

Spring has Sprung... so Summer is Soon!
The top 10 maintenance tips to get your home ready for Summer

Spring is the perfect time of year to start thinking about what needs to be done around the home in preparation for summer. We have put together some tips for getting summer-ready, but the best way to tackle your spring home maintenance is to think about what summer means for you and your family. Is it dinners on the deck? Backyard cricket? Sunday afternoons by the pool? Whatever it might be, this will dictate what should be a priority in getting your home ready for the steamy months.

1. Clean gutters and downpipes

This is important for so many reasons – and aesthetics is by far the least important. Summer in Queensland means two key things: storms and fires. Downpipes and gutters which are full of leaves, debris and dirt can't do their job properly. All it takes is a big gusty storm with heavy rainfall, and you could easily have a leaking roof. In the case of strong, hot winds and fires, blocked downpipes and gutters full of dry plant material are really just fire hazards waiting to ignite. Don't take the chance –give your roof, gutters and downpipes a good clean before the crazy weather hits!

2. Cut back any trees growing close to the roof or walls

During winter we can easily neglect the gardening, and once autumn hits with its stronger winds, this often means lots of leaves and branches being dropped in the yard. Aside from looking messy, this can cause trouble for your roof (like we just mentioned) and also the basic structure of your home. Plant matter is a perfect breeding ground for mould, bugs and other nasties that can cause dramas with exterior paint and timber structures. Prune back shrubs, trees and plants that are starting to get too close to the roof (especially the gutters) and the outside of the home.

3. Make sure all latches on pool fences and gates work properly

Last month we looked at pool fencing regulations and pool fence maintenance. Remember to have your pool registered, have your pool safety certificate up-to-date, and not leave climbable objects near pool fences and gates. Make sure all latches and gates are working properly, and if they aren't, have it fixed as soon as possible. Also ensure that there are no damaged portions of pool fencing, and if there are, have the portion repaired or replace the fence where necessary.

4. *Store all pool and garden chemicals in safe places*

Just like the rest of us, children and animals generally spend a lot more time outside when the weather warms up. During the warmer months we also tend to use pesticides, gardening chemicals, and pool chemicals much more. It's easy to get complacent and leave these products lying around outside, rather than storing them properly after each use. To protect the safety of your family and furry friends, keep dangerous chemicals (which are not only toxic, but also flammable) out of reach, out of direct sunlight, and away from general living areas.

5. *Check air-conditioning units are working properly and efficiently*

Unless you have reverse-cycle air-conditioners which you use to heat your home in winter, air-conditioning units may go unused for many months. Make sure your air-conditioning vents are clean and free of dust and dirt build-up. If your motor is located outside, do not have any objects on or near the unit – it needs room to breathe and do its job! If you have not had your air-conditioner serviced lately, now would be the perfect time to do so. This will help to ensure it is running smoothly and efficiently – saving you money in the long run!

6. *Test electrical circuit shut-off switches*

This is something that doesn't necessarily have to be done in spring, but this is a good opportunity to stop and think about electrical safety in the home. All power boards have a safety switch 'test button' so that you can always ensure the circuit shut-off switches are working. What's the point in having safety switches if they aren't even working properly? Right!?

7. *Check wooden fences and decks for termites*

Termites will happily munch away on your timber decks and fences all year round, but the last thing you want is to be sitting out on your deck and have a big section break apart because of termite damage! Make sure your termite treatments are up-to-date for the whole house, including timber fences. Look for classic signs of termite damage which we spoke about in our July blog.

8. *De-bug patios and pergolas so it is ready and safe for summer use*

When outside areas are not used much during the winter months, insects and other bugs have plenty of opportunity to take up residence in your outdoor furniture and play equipment. Spring is a great time to de-bug pergolas, patios, decks and all the furniture and equipment found there. Professional pest control will be needed to prevent nasty creepy crawlies like redbacks.

9. *Pressure clean and re-seal timber decking*

Spending time out on the deck is a basic pastime during a Queensland summer. But no one wants to be hanging out on a dirty, rotting, splintering deck... do they? Keeping your deck in tip-top shape is easy – it just takes a little bit of effort and consistent TLC. Pressure clean your deck regularly (especially after heavy rain and winds which cause dirt build-up), and make sure you re-seal your deck every 12 months. Then you can sit back, relax and enjoy the view!

10. Clean fly screens and security screens

Summer means having doors and windows open, and spending more time on the outside of the house than the inside! Because of this, we want to make sure all of our security screens, fly screens and glass windows and doors are clean and fresh. There is nothing worse for your health than lots of dust and dirt circulating through the house. Give all doors and windows a good hose-down and be ready to enjoy your home from the inside and outside!

Sources:

www.houspect.com.au

www.servicecentral.com.au

All content presented in our blogs is advice only, and for the sole purpose of education and information. Brisbane Maintenance Experts are not to be held responsible for any decisions or actions that their readers may or may not take.

© Brisbane Maintenance Experts 2013