot finely chopped
1 tbsp fresh sage leaves finely chopped
2 tsp minced garlic
1 cup jasmine rice
1/2 cup dried sweetened cranberries
1/4 tsp salt
pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Melt butter in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Stir in squash and cook 3-4 minutes, stirring occasionally. Then, add chopped shallot and minced garlic and cook 1 minute.

Stir in rice and cook 1-2 minutes until rice is toasted.

Add chopped sage leaves, cranberries, salt and chicken stock; bring to a boil. Cover and reduce heat to low. Simmer for 18-20 minutes or until rice is tender and liquid is absorbed. Remove from heat and let stand 5 minutes. Fluff rice with fork and serve.



*Photo & recipe courtesy of:
thesouthernsource.com
Autumn Rice*