

# Watch Out for Ordinary Wear and Tear

When it comes to keeping up your home's surfaces, systems and appliances, there are a number of things you can do yourself throughout the year to ensure they last as long as possible. On the other hand, some problems can become increasingly expensive to remedy or could even lead to dangerous malfunction if they are not dealt with correctly. That's why it's often worth the service fee to rely on the expertise of professionals for the following issues.



Have your furnace serviced by a heating and cooling system contractor before the onset of winter to make sure it is functioning safely and efficiently. Do the same with your air conditioning unit before the heat sets in to keep it working well.



At the end of every winter season, hire a chimneysweep to examine the fireplace and chimney, and have it cleaned or repaired as recommended.



Call on a pest inspector periodically, or whenever you suspect critters may have moved into your space, to check for signs of termites, carpenter ants, bees, fungus, dry rot, bedbugs, mice, rats, or other critters that may inhabit your area. Have any active infestations treated promptly to avoid more serious damage.



Consult a professional service person or contractor for any ongoing maintenance issue that you don't have the time, knowledge, tools or resources to deal with yourself.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

## The Cost of Deferring Maintenance

Deferring maintenance can be expensive since many minor issues have the potential to grow into major problems that can no longer be ignored. But it can really take its toll when it comes time to sell.

Homes that obviously need work turn off some potential buyers, and will prompt others to write offers well under market value. Less visible issues that are identified during a home inspection have the potential to be deal breakers if sellers don't agree to address them prior to closing. In extreme cases, lenders may also refuse to fund a loan based on the condition of a home.

Feel free to ask your real estate professional to recommend a good service provider whenever you need one.