



My home safety checklist for my major home systems

Plumbing, water heaters, electrical systems, heating... our modern conveniences sure make our day-to-day lives easier, but learning how to manage and maintain these major home systems safely can be intimidating. Fortunately, this simple checklist can help! Print it out now and check off each step as you complete it, then repeat yearly.

Electrical Systems

- Looking around your house, are there any damaged electrical appliances or extension cords? Replace damaged extension cords immediately. Replace damaged appliances or have a professional repair them before operating.
- Now look down at the floor. Are any cords or electrical extensions placed across walkways in your home? Cords or electrical extensions should never be run under carpets or rugs, or pinched in a door or under heavy objects. If any of this is happening in your home, relocate these cords and electrical extensions immediately.
- Finally, has an electrical inspection been performed in the last five years? If not, hire an electrician to perform one quickly and easily. They have special tools to test fuse and breaker boxes, wiring loads and spot potential problems.

QUICK TIP

Frayed and defective wiring and cords are a major cause of fires.

Plumbing and Water

- Let's check out your water heater. Has it been inspected once this year to maintain safe operating conditions? If not, consult a professional for assistance.

Heating, Air-Conditioning and Fire Safety

- First, check your boiler for any failure to light, maintain a pilot light, and any strange smells or sounds. Consult a professional for help as necessary.
- Next, test the air-conditioning system if you have one. Turn off immediately if the appliance sounds, smells or operates strangely. Consult a professional for further help.
- Have heating and cooling system filters been replaced at least once a year? If not, replace filters.
- Are smoke detectors available according to local building codes? A minimum of one smoke detector per floor level, situated just outside bedroom doors, is recommended. Change the batteries every year — to help you remember, make it a habit to do this near your birthday!
- Does your home have a carbon monoxide detector? If not, install one immediately, and make sure to change the batteries yearly.
- Finally, has your dryer vent been cleaned recently? Clogged dryer vents can lead to fires, so take action promptly.

QUICK TIP

Use the removed batteries from smoke detectors for other, non-critical items around the house.

All done! Remember, go through this checklist at least once a year to help keep your home safe for your family, pets, and visitors.