Want to Keep Your Home in Tiptop Shape, Do the Following This Fall

**1.** Inspect windows and doors, both inside and outside. Hot, dry weather can crack and crumble the seals around windows and doors. Caulk cracks and install weather stripping where the seal has failed. Replace any broken window glass, too.

**2.** Clean or replace filters in your heating system. If you have a gas heater, be sure to inspect the pilot light to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning

**3.** Inspect, clean and repair fireplace elements, including the chimney and flue, especially for wood-burning fireplaces. Dirty chimneys — those with a build-up of creosote — can cause fires.

**4.** Change the batteries in your carbon monoxide and smoke detectors when you change your clock for the end of daylight saving time on Nov. 5.

**5.** Drain and flush particulates and sediment from water heaters. Sediment builds up and reduces heating efficiency, and in gas water heaters it can cause hot spots that will lead to premature failure.

**6.** Trim trees away from the house. Branches that scrape the roof can cause damage to shingles or tiles. Even the leaves can cause damage because they can trap moisture and cause mold. Be sure to remove all dead and broken branches.

**7.** Check vents to ensure that screens are intact. Rodents and other pests can easily make their way into warm, cozy attics or crawl spaces through these access points if not properly secured.

**8.** Clean and remove debris from rain gutters and downspouts to ensure proper flow and drainage. Overflow from blocked gutters can eventually damage a home’s foundation. Gutter guards can help keep gutters debris-free.

**9.** Inspect painted exterior areas. Any chipped or bare areas should be painted as soon as possible. Paint or other surface coverings such as stains protect wood and stucco from damaging water intrusion and other harmful elements like pests.

**10.** Inspect your roof or hire a professional to conduct an inspection. Be sure that tiles and shingles are in good shape and areas surrounding protrusions are properly sealed and flashing is sitting properly.

**11**. Now is the time to professionally clean your carpets, upholstery and area rugs. Let us help you maintain a clean and healthy indoor environment.