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# **Maintaining Your Home Is A Year Round Investment**

*by James R. Ziglinski, C.R.*



Last year, I recall seeing a TV commercial in which a guy was complaining about household drafts, a broken down furnace, and leaky windows. He'd say "I've gotta do something about that"...and his resolve was to take off on a South Sea island vacation during the winter, leaving his home to fend for itself. This "it only leaks when it rains" attitude is no more healthier for your home than smoking is to your personal well-being.

Next to family, your home is the largest personal investment one can make. The only proper way to protect that investment is to be ever diligent, no matter what the season or weather. When a minor repair creeps up, your best investment strategy is to attend to it as soon as possible. I can remember back in my childhood when watching the Mickey Mouse Club, Jimmy always sang a song about preventative measures called "One Stitch Saves Nine". That's always stuck with me.

People do it with their cars, changing oil and so on every three thousand miles; however, when it comes to homes and health, that attitude seems to fade.

For example, let's take that roof that only leaks when it rains. Even if you catch the water in a bucket as it comes in, the area of penetration is getting saturated. The roof boards are soaking up water like a blotter, this can lead to rot. The acids and pollutants picked up by the incoming water can stain and weaken plaster or drywall.

If the leak is resolved as soon as possible, your investment may only involve a service call and minor materials. If left unchecked, however, this minor problem may fester into a major undertaking. This could lead to involving your homeowner's insurance. You may only pay a deductible up front; however, more times than not, it may result in an increased premium or a larger deductible the next time your premiums come due.

No matter what the weather and/or season, you need to protect your environmental investment throughout the year. Periodic inspections should be made of your home and its mechanicals on a scheduled regular basis. This should start from the first day you take possession.

When I do pre-purchase home inspections, I always recommend that a number of items be resolved before a property changes hands. This will start you off with a clean slate in an existing home. Some of these items may involve having the current owner pump the septic and have it inspected, clean out and flush water softeners, hot water heaters, and so on. Have the furnace or boiler inspected and serviced.

In this manner, when you take possession of that home, it will be your clean slate to lay out your own calendar or maintenance program.

Winter is always another area where the maintenance seems to go south with the birds. The only difference between the summer and the winter maintenance people is a set of long underwear. The problems are still resolved in the same professional manner no matter what the season. It is true that each season or weather item may bring with it some safety issues that must be addressed along with the maintenance, however that is why you as a home owner need to protect your home and yourself by calling upon a professional to undertake your maintenance and repair projects when the need arises as soon as possible. That catching it when only one is needed will save you not only money in the long run by avoiding the nine; it will also give you peace of mind saving your worries for more important items such as your kids finally reaching the dating or driving age.

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We hope this information has been helpful to you! If you have any further questions, please visit our website at [www.aroundyourhouse.net](http://www.aroundyourhouse.net), or contact Jim at Around Your House.

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