

SPRING HOME MAINTENANCE

Inspect & Clean Gutters & Downspouts:

- ☐ Examine gutters and downspouts. Make sure the sections are tight and the assembly is in good repair.
- ☐ Clean leaves and other debris from inside gutters and ensure that water flows away from your home properly.
- ☐ Low areas in the yard or next to the foundation should be filled with compacted soil. Spring rains can cause yard flooding, which can lead to foundation flooding and damage. Also, when water pools in these low areas in summer, it creates a breeding ground for insects.

Service & Start Irrigation:

- ☐ Make sure in-ground sprinkler systems—are in working order.
- ☐ Once the ground thaws completely, start preparing garden beds for summer plants. And take stock of your garden tools and lawn-maintenance equipment, including lawn mowers, trimmers and hoses.

Inspect & Repair Chimney:

- ☐ Examine the exterior of the chimney for signs of damage. Have the flue cleaned and inspected by a certified chimney sweep.
- ☐ If you have a masonry chimney, check the joints between bricks or stones. Have any fallen out? Is there vegetation growing out of them? Each signals water infiltration.
- ☐ Look for efflorescence—a white calcium-like deposit that indicates your masonry joints are no longer repelling water but absorbing it, re-seal masonry with a clear, impermeable or water-resistant barrier material. Brush it on, small areas at a time; let it absorb for 15 minutes, then reapply—it may need a couple of applications.

Inspect & Repair Roof:

- ☐ From the ground, examine roof shingles to see if any were lost or damaged during winter. You don't need to climb up there yourself; with binoculars and a keen eye, you can probably spot trouble. Do you see any shingle-shift, suggesting that some fasteners may have failed and need replacing? Any cracked or missing shingles? What about nail-pops? All will need to be addressed to keep your roof at peak performance.
- ☐ Have a professional contractor check flashing around plumbing vents, skylights and chimneys.
- ☐ Flashing around plumbing vents, skylights and chimneys need to be checked and repaired by a qualified contractor.

Inspect & Repair Concrete:

- ☐ Inspect concrete slabs for signs of cracks or movement. All exterior slabs except pool decks should drain away from the home's foundation.
- ☐ Fill cracks with a concrete crack filler or silicone caulk. When weather permits, power-wash and then seal the concrete.
- ☐ Check the condition of your sidewalks, driveway and other formal paths and walkways such as wheelchair ramps. Seal concrete or blacktop as necessary to prevent cracking, buckling and other deterioration.
- ☐ Stairs and walkways are some of the most dangerous areas in and around your house. Ensure they are in good repair – without uneven surfaces, moss patches or holes.

Inspect Home's Foundation:

- ☐ Examine your home's foundation from top to bottom for masonry cracks.
- ☐ Look for cracks and discolorations that point to a water leak or moisture source. Seal and treat as necessary. Small fissures are generally normal, but large or gaping cracks signal potential foundation failure. Consult a professional if you notice any signs of structural damage to your home's foundation.

©Martin Bros. Contracting, Inc.

26262 County Road 40

Goshen, IN 46526

574-862-2142

MartinBrosContracting.com

Inspect Decks/Patios:

- ☐ Inspect your home's deck for warped, loose or splintered boards.
- ☐ Is your deck or balcony in good condition? Perform a thorough examination. Push on railings to test for stability and bounce on decking boards to determine solidity. Look for popping nails and missing boards.
- ☐ Check where the deck or balcony connects to the house to ensure the flashing is in good repair and you don't see evidence of rot or damage. Underneath try digging into the wood with a screwdriver. Soft, spongy, easily gouged wood indicates dry rot.
- ☐ Sweep the deck to remove any leaves and debris accumulated in the space between boards. Whether it's wood, plastic or composite, a deck should be cleaned every year to extend its life.
- ☐ If the finish on your wood deck is faded or worn, now is the time to clean, stain, and reseal it. If you have composite decking, follow manufacturers' recommendations on seasonal care. The same is true for wood and composite fences, pergolas, trellises and other structures.
- ☐ If you have a stone patio, a simple hose down provides all the maintenance required (unless you detect moss or staining, in which case a more serious cleaning may be necessary).

Inspect & Repair Home's Façade:

- ☐ Inspect the exterior of your home. Is any paint chipping? Is any siding damaged from winter? Are there any holes in your brick?
- ☐ Whether you have wood siding, stucco or brick, look for trouble spots, especially under eaves and near gutter downspouts. Water stains normally indicate that your gutters are not adequately containing roof runoff.
- ☐ If you have wood siding, check for openings, damaged areas or knots that have popped out, making way for carpenter ants, woodpeckers and other critters that may nest in or burrow through.
- ☐ Replace missing or damaged siding.
- ☐ Brick and masonry surfaces should also be solid, without any whitish powder (efflorescence) appearing on the surface. Freezing temperatures are particularly hard on masonry and mortar as moisture soaks in and expands. Efflorescence is a collection of soluble salts, left behind as the water evaporates. Brush the surface to remove it, and then seal the brick or masonry to prevent further problems.

©Martin Bros. Contracting, Inc.

26262 County Road 40

Goshen, IN 46526

574-862-2142

MartinBrosContracting.com

Service Central Air Conditioning System:

- ☐ Schedule a qualified heating and cooling contractor to clean and service the outside unit of the air conditioning system. Clean coils operate more efficiently, and an annual service call will keep the system working at peak performance levels. Change interior filters on a regular basis.

Service Automatic Home Standby Generator:

- ☐ Schedule a qualified contractor to clean and service the automatic home standby generator.

Inspect Windows, Doors & Screens:

- ☐ Repair/replace damaged window screens. You don't want bugs making their way in because you missed a hole in a window screen. And no, duct tape doesn't count. It can be a quick fix, but don't leave it for long. It just looks bad.
- ☐ Inspect caulking on windows and weather stripping on doors. Walk around each door and window, looking at caulking, weather stripping, thresholds and other transitions. Fix as appropriate; caulk, expanding foam insulation and weather stripping are simple to apply and save you significant heating and cooling dollars.
- ☐ Clear out your home's basement window wells of excess material. Excess material encourages animal and insect activity and could be a safety concern as well.

Check Outside Faucets & Turn on Water to Outdoor Kitchens:

- ☐ Before using garden hoses, check outside hose faucets for frost damage. Someone should be inside to watch for leaks, while the outside faucets are turned on.
- ☐ If you own a Martin Bros. Contracting, Inc. built home the outside faucets are frost-proof. Damage should not occur, unless a garden hose was left attached during winter months.
- ☐ Have a plumbing professional inspect waterlines to outdoor kitchens and pool houses and have them turn on water for the season.

Clean up Landscaping:

- ☐ Clear dead plants/shrubs from the house.
- ☐ Remove dead plants/shrubs from landscaping beds.
- ☐ This could double as a gardening tip, but if you didn't trim trees or shrubs in the fall, do so now. Plants can weasel their way into cracks and holes on the exterior of your home, causing damage and shortened longevity. Nip that in the bud before it's an issue. If you have decorative vines on the exterior, pay close attention.
- ☐ Trim back or remove tree limbs hanging too close to your house. In spring storms, heavy limbs can do significant damage to your home.

Inspect Pool Houses, Outdoor Kitchens & Outbuildings:

- ☐ If your gas grill has remained idle over the winter months, check burner jets for clogs and obstructions. Be sure that gas hoses and connections are sound and secure. You'll also want to check for propane. For charcoal grill owners, make certain your grill is clean of ash and free of grease residue. It's a good habit to adopt throughout the grilling season, not just in the spring.
- ☐ Clean outdoor appliances and ready for the season.
- ☐ Clean pool house appliances and ready for the season.
- ☐ Clean pool house and ready for the season.
- ☐ Have pool house air conditioning system serviced.
- ☐ Walk around and through outbuildings, checking for structural issues and other damage. Roofing, siding, windows and doors along with water or pest damage are primary issues.

©Martin Bros. Contracting, Inc.

26262 County Road 40

Goshen, IN 46526

574-862-2142

MartinBrosContracting.com