

MAINTENANCE GUIDE

WHAT TO OBSERVE ON YOUR NEW HOME



GARANTIE
CONSTRUCTION RÉSIDENTIELLE

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WHY A MAINTENANCE GUIDE?

Since its beginning as the only mandatory guarantee plan, Garantie de construction résidentielle (GCR) has implemented various tools to improve residential construction quality in the province of Quebec and increase the coverage of new home buyers. GCR is proud to offer a new publication that expresses this vision: *The Maintenance Guide*.

This guide is a prevention tool helping owners of a new home maintain their investment in good condition.

Failures can be prevented by paying attention to warning signs of potential issues. Maintenance is a key element which helps limit damage and problems. However, some failures cannot be prevented by simple maintenance and may be covered by the guarantee plan.

The occurrence or presence of signs can have various causes, from normal material behaviour to a real defect. In some cases, observing and monitoring progression is recommended. It is, however, always a good idea to contact your contractor first.

The *Maintenance Guide* lists the various checks to perform on the main components of your new home. They are ranked by importance and potential issues are highlighted, as well as some preventive and corrective actions to be undertaken if needed.

A schedule for seasonal maintenance on your new home can also be found in this guide. The section will particularly be useful to plan for maintenance for the months and years to come. Finally, the glossary at the end of the *Maintenance Guide* will help you better understand the publication.

You are now ready to tour your property.

To your checklist!



NOTE Equipment and components listed in this guide may differ from those found in your home. The information provided is generic and for guidance purposes. The *Maintenance Guide* only covers, but is not limited to, a portion of building components. Its content does not replace the requirements and obligations defined in the Regulation respecting the guarantee plan for new residential buildings (B-1.1, r.8).



INFORMATION

If you are a co-owner, this guide can also be used for the maintenance of your private portion. However, it is important to check the declaration of co-ownership which specifies elements associated with private portions and common areas. It should be noted that the maintenance of common areas is the responsibility of the syndicate of co-owners. If in doubt, contact its members.



GOOD TO KNOW

For the owner of a new home, it can sometimes be difficult to differentiate a failure from normal wear and tear or building defects that could be covered by GCR. Remember that the contractor must respect their contractual and legal obligations. If in doubt, seek the advice of a recognized professional. For any question, visit garantiegr.com/acheteur or contact our customer service at **514-657-2333**.

1. SITE AND FOUNDATION / EXTERIOR

IMPORTANT



A bedroom window is actually an emergency egress. It is important to ensure that it is operational and unobstructed at all times, even in winter.



GOOD TO KNOW



The proper functioning of the foundation drain can be inspected through the sump pit or exterior cleanouts.

INFORMATION



Inspecting the foundation of your home yearly is imperative to detect new cracks.

	WHAT TO CHECK	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	DETAILS
A SLOPE	Reverse slope or water build-up	Look for any water spills or build-up near the foundation.	Reverse slope directs water toward the foundation and increases risks of infiltration.
B BASEMENT WINDOWS	Clearance under windows	Ensure that there is sufficient clearance (6 to 8 inches minimum) under the basement windows.	Spacing of less than 6 to 8 inches poses a risk of overflow and water infiltration.
	Emergency egress	Ensure that basement bedroom windows are not obstructed and can serve as emergency egresses.	It is mandatory to never restrict safe evacuation through a basement bedroom window, or any other bedroom window.
C WINDOW WELLS	Build-up of debris or organic matters	Clean any build-up to ensure constant drainage of the window well.	Build-ups of debris or organic matters (leaves, snow, ice, etc.) can restrict drainage. Water can overflow from a poorly drained window well.
D FOUNDATION	Cracks	Check for cracks in the foundations.	A crack can be unappealing or cause water infiltration, depending on whether it is on the surface or runs through the foundation. If in doubt, contact a specialist.
	Parging	Check for chips.	Parging is only for the look. It may require some touch ups.
	Foundation drains	Ensure that foundation drains are not overused.	Humidity or water infiltration on the basement floor can indicate a drainage problem and cause mould and damage.
E GUTTERS	Downspouts	Move downspouts away from the foundation to prevent water spillage.	Water can build up if downspouts are not far enough (6 feet from the foundation).
F TREES AND SHRUBS	Roots and branches	Properly plan the location of your trees and shrubs so roots and branches are away from the building.	Roots and branches can damage your home.

2. WALL COVERING AND COMPONENTS /



INFORMATION

Caulking joints tend to crack more in the first few years due to expansion and drying of the wooden frame. Touch-ups are sometimes necessary to ensure watertightness.

GOOD TO KNOW

Openings between brick joints are called weep holes. They allow for water drainage and ventilation. They are found in the lower sections of walls and above doors and windows.




EXTERIOR


	WHAT TO CHECK	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	DETAILS
A SOIL	Ground level	Ensure that the level of the ground or flower beds is not too high, and that it is 6 to 8 inches away from the cladding.	Humidity in the soil can damage components and cause water infiltration above the foundation.
	Efflorescence	Check for the appearance of efflorescence.	Often only unsightly, efflorescence can, however, indicate the presence of water or humidity under the cladding.
B MASONRY	Water marks	Check for the appearance of water marks.	Water can damage the cladding and cause infiltration.
	Mortar joints	Check that mortar joints are not cracked or deteriorated.	Deteriorated joints can let more water penetrate the cladding.
	Weep holes	Clean any obstructed weep hole.	Obstructed openings prevent drainage or ventilation of the wall.
	Loosening or breakage	Have any detached or damaged section of cladding repaired.	Strong winds can lift or loosen cladding boards or panels.
C CLAPBOARDS AND PANELS	Caulking joints	Frequently check the condition of caulking joints, which can tear or get loose.	Caulking is the first protective barrier to prevent water infiltration.
	Wear of finish	Check the condition of the cladding, particularly on the sunniest side.	Some cladding, such as wood or acrylic, require a diligent maintenance routine. Otherwise it will get prematurely damaged. Refer to the manufacturer's guide for more information.
	Reverse slope	Ensure that door and window sills maintain a positive slope.	Water rolling on doors and windows must be directed away from the building envelope.
D SILLS	Masonry joints	Have any cracked or deteriorated joint of sills corrected.	Deteriorating joints can let water infiltrate doors and windows.
	Corrosion	Check for surface corrosion on steel angles.	This part located above doors and windows must be repainted occasionally.
E LINTELS			

3. OPENINGS / EXTERIOR



INFORMATION + 

Proper humidity control inside your home will help reduce potential issues related to condensation on the glass of doors and windows.

GOOD TO KNOW + 

In high winds, water could trickle between the garage door and the concrete slab. It is necessary to check and adjust the pressure at the door sill, if needed.

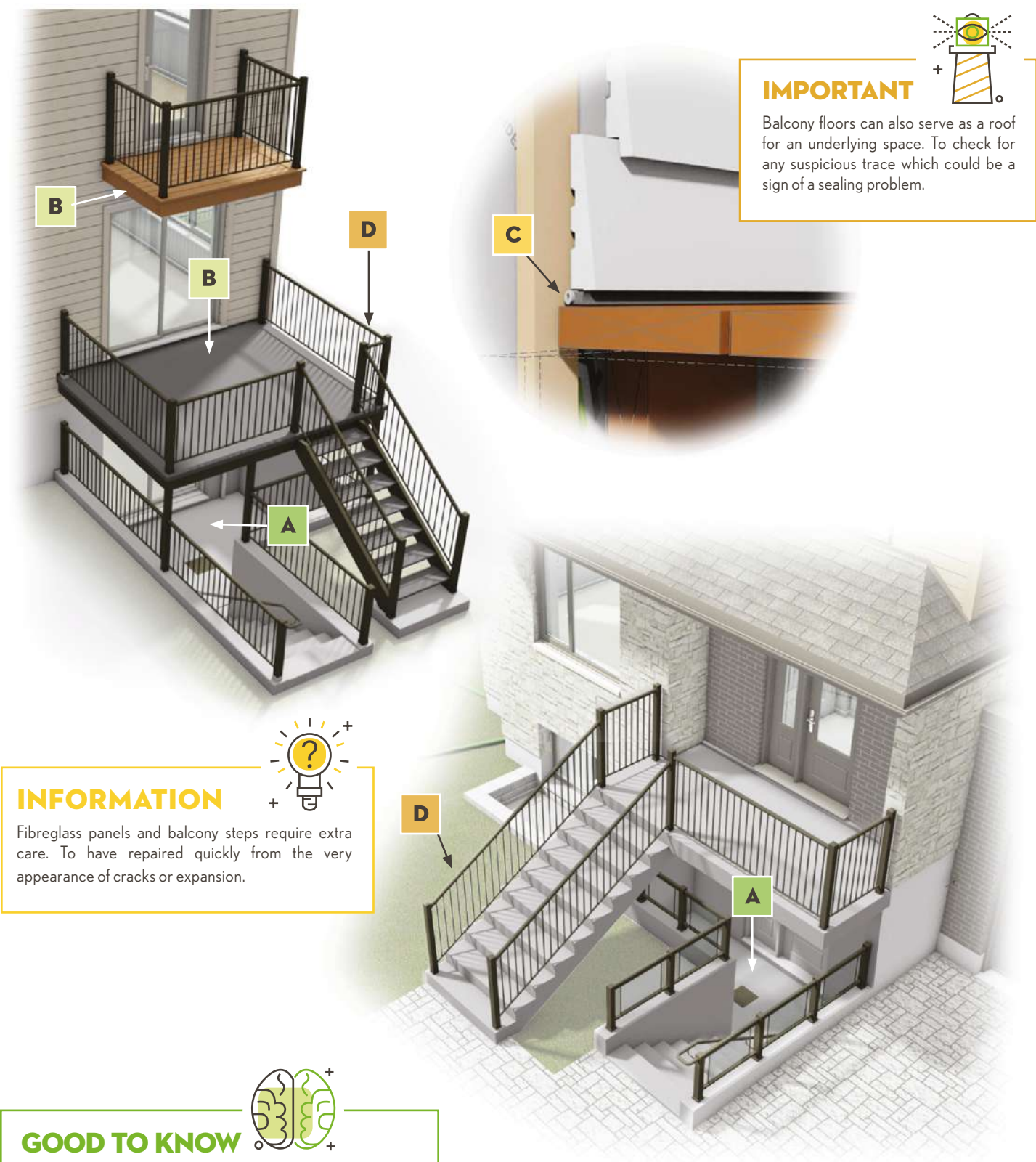
IMPORTANT + 

Garage door

A test should be performed sporadically to ensure that the anti-accidental closing system is operational.

	WHAT TO CHECK	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	DETAILS
GENERAL (Windows, entrance door, patio door and garage door)	Water infiltration	Check for traces of water on frames and interior surfaces.	Water can damage interior finishes and the concealed structure.
	Condensation	Check for condensation on thermal windows.	Too much condensation can be a sign of excess humidity in the air indoors.
	Weather stripping	Check the condition of the weather stripping to prevent any air leak.	Air can leak through damaged weather stripping or a poorly fitted panel.
	Screen	Have repaired or replace broken or torn up screens.	Holes or torn up sections can let insects in.
	Thermal windows	Ensure that thermal windows are not unsealed. Check the warranty and have it replaced, if need be.	Unsealed thermal windows will fog up and do not provide high energy efficiency.
	Door or window panel closure	Check that it is operational. Straighten the frame or panel, if need be.	Poor adjustment can prevent closure and weaken air and watertightness.
A ENTRANCE DOOR	Handle and lock	Ensure proper functioning. Retighten the handle and lubricate the mechanisms if need be.	Loose handles or locks are harder to operate.
B PATIO DOOR	Sill and bearing	Clean the rail, unclog drain holes of the sill and check the bearing condition.	The movement of the panel will be obstructed by dust and debris.
C GARAGE DOOR	Door opener motor	Ensure proper alignment in the tracks and lubricate if the motor pushes too hard.	Poor adjustment can make the motor overheat and damage the door opener.
	Anti-closure sensors	Check the anti-closure sensors to ensure that they are operational, well aligned and clean.	A garage door that closes accidentally can cause damage or serious injuries.
D CAULKING	Caulking joints	Check often caulking joints, which can get torn or loosen.	Caulking is the first protective barrier to prevent water infiltration.

4. ACCESS AND BALCONIES / EXTERIOR



IMPORTANT

Balcony floors can also serve as a roof for an underlying space. To check for any suspicious trace which could be a sign of a sealing problem.

INFORMATION

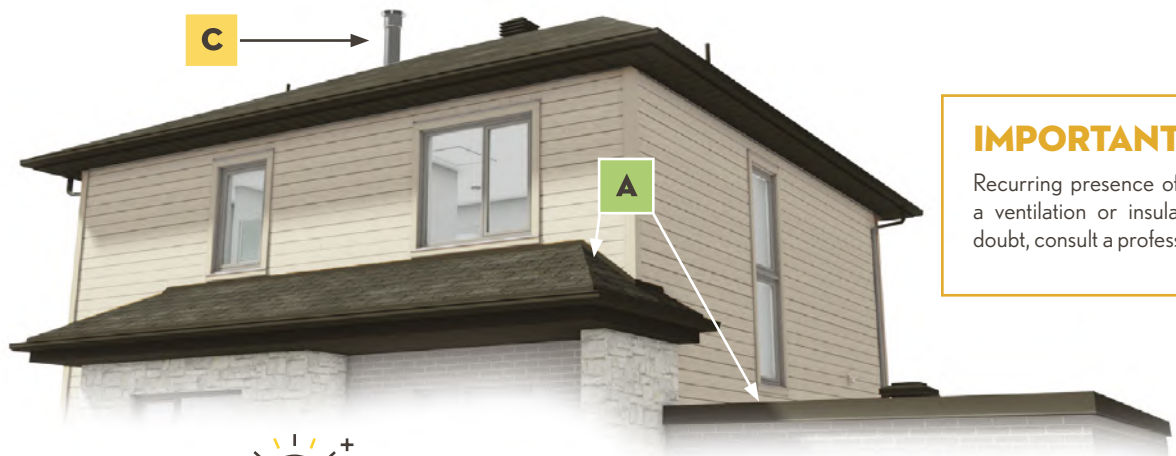
Fiberglass panels and balcony steps require extra care. To have repaired quickly from the very appearance of cracks or expansion.

GOOD TO KNOW


Outdoor staircases must also have banisters if they have more than three raisers.

	WHAT TO CHECK	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	DETAILS
GENERAL	Flashing	Inspect where the balcony meets the wall to ensure that the flashing is not damaged.	Water infiltration can damage the structure.
	Wooden components	Check the columns, joists and other wooden supports to ensure that they are in good condition.	Screws and anchors become less resistant on deteriorated wood.
	Ice build-up on concrete during winter	Use concrete-safe abrasives such as gravel or sand to de-ice surfaces.	The use of de-icing salts can damage the surface of concrete landings and steps.
	Frost heaving	Respect the clearance if required under staircases or balconies.	Soil expansion due to frost can put pressure and cause components on the ground to rise.
A BASEMENT TERRACE	Retaining walls	Check for cracks on retaining walls.	A crack can be a sign of frost-induced movement or lateral pressure. It can be minor or more important.
B BALCONY, PORCH AND ROOF DECK	Steel corrosion	Inspect to prevent corrosion which could damage steel.	Too much corrosion on steel may require costly corrective work.
	Fiberglass panels	Check for cracks and expansion.	Water can infiltrate the fiberglass and damage the balcony panels and steps. Ensure that it is promptly repaired if need be.
	Wooden floor	Protect wooden surfaces with the appropriate product.	Unprotected wooden surfaces can be prematurely damaged by UV rays and water. Planks can turn gray, split or rot.
C CAULKING	Caulking joints	Regularly check the condition of caulking joints, which can get torn or loosen.	Caulking is the first protective barrier to prevent water infiltration.
D STAIRS AND RAILINGS	Safety components	Inspect the fastening of steps, railing and banister.	Unsafe stairs increase risks of falls.


5. ROOF / EXTERIOR




IMPORTANT
Recurring presence of ice can indicate a ventilation or insulation problem. In doubt, consult a professional.



INFORMATION
Shingles can tear off due to high winds. It is necessary to keep a close look and have it repaired, if need be.



GOOD TO KNOW
Chimney
To avoid overheating, it should be ensured that the type of log used is compliant with the wood stove or fireplace. In doubt, refer to the user guide or contact the manufacturer.




NOTE
The roof must always be accessed in a safe manner. Every roof should be inspected once to twice a year.

	WHAT TO CHECK	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	DETAILS
GENERAL	Presence of ice	Watch for ice build-up on a pitched roof .	Too much ice can obstruct drainage or damage the roof. Recurring presence of ice can indicate a ventilation or insulation problem.
	Soffits	Straighten loosened soffits or vents under the eaves.	Insects, vermin or birds could seek shelter in the attic.
	Water build-up	Watch for water build-up on a flat roof and clean the drain.	The constant presence of water will prematurely wear down the membrane. A clogged drain will cause infiltration and damage.
	Shingles	Secure shingles lifted by the wind or replace torn off shingles.	Shingles can tear off due to high winds. The absence of shingles can cause water infiltration.
	Membrane surface	Examine the flat roof membrane to see any crack or tear.	Joints that come unglued or torn off are a water infiltration hazard.
A FLASHING AND PARAPET	Joints and fasteners	Fix torn off joints or missing fasteners.	Loose metal pieces will be torn off by winds. Check the condition of caulking joints, which can get torn or loosen.
B VENTS	Vent caps	Ensure that vent caps are firmly in place.	A missing cap will allow water, snow, insects and vermin to enter.
C CHIMNEY	Creosote build-up	Contact a certified chimney sweeper to carry out periodic maintenance.	Creosote build-up can cause chimney fires.
	Protective caps	Ensure that the protective cap is firmly in place.	A missing cap will allow birds to build their nest or other animals to enter the chimney.
D GUTTERS	Presence of debris	Clean debris and leaves from gutters.	Clogged gutters will overflow.
	Brackets and reverse slope	Check gutter brackets at the eaves and downpipes.	Unsecured gutters will create reverse slopes or loosen.


6. FLOOR AND STAIRS / INTERIOR





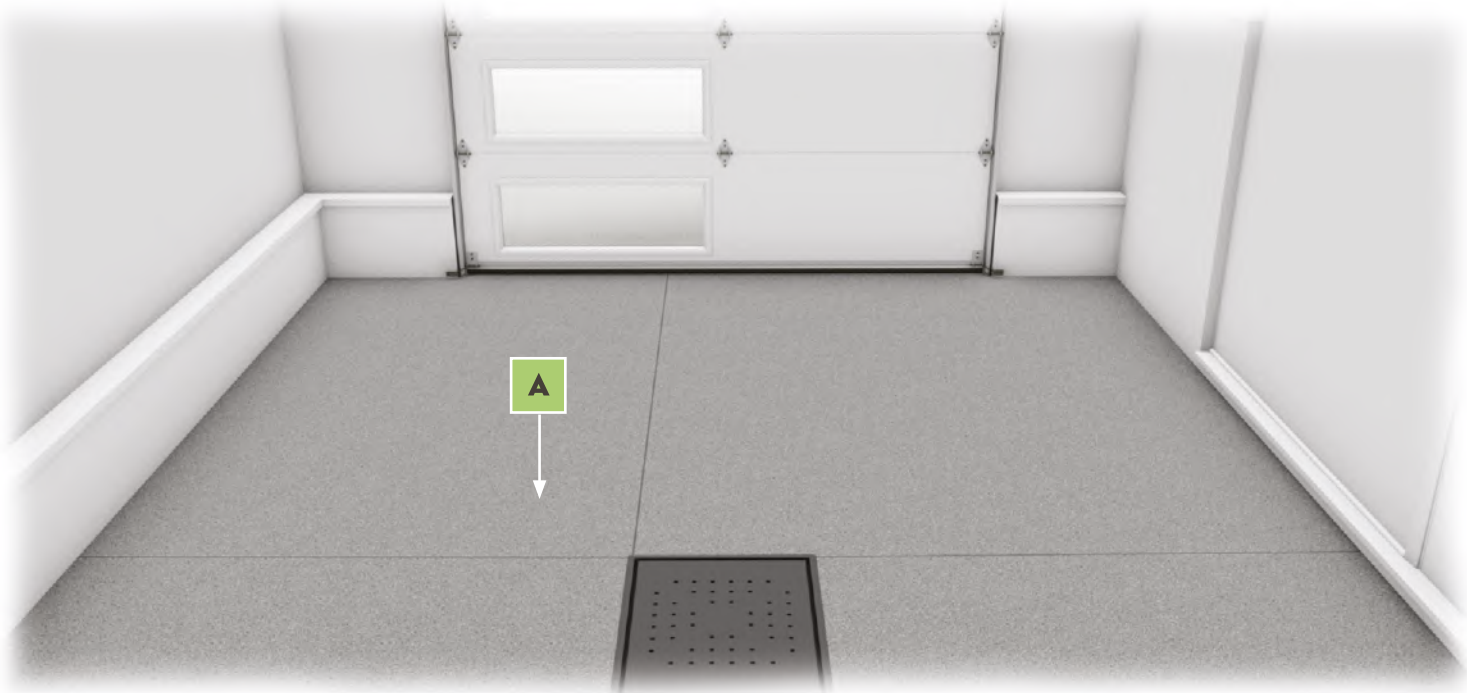
GOOD TO KNOW

Traces of efflorescence on a concrete slab can appear during construction, and can be cleaned. It is important to keep an eye and refer to a professional if in doubt.



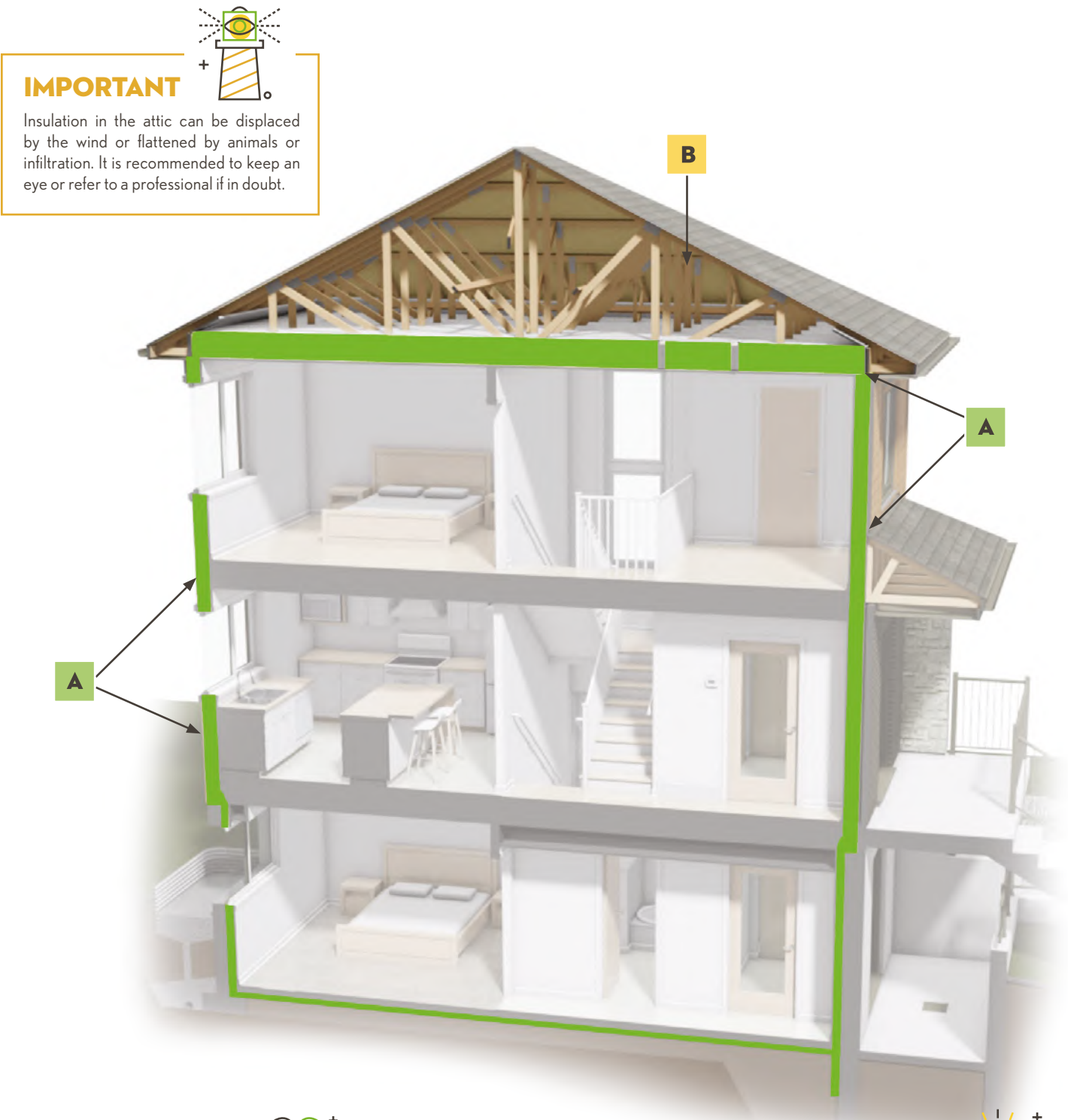
INFORMATION

If the degree of humidity of your home is too high, it will cause floorboards to warp, and if it is too low, gaps will appear.



	WHAT TO CHECK	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	DETAILS
GENERAL	Cracks	Check for cracks on the surface or in the joints.	A crack can be caused by normal behaviour or structural movement. If in doubt, contact a specialist.
	Stains or dampness	Check for traces which could be associated with water infiltration.	Water infiltration can worsen and cause major damage.
	Surface wear and tear	Check for wear and tear or deterioration of the surface (scratch, stain, etc.).	Overdue maintenance could lead to the full restoration of the finish.
A CONCRETE	Efflorescence	Check for rings or white powder on the concrete.	Those traces could be a sign of humidity or water. Traces of efflorescence that appeared during construction could be inconsequential, but it needs to be confirmed.
B WOOD	Cracking	Have floorboards that crack too much repaired.	Too much cracking can become annoying for occupants. It could be superficial and eventually diminish.
	Gaps	Check for major gaps between floorboards.	Since a gap is often associated with major humidity fluctuations, it is essential to monitor and control the degree of humidity in ambient air (around 30% to 50%).
C CERAMIC	Tiles	Check that tiles do not move or come unglued.	A loose tile will end up cracking.
	Joints	Check for damage to grout joints between ceramic tiles.	Deteriorated joints will hollow out.
D STAIRS	Components	Inspect the fixture of steps, railings and banisters.	An unsafe staircase increases the risks of falls.

7. INTERIOR SURFACES / INTERIOR



IMPORTANT

Insulation in the attic can be displaced by the wind or flattened by animals or infiltration. It is recommended to keep an eye or refer to a professional if in doubt.

GOOD TO KNOW


Sources of disruption by water can be diverse, such as plumbing leaks, foundation cracks, damage to the exterior envelope, etc. Quick action must be taken as soon as any suspicious trace appears.

INFORMATION

Objects or furniture should not be stored against the exterior walls of the basement. The lack of space will contribute to the build-up of mould.

	WHAT TO CHECK	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	DETAILS
GENERAL	Water infiltration	Check for stains or blistering paint caused by water or humidity.	Water infiltration can cause major damage.
	Mould	Check for mould on surfaces.	Mould is caused by the presence of humidity or water coming from, for example, a plumbing leak, a foundation crack, breakage of the exterior envelope, or other.
	Condensation	Check for water droplets or dampness on interior surfaces.	Heavy condensation can cause mould or damage. During extreme cold, it may be necessary to keep relative humidity to 30% or less. In winter, relative humidity should not exceed 45%.
	Cracks	Check for cracks on the surface or in the joints.	A crack can be caused by normal behaviour or a structural movement. If in doubt, contact a specialist.
A INSULATION AND AIRTIGHTNESS	Cold sensation	Check surfaces from which abnormal cold emanates.	Insulation displaced or flattened by animals, wind or infiltration through a wall or the ceiling will let the cold in.
	Air leakage	Deal with air leakage from new holes or added openings.	Components (mechanical, electrical or other) added by the owner after the construction can cause leakage if not properly sealed.
B ATTIC	Presence of vermin	Check for vermin or insects. Contact an exterminator if needed.	The temperature-controlled attic and the insulation material are favourable conditions to their presence.
	Structural components	Inspect structural components for distortion or breakage.	A build-up of snow or ice, for example, can cause too much stress on a structure.
	Hatch	Check that the hatch is properly closed and sealed.	Such as an improperly closed door, the hatch can cause major air leakage.
	Insulation	Ensure that ceiling insulation is not displaced.	A poorly insulated section can let cold in and cause condensation.
	Vapour barrier	Check for blackish traces or dampness on the insulation.	Humid and dusty air will stain the insulation material and indicate the presence of a leak.
	Ventilation	Ensure that soffits are not obstructed by the insulation, deflectors or other material.	A poorly ventilated attic cannot extirpate warm humid air. Poor ventilation of a roof can often be the cause of ice collecting along the eaves.

8. PLUMBING / MECHANICAL AND

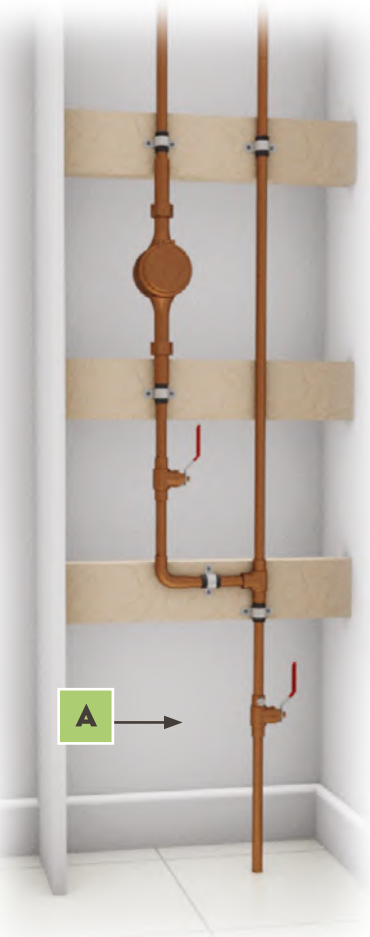


GOOD TO KNOW
A property can have more than one back-flow valve in the basement. Owners should be aware of their location.



IMPORTANT
It is recommended to contact a professional for gas and oil-fired water heaters.

INFORMATION
Inspection of the drainage pump in the basement, as required, should be performed during winter before the spring thaw period.



ELECTRICAL COMPONENTS

	WHAT TO CHECK	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	DETAILS
GENERAL	Water leakage or overflow	Check for water on the floor and traces on the walls	Water infiltration can intensify and cause major damage. If in doubt, close the valve of the water main and contact a plumber.
	Discharge	Test the good water flow using fixtures.	Gurgling and air bubbles can be the sign of a waste or vent obstruction.
	Concealed components	Do not cover or conceal plumbing fixtures during renovation projects.	Stop valves, covers and other openings must always be kept free for access.
	Water pressure	Check if the pressure is low for all of the fixtures or a single one.	A pressure loss can be caused by defective cartridges, deposits obstructing pipes or faucets. Check with a neighbour beforehand to determine if the problem stems from municipal waterworks or your artesian well.
	Back-flow valves	Ensure that valves operate and are not obstructed.	A defective valve cannot fulfil its purpose in case of a sewer back-up. A property can have more than one valve; owners should be aware of their location.
	Basin and pump	Test the pump to ensure it properly drains water from the basin.	A defective pump cannot fulfil its purpose in case of surcharge water overload or overflow.
	Faucets	Replace washers that cause leaks.	A faucet that constantly drips is annoying in addition to wasting lots of water.
A WATER MAIN	Stop valve	Occasionally operate the stop valve to ensure that it is not stuck or hard to manoeuvre. Lubricate if needed.	A valve can be stiff or hard to close.
	Condensation	Insulate the water main in case of surface condensation.	The water main is cold and its surface can produce condensation.
B FLOOR DRAIN AND BASIN	Odour in the basement and garage	Occasionally inspect the floor drain and garage basin, and fill it with water with some mineral oil.	The drying up drainage trap or basin will allow bad smells to enter.
C WATER HEATER	Inconsistent water heat	Check the thermostat adjustment.	A poorly adjusted or defective thermostat can cause burns.
	Tank	Check for corrosion on the tank as well as the sacrificial anode condition, and change if needed. Drain the tank from time to time.	Without the anode, rust will prematurely perforate the water heater. The equipment supplied by an artesian well with hard or ferrous water will require more maintenance.
	Safety valve	Manually operate the pressure relief valve once a year.	The valve can be defective or blocked.
D OUTSIDE FAUCET	Frost	Never leave a hose connected through winter.	Water will freeze in the faucet, which could crack the hose and cause water damage inside.



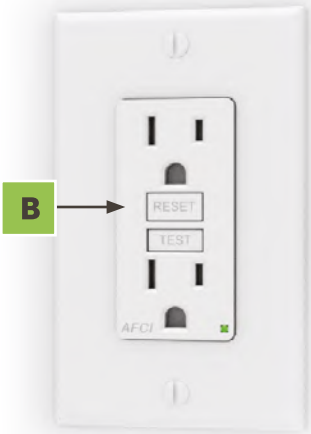
IMPORTANT

Only a master electrician is authorized to carry out such work.



GOOD TO KNOW

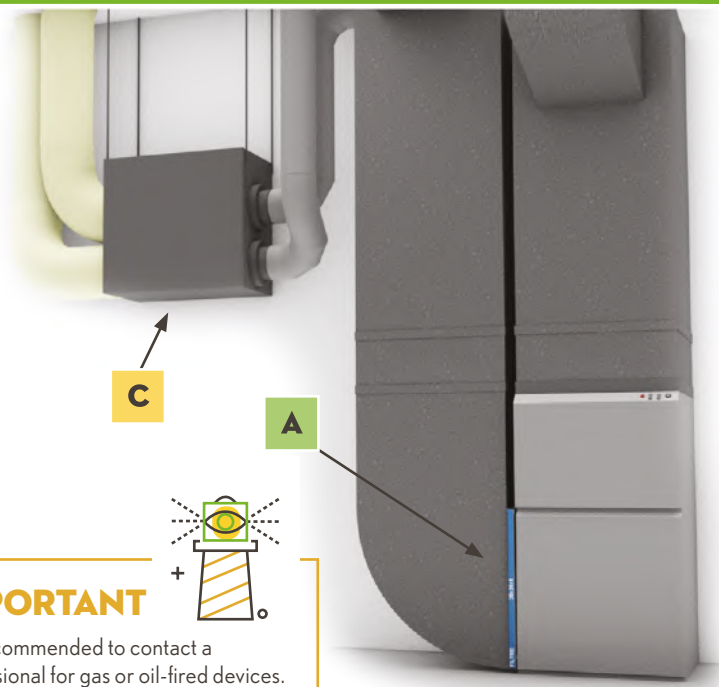
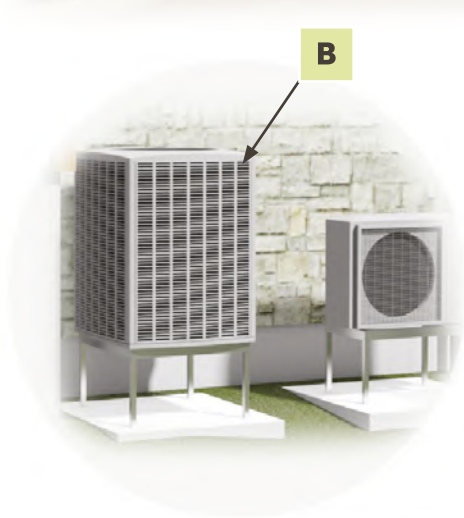
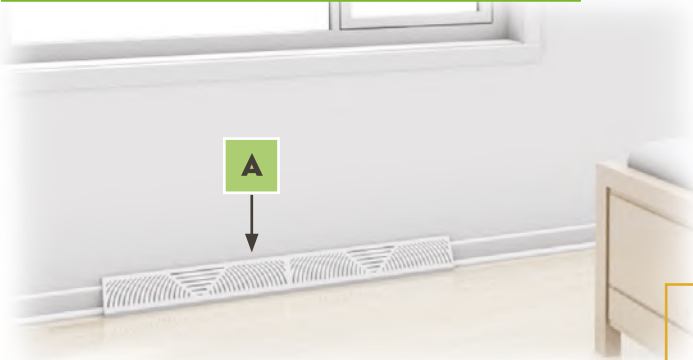
Arc fault protection breakers in bedrooms can sometimes trip when devices such as a vacuum cleaner or a hairdryer are plugged in. The incompatibility between some devices and arc fault interrupters can be normal.



	WHAT TO CHECK	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	DETAILS
A SERVICE ENTRANCE	Circuit breakers	If a circuit breaker trips repeatedly, ensure that the circuit is not overloaded.	A circuit breaker that trips can be the sign of a bigger problem. Contact an electrician if a circuit breaker seems defective, generates heat or shows signs of overheating.
	Space in front of a panel	Ensure that there is sufficient clearance in front of the circuit breaker panel.	It is impossible to intervene quickly if access is compromised.
B PROTECTION	Ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI)	Press the <i>Test</i> button on the exterior or bathroom outlets. Rearm the device using the <i>Reset</i> button.	A defective interrupter will not protect you in case of ground fault.
	Arc fault interrupters	Press the <i>Test</i> button of arc fault interrupters in the bedrooms, living room, etc. Rearm the device using the <i>Reset</i> button.	A defective interrupter will not protect you in case of an arc fault.
C SMOKE ALARMS	Audio signal	Test the smoke alarms to ensure its proper functioning.	An occasional audio signal can be a sign of a defect. To inspect without delay.

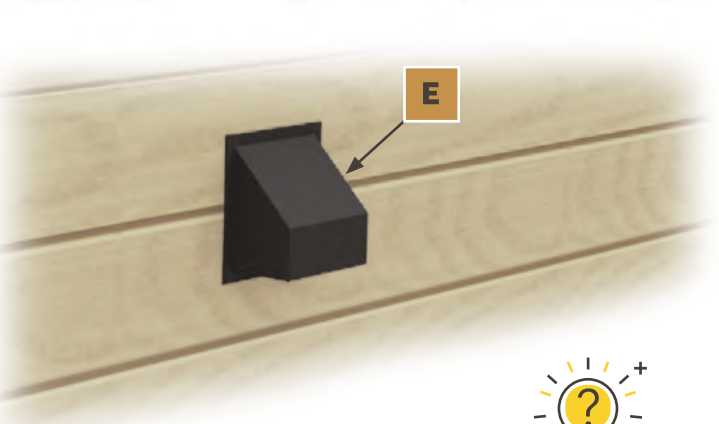
GOOD TO KNOW

The air exchange system should be turned off and vents shut during renovations.



IMPORTANT

It is recommended to contact a professional for gas or oil-fired devices.



INFORMATION

It is important to check every exterior vent cover periodically and to clean them if needed.

	WHAT TO CHECK	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	DETAILS
GENERAL	Filters	Check, clean and periodically replace the filters of the various devices.	A dirty filter will greatly reduce performance.
	Strange noises	Inspect components and lubricate if needed.	A defective component will end up damaging the device.
	Carbon monoxide alarms	Avert carbon monoxide-related risks by regularly testing alarms.	The gas released by some device is odourless and can compromise your safety.
A FORCED-AIR HEATING	Covers	Check covers for traces of greasy dust.	Grease marks can be a sign of an issue with the heat generator.
B HEAT PUMP	Heat pump efficiency	Check the control circuit, fluid pressure and compressor condition every year.	A monthly cleaning of the filter is advised to prevent wear.
C AIR EXCHANGE SYSTEM	Air circulation	Clean or replace the filter and covers. Rebalance the system. Ensure the cleanliness of the ducts and have it cleaned if needed.	The air exchange system should be turned off and vents shut during renovations. The addition of living spaces requires the rebalancing of the system.
D EXHAUST FAN AND RANGE HOOD	Power	Remove the cover to clean it as well as the fan blades.	Dust and grease build-up significantly reduce the efficiency of the apparatus.
E EXTERIOR EXHAUST OUTLETS	Traps	Check that the exhaust outlet trap opens and closes correctly.	A trap left half-opened is an open door for cold air, vermin and bird nests.
	Obstruction	Check for twigs dangling from the trap indicative of the presence of a nest.	The exhaust flow rate will be greatly reduced and the appliance could overheat.
	Dryer exhaust outlet	Regularly clean the dryer exhaust duct to prevent lint build-up.	A build-up of lint will reduce the dryer efficiency, which could overheat.

MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

ANY SEASON

- ☐ Test garage door safety system
- ☐ Inspect railings and handrails fixtures
- ☐ Repair unstable steps and damaged ground paving
- ☐ Check for any suspicious water, mould or other marks
- ☐ Look for cracks on the floor, walls and ceilings
- ☐ Clear bath, shower and sink drains from any debris and hair
- ☐ Check condition of back-flow valves
- ☐ Check ground fault circuit interrupters and arc fault interrupters
- ☐ Check, clean or replace vent, heat pump and air exchange filters
- ☐ Clean or replace range hood filter
- ☐ Check, clean or replace central vacuum filter
- ☐ Clean and check smoke alarms
- ☐ Clean and check carbon monoxide alarms
- ☐ Confirm escape routes and check fire extinguishers

NOTE

These tasks can be done all year round.



WINTER

- ☐ Check for ice along eaves and ice build-up on roof
- ☐ Check for too much snow build-up on roofs
- ☐ Check for condensation or frost in attic
- ☐ Check water main working condition
- ☐ Check drainage basin pump working condition before spring
- ☐ Add water in basement floor drain and garage basin
- ☐ Clean washer pump filter (some models)
- ☐ Remove covers and clean bathroom vents
- ☐ Inspect water heater safety valve
- ☐ Clean refrigerator condenser coil (back)



SPRING

- ☐ Check for reverse slopes or water build-up around foundations
- ☐ Check condition of exterior cladding and plan for its maintenance
- ☐ Inspect caulking joints
- ☐ Install screens
- ☐ Clean and protect surface of balcony, if required
- ☐ Inspect roof condition
- ☐ Clean debris in gutters
- ☐ Check and maintain the air conditioner or heat pump
- ☐ Check and clean dryer exhaust
- ☐ Turn on irrigation system
- ☐ Open pool



SUMMER

- ☐ Trim hedges and conifers
- ☐ Cut branches that are too close to the house
- ☐ Check condition of outer steel and protect its surface
- ☐ Inspect and lubricate movable parts of doors, garage doors and windows
- ☐ Check condition of latches and locks on doors and windows
- ☐ Inspect gutter brackets
- ☐ Have chimney cleaned and check condition before first fall frost
- ☐ Inspect attic for leaks, animals, insects or others
- ☐ Check condition of ceramic joints in bathtubs and showers
- ☐ Inspect and empty septic tank system
- ☐ Test artesian well water quality and check filters, pressure, etc.
- ☐ Clean air conditioner or heat pump filter
- ☐ Clean range hood filter
- ☐ Remove covers and clean bathroom vents



FALL

- ☐ Remove leaves and debris from window wells
- ☐ Check and repair damaged weather stripping
- ☐ Remove and store screens
- ☐ Inspect roof condition before winter
- ☐ Inspect flat roof drain
- ☐ Clean leaves and debris from gutters
- ☐ Disconnect water hose
- ☐ Dust off heaters and baseboard heaters
- ☐ Remove air conditioner or protect with cover
- ☐ Check and clean dryer exhaust
- ☐ Close and flush irrigation system
- ☐ Close and get pool ready for winter

GLOSSARY¹

A	
Arc fault circuit interrupter (AFCI)	Interrupter or circuit breaker that protects from arc faults. <i>(Prise anti-arc in French)</i>
Attic	Part of a building between the upper floor ceiling and roof, or a knee wall and a sloping roof. <i>Synonym: Roof space</i>
B	
Backflow valve	Device preventing the backflow of water or sewage. <i>Synonym: Backflow preventer</i>
Brick lintel	Steel angle iron placed above a window or another opening to support the brick veneer.
C	
Creosote	Wood combustion-derived hydrocarbons obtained from high temperature carbonization.
D	
Drain trap	Fitting shaped like an “S” located under the sink or another fixture. It retains water to a certain level to prevent sewer gas to enter the home through the drain pipe, while allowing the flow of liquid.
E	
Efflorescence	White powdery deposit of soluble salts carried by humidity on the surface of brick, concrete or mortar. Salts crystallize as the humidity evaporates, creating the characteristic irregular patterns on the surface of affected materials.
F	
Flashing	Sheet metal or another watertight material used to prevent water infiltration or to direct and push water away from the building envelope or other. <i>(Solin in French)</i>
Foundation drain	Drain installed around foundation walls, below the foundation floor level, which collects surface and ground water and keeps it away from the foundation.
G	
Ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI)	Interrupter or circuit breaker that protects from a ground fault. <i>Synonym: Ground fault interrupter (GFI). (Prise avec détecteur de fuite à la terre [DDFT] in French)</i>

H	
Handrail	Long and narrow bar that crowns the railing of a staircase. Horizontal or sloped (in the case of a ramp or stairs) support at the top or side of a railing or a wall for people to hold for support in order to prevent falls.
L	
Lintel	Horizontal structural section supporting the load over a door or window opening and divides it between the studs.
P	
Parapet	Low wall bounding a surface, such as a roof. Part of an exterior wall, a common wall or a firewall extending over the roof level.
Parging	Plaster or cement mortar coating applied on a masonry or concrete wall.
R	
Railing	Protective barrier placed around an opening in a floor or on the open sides of a staircase, an access ramp, a landing, a balcony, a mezzanine, a porch or any other area in order to prevent a fall into open space. <i>Synonym: Guardrail</i>
Reverse slope	Opposing slope, inclination directing water in the opposite direction.
Riser	Vertical piece separating two steps or a step and a flat surface such as a landing.
S	
Safety valve	Safety device that prevents pressure in a plumbing installation, a water heater or another recipient, from exceeding a predetermined limit by opening and releasing excess pressure to avoid damage and injuries. <i>Synonym: Relief valve</i>
Sill	Trim piece, simple or moulded, underneath a window.
Soffit	Under side of the part of the roof overhanging the wall.
V	
Vapour barrier	Material used in the envelope of a building as a vapour retarder.
W	
Weather-stripping	Strip of felt, rubber, metal or other material, fixed along the edges of a window or a door to keep out drafts and reduce heat loss.
Weep hole	Openings between brick joints that allow for water drainage and ventilation. They are found in the lower sections of walls and above doors and windows.
Window well	Structure made of corrugated sheet, concrete or timber designed to keep dirt away from a basement window.

1 References: Glossary of Housing Terms (CMHC) and Le grand dictionnaire terminologique by the Office Québécoise de la langue française



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