

Seasonal Home Maintenance Guide

For First-Time Homeowners in Metro Milwaukee

Owning a home in southeastern Wisconsin means navigating everything from spring floods to sub-zero winters. This season-by-season guide will help you stay ahead of costly repairs and keep your home in top shape all year long.

Lucas Murphy · eXp Realty
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MARCH – MAY

Spring

Assess winter damage and prep for warmth

As the snow melts, your home reveals the wear of another Wisconsin winter. Work through this checklist before temperatures climb.

Roof and Gutters

Inspect shingles for lifting or ice dam damage. Clean gutters and downspouts of all winter debris.

Basement and Foundation

Check for moisture or water intrusion from snowmelt. Walk the foundation perimeter and flag any cracks wider than a quarter inch.

Systems and Exterior

Schedule an AC tune-up, test the sump pump, inspect weatherstripping, and service lawn equipment.

📌 **Pro tip:** Wisconsin's freeze-thaw cycle is brutal on foundations. Any new crack wider than a quarter inch deserves a call to a foundation specialist — catching it early can save thousands.

JUNE – AUGUST

Summer

Exterior projects and preventive care

Warm weather opens the window for exterior work and safety checks. Tackle these before Milwaukee's storm season peaks in July.

Fire Safety

Clean the dryer vent hose to prevent fires. Test smoke and CO detectors and replace batteries.

Exterior Upkeep

Power-wash siding, decks and walkways. Check paint for peeling, and stain or seal the deck if water no longer beads.

Yard and Storm Prep

Trim trees and shrubs. Maintain 12 inches of clearance from the house and 10 feet from the roofline.

Water Heater

Flush it to remove sediment buildup and extend its lifespan.

 **Pro tip:** Milwaukee summers bring severe thunderstorms. Trim any branches within 10 feet of your roofline or power lines before July — peak storm season.

SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER

Fall

Winterize before it's too late

Fall is your last opportunity to protect your home before temperatures plummet. Don't skip these — they save you from expensive winter emergencies.

Plumbing and Heating

- Shut off exterior hose bibs at the interior shutoff valve and drain the lines
- Disconnect and store all garden hoses
- Schedule a furnace inspection and replace the filter
- Insulate exposed pipes in the garage, basement and crawl spaces

Sealing and Yard

- Clean gutters thoroughly after the leaves have dropped
- Seal gaps around pipes, vents and utility entrances to keep mice out
- Reverse ceiling fans clockwise to push warm air down
- Aerate, overseed and apply fall fertilizer
- Stock up on ice melt, snow shovels and a roof rake

 **Pro tip:** Shut off exterior water at the interior shutoff valve, not just the outdoor spigot. Even "frost-free" hose bibs can burst if a hose is left connected.

DECEMBER – FEBRUARY

Winter

Protect your investment in the deep freeze

Wisconsin winters regularly hit ten below or colder. These tasks aren't optional — they're your defense against thousands of dollars in damage.

Ice and Snow

Use a roof rake if ice dams form. Keep gutters clear and sidewalks and driveways ice-free, per Milwaukee municipal code.

Heating System

Replace the furnace filter monthly during heavy-use season. Clear snow from the furnace exhaust and intake vents outside.

Frozen Pipes

Drip faucets on sub-zero nights and open cabinet doors under sinks. Never set the thermostat below 55 degrees when away.

Moisture and Seals

Monitor the attic for frost, a sign of poor ventilation. Watch for window condensation, which may indicate a humidity imbalance or seal failure.

 **Pro tip:** A single burst pipe can cause more than \$10,000 in damage. If you leave for vacation, never set your thermostat below 55 degrees.

Questions? I'm here to help.

Whether you're buying your first home or just moved in, I'll guide you through every step of homeownership in Metro Milwaukee.

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