

**MCS Inspection Services**

## Maintenance Tips

We Inspect

We Instruct

We Report

We Follow-Up

## Upon Taking Ownership

After taking possession of a new home, there are some maintenance and safety issues that should be addressed immediately. The following checklist should help you undertake these improvements:

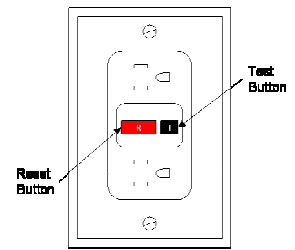
- Change the locks on all exterior entrances, for improved security.
- Check that all windows and doors are secure. Improve window hardware as necessary. Security rods can be added to sliding windows and doors.
- Install smoke detectors on each level of the home. Ensure that there is a smoke detector outside all sleeping areas. Replace batteries on any existing smoke detectors and test them. Make a note to replace batteries again in one year.
- Create a plan of action in the event of a fire in your home. Ensure that there is an operable window or door in every room of the house. Consult with your local fire department regarding fire safety issues and what to do in the event of fire.
- Examine driveways and walkways for trip hazards. Undertake repairs where necessary.
- Examine the interior of the home for trip hazards. Loose or torn carpeting and flooring should be repaired.
- Undertake improvements to all stairways, decks, porches and landings where there is a risk of falling or stumbling.
- Review your home inspection report for any items that require immediate improvement or further investigation. Address these areas as required.
- Install rain caps and vermin screens on all chimney flues, as necessary.
- Investigate the location of the main shut-offs for the plumbing, heating and electrical systems. If you attended the home inspection, these items would have been pointed out to you.

## Monthly

- Check that fire extinguisher(s) are fully charged. Re-charge if necessary.
- Examine heating/cooling air filters and replace or clean as necessary.
- Inspect and clean humidifiers and electronic air cleaners.
- If the house has hot water heating, bleed radiator valves.
- Clean gutters and downspouts. Ensure that downspouts are secure, and that the discharge of the downspouts is appropriate. Remove debris from window wells.
- Carefully inspect the condition of shower enclosures. Repair or replace deteriorated grout and caulk. Ensure that water is not escaping the enclosure during showering. Check below all plumbing fixtures for evidence of leakage.

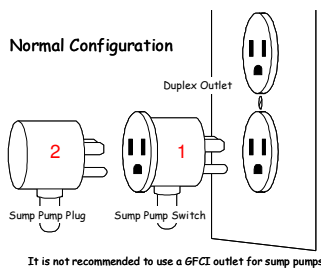
- Repair or replace leaking faucets or shower heads.
- Secure loose toilets, or repair flush mechanisms that become troublesome.

- If you have Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (G.F.C.I.) outlets, it is recommended that you test (and reset) them monthly. When you push the test button, the reset button should pop out, shutting off the circuit. If it doesn't, the breaker is not working properly. If you don't test them once a month, the breakers have a tendency to stick, and may not protect you when needed.

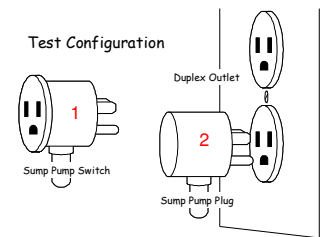


Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (G.F.C.I.) outlet

- The sump pump should have two power connections plugged into an outlet. The first power plug is the switch connected to the float. This is the mechanism that turns the pump on when the pit is full of water. The second is the power connection for the pump. Disconnect the switch plug (1) and connect the pump plug (2) directly into the power source. You should be able to hear the pump turn on. This is an indication that the pump is working. Be careful not to run the pump more than a few seconds.

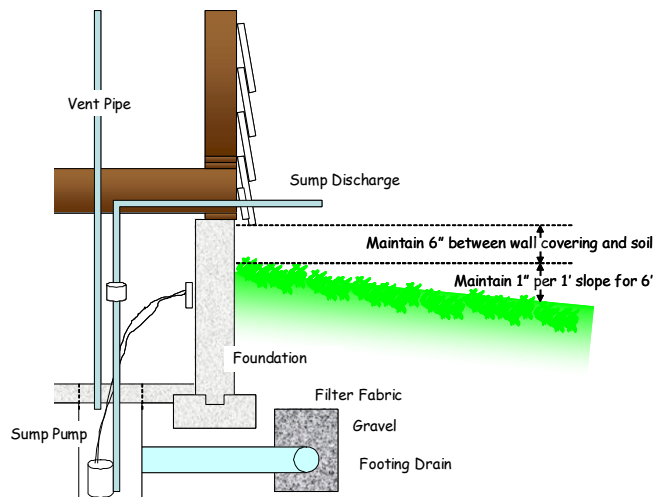


Excessive running could damage the pump. Reassemble the power connection, as shown in the normal configuration (1, 2). This procedure does not test the switch. The best way to test the switch is to add water to the pit.



## Spring

- Replace smoke detector batteries.
- Examine the roof for evidence of damage to roof coverings and flashings. Have chimneys inspected and cleaned. Ensure that rain caps and vermin screens are secured.
- Look in the attic (if accessible) to ensure that roof vents are not obstructed. Check for evidence of leakage, condensation or vermin activity. Level out insulation if needed.
- Trim back tree branches and shrubs to ensure that they are not in contact with the house.
- Survey the basement and/or crawl space walls for evidence of moisture seepage.
- Look at overhead wires coming to the house. They should be secure and clear of trees or other obstructions.
- Ensure that the grade of the land around the house encourages water to flow away from the foundation.
- Inspect all driveways, walkways, decks, porches, and landscape components for evidence of deterioration, movement or safety hazards.
- Clean windows, repair screens and test their operation. Improve caulking and weather-stripping as necessary. Watch for evidence of rot in wood window frames. Paint and repair window sills and frames as necessary.
- Test exterior ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI).
- Test the overhead garage door opener, to ensure that the auto-reverse mechanism is responding properly. Clean and lubricate hinges, rollers and tracks on overhead doors.
- Clean the air conditioning system.
- Inspect and maintain laundry room.
- Check the attic fan.



## Summer

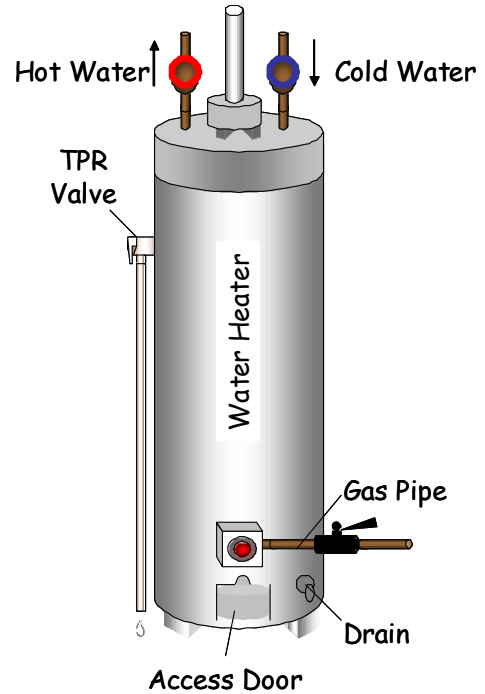
- If the house utilizes a well, check and service the pump and holding tank. Have the water quality tested. If the property has a septic system, have the tank inspected (and pumped as needed).
- If your home is in an area prone to wood destroying insects (termites, carpenter ants, etc.), have the home inspected by a licensed specialist. Preventative treatments may be recommended in some cases.
- Inspect and weatherproof exterior doors.
- Inspect, repair and reseal driveway.
- Check crawlspace.
- Maintain yard growth. Keep vegetation at least 12" from all structures.
- Test the overhead garage door opener, to ensure that the auto-reverse mechanism is responding properly. Clean and lubricate hinges, rollers and tracks on overhead doors.
- Remove rust on exterior railings.
- Inspect and clean the deck. Look for loose boards and railings.
- Inspect the exterior walls and foundation for evidence of damage, cracking or movement. Watch for bird nests or other vermin or insect activity. Clean as needed.

## Fall

- Have the heating, cooling and water heater systems cleaned and serviced.
- Examine the roof for evidence of damage to roof coverings, flashings and chimneys. Clean out the gutters.
- Look at overhead wires coming to the house. They should be secure and clear of trees or other obstructions.
- Inspect the exterior walls and foundation for evidence of damage, cracking or movement. Watch for bird nests or other vermin or insect activity.
- Trim back tree branches and shrubs to ensure that they are not in contact with the house.
- Ensure that the grade of the land around the house encourages water to flow away from the foundation.
- Clean outdoor drains.
- Look in the attic (if accessible) to ensure that roof vents are not obstructed. Check for evidence of leakage, condensation or vermin activity. Level out insulation if needed.
- Clean windows and test their operation. Improve caulking and weather-stripping as necessary. Watch for evidence of rot in wood window frames. Paint and repair window sills and frames as necessary.
- Survey the basement and/or crawl space walls for evidence of moisture seepage.
- Check and clean the humidifier if one is installed.
- Inspect all driveways, walkways, decks, porches, and landscape components for evidence of deterioration, movement or safety hazards.
- Shut off isolating valves for exterior hose bibs in the fall if installed, if below freezing temperatures are anticipated. Disconnect and store all hoses.
- Inspect for evidence of wood boring insect activity. Eliminate any wood/soil contact around the perimeter of the home.
- Replace or clean exhaust hood filters.
- Clean, inspect and/or service all appliances as per the manufacturer's recommendations.

## Winter

- Test the Temperature and Pressure Relief (TPR) Valve on water heaters. Check and flush the water heater.
- Check and upgrade insulation if necessary.
- Vacuum air registers.
- Lubricate door hinges and hardware. Use a good quality lubricant. Refrain from using aerosol lubricants.
- Inspect the bath and shower areas. Clean shower heads. Remove damaged and loose caulk and replace.
- Maintain the fireplace and chimney. Have it inspected by a qualified chimney sweep.
- Replenish flashlight batteries
- Check gutters for ice.
- Replace or clean exhaust hood filters.
- Clear out and inspect all sink drains. Examine for leaks.
- Clean, inspect and/or service all appliances as per the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Check all appliances for recalls. Visit the **U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission** web site at <http://www.cpsc.gov>.



## Prevention is the Best Approach

Although we've heard it many times, nothing could be truer than the old cliché "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Preventative maintenance is the best way to keep your house in great shape. It also reduces the risk of unexpected repairs and improves the odds of selling your house at fair market value, when the time comes.

Please feel free to contact our office should you have any questions regarding the operation or maintenance of your home. Visit our website [www.mcsinspections.com](http://www.mcsinspections.com) for updates to this maintenance schedule and other important information.

Please complete and mail our Transaction Survey. Please indicate if you would like to be included in future mailings.

Enjoy your home!

**Roof Types and Life Expectancy**

<b>Roof Type</b>	<b>Life Expectancy</b>	<b>Special Remarks</b>
Asphalt Shingles	15-20 years	Used on nearly 80% of all residential roofs; requires little maintenance
Asphalt Multi-Thickness Shingles	20-30 years	Heavier and more durable than regular asphalt shingles
Asphalt Interlocking Shingles	15-25 years	Especially good in high-wind areas
Asphalt Rolls	10 years	Used on low slope roofs
Built-up Roofing	10-20 years	Used on low slope roofs; 2 to 3 times as costly as asphalt shingles
Wood Shingles	10-40 years	Treat with preservative every 5 years to prevent decay.
Clay Tiles	20 + years	Durable, fireproof, but not watertight, requiring a good subsurface base.
Cement Tiles	20 + years	Durable, fireproof, but not watertight, requiring a good subsurface base.
Slate Shingles	30-100 years	Extremely durable, but brittle and expensive.
Asbestos Cement Shingles	30-75 years	Durable, but brittle and difficult to repair.
Metal Roofing	15-40 + years	Comes in sheets & shingles; should be well grounded for protection from lightning; certain metals must be painted.
Single Ply Membrane	15-25 years (mfg's claim)	New material; not yet passed test of time.

**Table of Heating Unit Life Expectancy**

Gas-Fired Hot Air	15-25 years
Oil-Fired Hot Air	20-30 years
Steel Boiler	30-40 years or more
Copper Boiler	10-20 years
Circulating Cast Iron Boiler	30-50 years or more
PUMP (Hot Water)	10-15 years

**Table of Air Conditioning Unit Life Expectancy**

Air Conditioning Compressor	8-12 years
Heat Pump	8-12 years