

## SPRING & SUMMER HOME TIPS

### **SUMP PUMP**

An early winter thaw and spring rain showers will put your sump pump to the test. Be sure the sump pump is working and the drain pipe is free and clear of debris. Never plug your sump pump into a GFI protected outlet. An undetected trip can terminate power to the pump.

### **EXTERIOR INSPECTION**

Inspect the trees in your yard for winter damage. Cracked or hanging branches create a safety hazard to humans, pets and homes. Snow, ice and winter winds can damage the shingles on your roof. Do a visual inspection from the ground, then call in a professional roofer for repairs if needed. Check your exterior lighting systems for security and safety purposes. Heavy snow can damage landscape lighting fixtures and wiring.

### **WEATHER READY**

Be sure all lawn furniture, trampolines and swing sets are secured. Spring storms can bring high winds causing these items to become airborne. Have a severe weather plan in place and a power outage survival kit ready. Tornadoes often happen at night. A UL approved battery back-up weather radio is always handy when threatening weather develops.

### **FIRE HAZARDS**

Make sure when grilling out to move the grill away from the house before using it. The intense heat can start a fire or distort siding. Store gasoline and flammable liquids in approved containers in a well ventilated area. Make sure holiday celebrations with fireworks don't create a fire hazard. Never store bagged mulch against the exterior wall of your home or garage. Bagged mulch can spontaneously combust in extreme heat causing a fire.

### **AIR FLOW**

Schedule an inspection with a certified HVAC professional to ensure your air conditioning system is charged and functioning properly. Adjust the dampers in your ductwork to move the cool conditioned air to the highest level in your home. Cold air falls and this will allow your air conditioning system to run more efficiently. Adjust your ceiling fans to the forward position so that it spins counterclockwise (air flow down) to circulate cool air. Check your furnace filter more frequently in the summer. Opening the windows and doors can add to the airborne dust in your home. Your home will stay much cooler by closing the curtains or window blinds on a sunny day. The air conditioning system will operate more efficiently by maintaining the temperature inside your home.

### **HOSE BIBS & IRRIGATION SYSTEMS**

Be certain to look for leaks on the first use of the garden hose or irrigation systems. An exterior frozen water line may be hard to detect until it's too late.

### **VACATIONS**

Have the mail and newspaper delivery stopped while on vacation. Set timers on various lights in your home to go on and off at different times. Leave your window blinds open so the house looks occupied. Have a neighbor check on the house while you're out of town and that it's OK if they park a car in your driveway for visual security. Closing all interior doors while you are gone limits smoke damage in the event of a fire. Turn the water meter off and set the water heater back to vacation mode or a low setting.