

Look Out!

Fall's a great time to step outside and evaluate your exterior while the weather is still nice. This gives you time to make any repairs before harsh conditions arrive. Examine the following areas:

CRAWL SPACE: Make sure the moisture vapor barrier is still in good condition. This is also a good time to close up crawl-space vents. If you have an electronic system, you could wait until colder weather to shut the vents.

HOSES: Before the first freeze, detach outdoor hoses, drain standing water and store them inside. Be sure to drain outdoor faucets and close the interior shut-off valves to the hose bibs or spigots to help prevent frozen pipes.

FOUNDATION: Look for the following signs of a potential foundation problem: a gap in the caulk around windows, cracks in masonry joints near windows, gaps in caulking or mortar cracks around doors and cracks larger than a quarter inch in the foundation.

ROOF: Make sure your shingles are in good condition, that none are missing and that they're properly attached. Look for any dips, which may indicate a problem with the wood underneath. If the roof is more than 20 years old, consider an inspection with a roofing contractor.



LOOK ONE UP

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LIGHTING: With plenty of long nights ahead, take time to review your lighting needs. Not only can security lights help deter criminals, but path lights can spotlight any potential icy hazards before someone slips.

GUTTERS: In addition to cleaning, you should also make sure gutters and downspouts are properly moving water away from the house. Go outside when it's raining or run a hose up to the gutter to monitor the flow of water.