



New Home Owners Maintenance Information – from Tarion

Congratulations on your new home! Owning a new home is exciting and start of a new journey. Please note that a new home needs general maintenance, wear and tear up keep and repairs. Below is some information to assist you with helping keeping your home looking great all year long and to help avoid unexpected issues. Settling and shifting

Tips and Suggestions

Avoiding Moisture Damage Today's energy-efficient homes are built tightly to seal out the cold weather in winter and keep in the air conditioning in summer. Because of this, it is possible that a new home can be severely damaged by lack of ventilation or by excess moisture.

It is important to remember that moisture damage caused by improper or inadequate use of your ventilation system, is not covered by the new home warranty. **Ensure you run a dehumidifier regularly in the 1st year of owning your home as building materials as well as everyday living can amount to high humidity levels in your home. Ensure you have a humidity monitor in your home.**

What causes moisture damage?

Your home can be damaged if weather-related water is allowed to enter and remain in the structure. Water from leaking pipes or fixtures that is not immediately cleaned up, and indoor humidity levels that are not properly controlled, can have serious consequences. Sometimes this damage is easily seen, at other times the damage is hidden inside wall and roof spaces.

Regardless of where it occurs, moisture damage can lead to serious problems, such as rot, mould, and even structural failure.

How can I control moisture?

Always use your home ventilation system to control moisture. In a typical home, over 20 litres of water are added to the indoor environment every day. That's 7,300 litres in a year, enough to fill a medium-sized swimming pool. Bathroom fans, kitchen range hoods and packaged ventilators such as heat-recovery ventilators are specifically installed in your home to help you control

moisture and contaminants. Regular use of your home ventilation system will exhaust excess airborne moisture caused by bathing, showering, doing laundry and cooking.

What else can I do to control moisture?

Here are some extra tips you can follow to help prevent moisture damage to your home

Outside the Home

1. Keep flowerbeds or landscaping at least six inches or 150 mm away from the top of the foundation. Placing soil near or above the top of the foundation allows moisture to come into direct contact with the structure of the building.
2. Ensure that land adjacent to the foundation slopes away from the home so that rainwater and snow melt will run away from the foundation.
3. Clear eavestroughs of debris regularly and extend downspouts so that water is directed away from the building. Water flow can erode the ground near the foundation and create depressions where water collects. Standing water near the foundation can force its way into the basement.
4. Fix the caulking around windows and doors and on the roof if it becomes cracked or separated.
5. Have your roof inspected regularly to ensure shingles, flashing and chimney caps are in place and sealed properly.

Inside the Home

1. In the winter, keep the relative humidity in your home in the range of 30-45%. Lower humidity levels may affect your health and cause things made of wood to shrink. Excess humidity can cause condensation on windows and damage the surrounding wall. When using a humidifier, follow the manufacturer's instructions.
2. In the summer, dehumidify the basement to avoid condensation buildup on the cool foundation walls. Relative humidity levels should not exceed 60%.
3. Repair leaky pipes and fixtures immediately. Clean and completely dry any areas that are dampened or wet within 48 hours.
4. Store organic materials such as newspapers and clothes away from cool, damp areas. Keep storage areas tidy so that air circulates freely.
5. Purchase a "hygrometer" to monitor the relative humidity in your home.
6. If you are adding a hot tub to your home, or have a large collection of plants, consider the amount of moisture they will add to your indoor air and ventilate accordingly.
7. Never vent your clothes dryer inside your home. If you have a gas- or propane-fired dryer you may also be venting carbon monoxide inside your home!
8. Investigate and identify any musty smells and odours. They are often an indicator that there is a hidden moisture problem.

Spring Maintenance Checklist

March

- Clean furnace filter and heat recovery ventilator (HRV)
- Check attic
- Check sump pump (if installed)
- Clean humidifier
- Remove snow and ice from overhang and vents
- Check and reset ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI)
- Test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors

April

- Check eavestroughs and downspouts
- Clean furnace filter and HRV
- Clean humidifier
- Inspect basement or crawl spaces
- Check roof for loose or cracked shingles
- Check driveways and walks for frost damage
- Check water heater for leaks
- Turn on exterior water supply
- Plan landscaping to avoid soil settlement and water ponding
- Check and reset GFCI
- Test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors

May

- Inspect fences
- Check caulking for air and water leaks
- Lubricate weather-stripping
- Check exterior finishes
- Check windows and screens are operating properly
- Check septic system (if installed)
- Check and reset GFCI
- Test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors

Summer Home Maintenance Checklist

June

- Inspect air conditioning
- Check roof
- Check sheds and garages
- Check sealing around windows and doors
- Check septic system and clean if necessary
- Fertilize lawn
- Check water heater
- Check and reset ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI)
- Test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors

July

- Air out damp basements on dry, sunny day
- Clean air conditioner
- Check exhaust fans
- Check water heater for leaks
- Check and reset GFCI
- Test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors

August

- Clean air conditioner filter
- Air out damp basements on dry, sunny days
- Inspect driveways and walks
- Inspect doors and locks
- Check and reset GFCI
- Test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors

Fall Home Maintenance Checklist

September

- Check exterior finishes
- Check garage door tracks and lubricate bearings
- Check caulking for air and water leaks
- Plant new lawn
- Check fireplace and chimney
- Check basement or crawl spaces
- Have humidifier, furnace and HRV serviced
- Check clothes dryer vent
- Check and reset ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI)
- Test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors

October

- Check windows and screens – remove for winter to avoid moisture issues on windows
- Drain exterior water lines
- Check roof including shingles, flashing and vents
- Check weatherstripping
- Check sealing around windows and doors
- Check septic system
- Winterize landscaping and remove leaves
- Clean furnace filter and HRV
- Clean water heater
- Shut off exterior water supply
- Check eavestroughs and downspouts
- Clean humidifier
- Check and reset GFCI
- Test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors

November

- Check attic
- Inspect floor drains to ensure trap is filled with water
- Clean furnace filter and HRV
- Check for condensation and humidity
- Check and reset GFCI
- Test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors

Winter Home Maintenance Checklist

December

- Check air ducts
- Check for excessive snow on roof
- Clean furnace filter and heat recovery ventilator (HRV)
- Clean humidifier
- Check and reset ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI)
- Test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors

January

- Clean furnace filter and HRV
- Check furnace fan belt
- Check water heater
- Check exhaust fans
- Clean humidifier
- Remove snow and ice from roof overhang/vents
- Check and reset GFCI
- Test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors

February

- Clean furnace filter and HRV
- Check inside surfaces
- Remove snow and ice from roof overhang/vents
- Check and reset GFCI